Psychology 3374.001 Human Sexuality
Fall 2017

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Email: Yuliana.Zaikman@tamucc.edu
Office hours: TR 1:00 - 3:00, and by appointment

Class Meetings: TR 11:00 - 12:15
Location: CI-102

The Invitation

Let’s talk about sex.
In 21st century America, sex is everywhere and nowhere. It permeates popular culture but is largely absent in our educational system. The media is obsessed with sex, but frank and factual conversations remain controversial. Middle-schoolers find themselves involved in unintended pregnancies even while mortified to say words like “penis” and “vulva.”

Join me this semester in exploring the topic of sexual behavior, including human sexuality, reproduction, male-female conflicts and the social implications of sex. By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Communicate with your partner about sexual pleasure, contraception, and sexually transmitted infections
- Communicate with your children about sexual anatomy, sexual orientation, reproduction, contraception, sexual pleasure, relationships, and sexually transmitted infections across the lifespan
- Communicate with politicians and the electorate at large about policy-related issues including sex education, abortion laws, availability of emergency contraception, public funding for contraception, insurance coverage for infertility treatments

In short, by the end of the semester, you will be able to communicate about sexuality and related issues using language appropriate to a wide variety of audiences.

Let’s talk about sex.
**Four Cautions**

1) This course will be writing intensive.
2) This course will include sexually explicit information, including text, photos, illustrations, and video clips. The material in this class may be considered offensive by some individuals. Your continued enrollment in this course indicates that you are aware of the nature of the material and that you consent to the presentation of the material.
3) Sexuality is a topic, rich with emotion and relatively short on “right” answers. In class and in your assignments, it is ok to honestly express your beliefs, even if they are not politically correct or socially desirable. I expect emotions will make frequent guest appearances in class and in your writing, whether they elicit laughter, squirming, or grimaces.
4) The primary learning objective for this course is to communicate about sexuality and related issues using language appropriate to a wide variety of audiences. This skill requires practice and there may be times when we miss the mark. However, I pledge to make my best effort to be respectful and accurate in my language. When in doubt, consider this: *Write and speak in a way that would not mortify your mother.*

**Class Activities**

How will you acquire the knowledge and skills to communicate about sexuality and related issues using appropriate language for a wide variety of audiences?

1) Complete all assigned pre-class preparation readings and activities
2) Attend class regularly
3) Participate actively and constructively in in-class and team activities
4) Demonstrate your readiness to participate in in-class activities by performing satisfactorily on individual daily quizzes
5) Complete reflection papers relating material about human sexuality
6) Complete team end of unit activities
7) Draft and revise a final team project applying class material
8) Provide your teammates feedback on their performance as teammates

Each of these tasks are described in more detail below.

1. **Complete all assigned pre-class preparation activities.**
The majority of pre-class preparation assignments will involve reading excerpts from the required text and/or viewing short video clips. The assigned readings can be found in the course calendar, while the video links can be found on Blackboard under the appropriate date.

   **The required text is:**

2. **Attend class regularly**
Attending class is critical to developing your ability to communicate about sexuality and related issues. Specifically, in-class activities and materials will give you opportunities to practice using language appropriate to a wide variety of audiences. Communication is a skill not unlike knitting or shooting free throws; it improves with practice. Practice is particularly important in learning how to communicate about sexuality. You must learn how to negotiate all the emotions and beliefs associated with sexuality, as well the facts and vocabulary related to the topic.
Attending class is also critical to your final grade in class. Although attendance does not directly contribute to your final grade, we will be doing a variety of in-class activities and submitting out-of-class work during class. Most of these activities cannot be made-up. Your final grade will also include your teammates’ evaluation of your performance in the team. This evaluation is unlikely to be positive unless you are in class and make positive contributions to your team (see below for more information).

3. **Participate actively and constructively in in-class team activities.**

When asked, employers report that the ability to work in teams is one of the two most important characteristics they look for in future employees (Hart Report, 2006). Unfortunately, you either have had no practice working with other people on a common task or have had negative experiences working with teams. You also may be far more comfortable texting than talking to people. All these experiences put you at a disadvantage on the job market.

Happily, working collaboratively and communicating with other people are both skills that can be improved with practice. To give you this practice, you will be assigned to a permanent learning team at the beginning of the term. You will do a variety of in-class activities in your teams, each of which will give you valuable practice communicating about sexuality and related issues. During class activities, please give others and their ideas the attention and respect you expect to receive. Because you must be present to participate meaningfully in these activities, they cannot be “made up.” If you know in advance that you must miss class, you may be able to complete the day’s activity early. Talk to me ASAP about this option. You will not be able to “make up” work after its deadline.

4. **Demonstrate your readiness to participate in in-class activities by performing satisfactorily on individual daily quizzes.**

Prior to most class periods, you will need to complete an individual quiz (IQ) on Blackboard that will be due by 10:30 AM. These IQs will be available on Blackboard and you will be able to complete them at any time prior to the due date. Each IQ consists of 5 questions, each worth 5 points, and you will have 5 minutes to complete it. These quizzes have to be completed independently, and any collaboration on them can result in disciplinary actions.

At the end of the term, individual scores on the IQs will be added together to calculate an IQ total. The individual DQ total will be weighted in the final grade according to the grade weights specified below.

Because daily quizzes hold students accountable for being prepared for and attending class, **no make-up quizzes will be given** for any reason. It is your responsibility to complete the IQs before the deadline.

5. **Complete reflection papers relating material about human sexuality.**

Students will write several reflection papers (as individuals, not teams) based on various supplemental material (excerpts from other books, videos etc.). Each reflection paper should be between 500-1000 words long. More detailed information and the evaluative criteria for these papers will be posted on Blackboard. Due dates are listed on the tentative schedule in the
syllabus. Students are encouraged to consult the Purdue Online Writing Center (owl.english.purdue.edu) for help with these assignments.

6. **Complete end of unit activities:**
Each team will complete a team activity at the end of each unit of class material. These activities will require you to use information from the unit to answer a set of questions. You will need to complete the end of unit activities in class and every team member will receive the same grade on the end of unit activity. Additional information on these tasks will be posted on Blackboard. If you know you will be absent during a day when we will be working on an end of unit activity, consider completing some of the questions prior to that day and emailing them to your group members.

7. **Draft and revise a final project applying class material**
One of the main goals of this course is to learn how to communicate appropriately with different audiences about sexuality and related issues. To demonstrate your mastery of this goal, you will be required to create an explanatory video using five different concepts that were presented throughout the course of the semester. Be creative! Keep in mind that regardless of what you create, you must incorporate 5 different concepts from the class material that will help you reach the goal of your explanatory video (think of John Oliver’s segments).

You will be working in groups for this project. At the end of the semester, each team will present their projects. Presentations should be approximately 10 minutes long.

Each team member will also turn in their own 2-3 page paper (double spaced, 12 Times New Roman, 1 inch margins) describing in more detail the five concepts incorporated in your presentation (e.g., this is NOT a team paper). This paper should contain the following information for each of the 5 concepts you used: identify the concept, define the concept in your own words, and explain how it was used in your project. This individual paper will hold each team member accountable for demonstrating their own understanding of course material. As such, each student’s grade on the final project will consist of 50% of his/her performance on the individual paper and 50% of the team’s performance on the final project.

8. **Provide your teammates feedback on their performance as teammates**
This peer evaluation holds team members accountable to their teammates. Your teammates can become valued friends and a means to success in the course if you give your best contribution to all team activities. You will complete peer evaluation twice throughout the semester, once in the middle of the semester and once at the end of the semester. The peer evaluation completed in the middle of the semester serves an opportunity to check in with your teammates and provide constructive criticism. The first peer evaluation will be 5% of your final grade. Prior to the final exam period, you will provide each of your teammates with feedback on their performance as a team member using the questionnaire found on canvas. The second peer evaluation will be 10% of your final grade.

**The Five Star Review**
How will I know if I am able to communicate about sexuality and related issues using language appropriate for a wide variety of audiences?
I have very high standards for this course, because it is designed to help you learn skills and information that will make you more successful in life. I am confident you can meet my standards if you come to class prepared, interact productively with your teammates, and follow the instructions on assignments carefully.

Due to university policy, I am required to reduce my assessment of your learning to the woefully inadequate representation of a letter grade. I will use three types of evidence to do so: your performance on individual tasks, your team’s performance, and your teammates’ peer evaluations of your performance as a teammate. However, you will have the opportunity to determine the percentage of the grade that will be determined by scores in these performance areas. I will use the following procedure to do so at the beginning of the term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>% WITHIN AREA</th>
<th>% OF FINAL GRADE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual quizzes (~ 20 IQs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection papers (~ 5 Reflection papers)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class activities (~ 20 In-class activities)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. TEAM PERFORMANCE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of unit team activities (~ 5 End of Units)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final project (1 team project and 1 individual paper)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PEER EVALUATION</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Final grades will be assigned based on the following percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage to be earned</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>89.5-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>79.5-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>69.5-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>59.5-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some ways, our exploration of sexual behavior is similar to a potluck dinner. At a potluck, everyone has a better experience if everyone brings a satisfactory dish to the table. If only a fraction of guests bring a dish or too many people bring easy but unsatisfying food (e.g., Jello salads), the potluck becomes an unfulfilling experience.

Similarly, the quality of your learning in and enjoyment of this class depends on the level of preparation and engagement that you and your teammates bring to our intellectual table. Consequently, students cannot pass this class solely on the efforts of their teammates. **STUDENTS WHO DO NOT EARN AT LEAST 70% OF THE INDIVIDUAL POINTS WILL NOT RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THEIR TEAM’S PERFORMANCE.** These students’ final grades will be calculated by weighting their individual performance by 85% and the peer evaluation by 15%.
The Insurance Policy (AKA: Extra Credit Opportunities)
This class is set up such that missing (or performing terribly) on any one or two assignments will not have a dramatic effect on your final grade. However, many students feel less anxious if they earn extra-credit “just in case.” This desire presents the opportunity to share additional resources with interested students. However, I do not want to facilitate students cramming hours of extra-credit into the last days of the semester in a vain attempt to raise your final grade. Thus, the extra-credit opportunities will be due throughout the semester, yoked to the unit to which they are relevant. Specific information about these extra-credit opportunities will be posted on Blackboard.

General Class Conduct
1) Please turn your phones off, or on silent. Do not check your phone during class. You’re in class. You’re an adult. You pay for this course. So please behave accordingly.
2) Please treat this class time as Vegas. In other words, “what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas”. Please respect the information your teammates and classmates share in this class and do not repeat it to people outside of this class. I want us to feel comfortable to talk about sexuality without worrying about the information circulating throughout the university.
3) Email communication: Please view email correspondence as an extension of appropriate class conduct. Please don’t start emails with “Hi there”, it is a personal pet peeve, so please don’t do it. Always remember, if you want to ask someone a question or a favor, you are more likely to get a positive response if you are nice.
4) Very often, students come to me and tell me that if they do not receive a certain grade in my course, they are going to lose their scholarship, or they won’t graduate, or they will become ineligible for something or other. Let me be clear: I can relate. I understand how hard it is to succeed in education, to pay for school, etc. I in no way wish for anything bad to happen to anyone as a result of failing my course. But it is your responsibility to get a good grade in my course; it is not my responsibility to give you a good grade. I will never assign a student a grade that s/he did not earn, so please do not come to me saying “I need a grade bump or I will lose my scholarship”. It would be completely unfair to the rest of the class to grant anyone a grade they did not earn. If you are worried about something like this come to see me early, and we can discuss options.

The Fine Print

PREREQUISITES: PSYC2301

EMAIL: Official communication to you will often come through your TAMUCC e-mail box. Please access it regularly, or forward it to your current use address, as your success in college may depend on your ability to respond quickly.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY POLICY:
As adults, you should know that using a digital device during class for purposes unrelated to class activities is unacceptable. Unfortunately, in the last decade, you have also observed virtually every other adult using digital technology at inappropriate times. Thus, the following clarification is necessary.
Except on days when I instruct you to bring a web-enabled device to class for use during an in-class activity, the use of computers, iPads, netbooks, cell phones or other electronic devices is NOT allowed. Put simply, if you are using a digital device, you are not participating fully in the day’s activity. If I observe you using a digital device in an unauthorized way, I will confiscate it for the remainder of the class period. I hold myself accountable to this standard as well. I pledge not to use my laptop for purposes unrelated to class during all class meetings.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

ACADEMIC DISHONEST:
Acknowledging that the vast majority of TAMUCC students do not engage in dishonest behavior, the university's policy regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism will be upheld in this class. Plagiarism is using another person’s work without acknowledgment, making it appear to be one’s own. Any ideas, words, pictures, or other intellectual content taken from another source must be acknowledged in a citation that gives credit to the source. This is irrespective of the origin of the material, including the Internet, other students’ work, unpublished materials, or oral sources. Intentional and unintentional instances of plagiarism are considered instances of academic misconduct. It is the responsibility of the student submitting the work in question to know, understand, and comply with this policy.

Even with a citation, failure to put quotation marks around direct quotations also constitutes plagiarism, because it implies that the writing is your own. Material should either be paraphrased or clearly designated as a quotation. Note that replacing words with synonyms, changing verb tense or other minor alterations do not qualify as paraphrasing.

ACADEMIC ADVISING:
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E and can be reached at 825-3466.

DROPPING THE CLASS: I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class; however, it is sometimes in a student’s best interest to do so. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Simply no longer attending and participating in the class will NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Wednesday, November 15th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.
GRADE APPEAL PROCESS:
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

ACADEMIC CONTINUITY:
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane, in which classes cannot be held on the TAMUCC campus, this course will continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., email, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
<th>DEADLINES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes begin</td>
<td>August 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor day Holiday</td>
<td>September 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to late register or add a class</td>
<td>September 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last day to drop a class</td>
<td>November 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Day-No Class</td>
<td>November 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Holidays</td>
<td>November 23-24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to withdraw from the University</td>
<td>December 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
<td>December 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading day</td>
<td>December 7-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finals week</td>
<td>December 11-14</td>
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