

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY RELATIONS
AND APPLIED NUTRITION
University of Guelph

FRHD 4200
ISSUES IN HUMAN SEXUALITY
Winter 2014
COURSE OUTLINE

Course Information

Time & Place: Tuesday & Thursdays 10:00-11:20am, MACK 121

Professor: Dr. Corey Isaacs

Office: MINS 147

Office Hours: Thursdays 11:30-12:30 (by appointment)

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Calendar Description

An advanced analysis of sexual development. Specific attention will be given to sexual problems, and the concepts, methods and issues associated with sex education and counselling.

Prerequisite(s): FRHD*1020, FRHD*2100 and 1.00 credit at the 3000 level in Family and Social Relations, Psychology or Sociology

Restriction(s): This is a Priority Access Course and some restrictions may apply during some time periods.

Course Objectives

This course is taught from a **learner-centered perspective** which emphasizes the **exploration of meaning and content knowledge through personal and interpersonal discovery**. FRHD*4200 was developed with consideration to the University of Guelph Learning Objectives. Specifically, throughout the semester in FRHD*4200, it is hoped that students will:

1. Develop a *global understanding* of issues related to human sexuality, comprehending the variety of political, religious, cultural, biological, social, and historical forces that shape sexuality;
2. Develop an appropriate *depth and breadth of understanding* of key issues in human sexuality, recognizing the implications of course content and putting it into a broader context;
3. Develop skills in *personal attitude recognition*; become aware of personal values, biases, and beliefs regarding sexual issues;
4. Develop *moral maturity* related to sexual issues; specifically, understanding that aspects of human sexuality can be considered and evaluated in many ways. It is hoped that students will become more aware and accepting of the lifestyles and sexual value systems of others, especially those which are divergent from their own;
5. Develop *independence of thought*, and the ability to challenge accepted truths about human sexuality and think critically about sexuality as it appears in research and the media;

6. *Understand* the various *forms of inquiry* used in the study of human sexuality, and be able to assess the strengths and limitations as well as the cultural and historical impact of these forms;
7. Acquire *literacy* and *numeracy* skills related to human sexuality; specifically, be able to analyze and synthesize hypotheses about sexuality and comprehend the use of quantitative data to test such hypotheses;
8. Improve communication skills and increase comfort with communication about sexual issues and behaviour;
9. Understand the *personal* and *practical implications* of course content; becoming informed about issues related to sexuality that will aid in the development of an intelligent, responsible, and fulfilling sexual lifestyle;
10. Develop a *love of learning*, or intellectual curiosity, regarding human sexuality, by getting personally involved with course content, and reflecting on the personal experiences that have contributed to your development as a sexual being, and the values you hold related to sexuality.

Course Format and Approach

This 400-level Sexuality course is an issues-based course, as opposed to a survey, content course. This means that we won't cover the breadth of the field of sexuality, but rather, examine in-depth key issues in sexuality that are current, topical, and controversial. Topics and readings have been chosen to stimulate your thinking about sexuality and challenge your beliefs, values, and attitudes. It is hoped you will approach every class with an open mind, and an attitude of respect and tolerance for those who may think differently than you do and live their lives differently than you do. That being said, I intend this course to be exciting, thought-provoking, and personally meaningful.

WARNING: DIFFICULT COURSE CONTENT

In this course we will explore and address sensitive and controversial sexual issues such as sexual abuse, sexual orientation, sexual difficulties, and variations of sexual expression, to name a few. If any of these issues might create personal distress on an intellectual and or emotional level, it is advised students not enroll in this course at this time. It is also recommended, if any of the presenting topics create some concern for students, that students seek support through Counselling Services, University Centre - Level 3 South, Phone (519) 824-4120 Ext. 53244. Please consult yourself, as you are in the best position to decide whether this course is appropriate for you at this time.

Your Responsibilities

1. Come to class with an open mind and a non-judgemental stance.
2. Be prepared for every class by doing all required readings.
3. Be respectful of other students and guest speakers.
4. Come to class on time and stay until the end of the class period.
5. Work with group members outside of class to create an integrated, creative presentation.
6. Check CourseLink every 48 hours for important announcements, supplementary readings, and use CourseLink to communicate with other students and the instructor.
7. Complete course requirements with integrity.

Required Readings

See course website.

Evaluation

Component	Important Dates	Value
Readings Quizzes	Choose 7 out of 10	10%
Midterm	Thursday, Feb. 13 10:00-11:20am	24%
Book Club Presentation	Date of sign up	20%
Online Discussion Participation	Throughout the semester	16%
Critical Paper	Thursday March 20	30%

Readings Quizzes (worth 10%)

Reading quizzes will be posted online throughout the semester to ensure that students have read the articles prior to attending class. These quizzes will be multiple choice and will be available online by the end of the preceding week. Students will have 10 minutes to complete each quiz and **MUST** do so before coming to class on the day that the articles are covered. On average, four to six questions will be asked. Students have three free misses for readings quizzes - the student may choose which of the ten quizzes to use their three free misses. If a student opts to take all the reading quizzes, then the 3 lowest marks will be dropped.

Midterm (worth 24%)

The midterm will be held on **Thursday, February 27**, during regular class time and will cover lecture, readings, guest speakers and supplementary materials. The questions will be in a variety of formats (e.g., multiple choice, short answer, fill in the blank, matching, essay). **The test is closed-book.**

Online Discussion Group Participation (worth 16% total: 8% for critical reflections and 8% for response posts)

The class will be randomly divided into several online discussion groups. The purpose of these groups is to provide a smaller seminar environment for students to critically reflect on the course material. Each group member will be required to post at least 2 critical reflections on a topic (**worth 4% each**) and then to respond to at least 4 posts from other group members (**worth 2% each**). You can write about how the material interested, engaged, moved, inspired, challenged, bothered and/or puzzled you. Additionally, you can discuss the material within a broader context (e.g., how it relates to something you have encountered in the media, on campus, etc.).

It is recommended that your critical reflections be at least 200 words and edited prior to posting. When posting a critical reflection, please give it a title and number (e.g., The culture of sex-reflection #1) and provide a copy in the dropbox labeled "critical reflections" for confidential marking. If you do not provide a copy in the dropbox, your reflection will not be graded. The same process applies to your 4 response posts. It is expected that you provide a meaningful response to group members' posts and that you submit a copy in the dropbox. You are encouraged to post throughout the semester and are welcome to post additional reflections and/or responses as part of your own learning process. Any extra reflections or responses will not be graded.

Book Club Presentations (worth 20% total: 2% summary, 18% presentation)

Working in a small group (3 students), you are required to select a pop culture book on sexuality that is of interest to you and then make a brief presentation (15 minute) on it to the class. You must post your book selection online in the discussion forum labelled "book choice forum" **by January 23rd**, so that two groups do not select the same book. Once a group has publicly selected their book, no other group can pick it, so pick your book early and inform the class. If, on the presentation days, two groups have the same book, then the group that declared second or did not publicly declare their book, will get zero on the assignment. It is your responsibility to check email and make sure that your book was not already selected.

In your presentation, cover the following information:

- Basic Information about the book:
 - o Author
 - o Author's background (e.g. education or experience)
 - o Title
 - o Date of publication
- Intended audience
- Summary of content
- Critical analysis
 - o Is content consistent with what you have learned about sexuality in this or other classes?
 - o How do the books claims relate to the research on this topic?
 - o Do you see any biases?
- Overall quality
 - o Would you recommend this book to others?
 - o Strengths?
 - o Weaknesses?
- Anything else of interest that you would like to include.

You will be evaluated in terms of content (covering information requested), ability to highlight controversial and/or thought-provoking issues, critical analysis of content, and presentation style (creativity, preparation, pacing, tone, enthusiasm).

A **one-page summary** of the above information is to be brought to class (copied one per student). This is worth 2% of your final grade. You will be evaluated in terms of content and visual appeal.

Critical Paper on the documentary *Orgasm Inc.* (worth 30%)

All students will be required to submit a 8 page (excluding references), typed, and double-spaced research-based response and critique of the documentary *Orgasm Inc.* The film **will be shown in class on Tuesday, January 21**. A copy of the documentary will also be available from the library. Students who are unable to attend class for the screening of the film are responsible for viewing it on their own time. The purpose of this assignment is to induce you to apply a critical attitude to popular information in the media. To successfully write this paper, you will have to review data from journal articles related to the main ideas of the documentary. You will then be expected to critically evaluate from a scientific, empirical perspective whether the central thesis of the documentary is valid. A reading by the director of the documentary and a target reading have been included in your reading list to assist you.

The paper will be graded as follows:

Style and format.....	5
Introduction/Conclusion.....	5
Research.....	7
Quality of critique.....	13

Further details of the grading criteria are explained in detail on the grading scheme. Please remember that although you will receive a breakdown of your mark for each of the three categories, it is impossible to totally separate these. For example, if your research is inadequate, your critique will suffer because of insufficient information.

The **paper is due by the beginning of class on Thursday, March 20, 2014** and can be submitted by email or in person. Late assignments will be **penalized 2% per day** (e.g., a paper grade of 78% that is 3 days late = final grade of 72%). Travel, computer issues, relationship problems, etc. are not valid reasons for an extension since you will have 2 months to complete the assignment.

Suggestions for writing the paper:

Some students might find that they have little experience with an assignment like this one. I am therefore providing several suggestions to get you started. Please also feel free to talk to me about your ideas or questions during my office hours.

1. Watch the documentary attentively. You may need to borrow it from the library and watch it again. Make sure you understand the central argument and supporting claims made in the documentary.
2. Do a comprehensive literature search (on the computer) for empirically-based references relevant to these ideas using both Medline and PsycInfo. Relevant journals may be indexed in only one or the other.
3. Based on your computer search, read the relevant empirical literature. Avoid pop psychology references. Review articles, meta-analyses, and book chapters are very useful, but sometimes do not give enough detail to allow you to evaluate specific studies. If you haven't read the original article, don't use it/cite it! Remember that the fact that an article is published does not mean that it is of high quality or that its conclusions are valid. There are many published studies that reach invalid conclusions based on poor experimental design, poor data analysis, and poor reasoning. To get an excellent mark, it is important to be able to distinguish good from bad empirical studies and base your conclusions accordingly. Personal opinions are interesting, but need to be supported by data or logical arguments.
4. It is impossible for me to say in advance how much research is necessary, but your paper is expected to comprehensively cover the research data. I would expect to see at least 8 empirical articles cited in your paper.
5. Draft an outline of your paper. Re-draft it until it makes sense. It usually takes me at least 5 drafts of a paper before it reads well, makes sense, and fits within the required page limits. If you get a draft of your paper outline (1 page) to me at least 2 weeks before the due date, then I will try to give you some feedback.
6. A very brief summary of the central argument of the documentary is all that is necessary - no more than one paragraph! Do not waste your limited space on a lengthy summary of the video. Similarly, do not try to summarize all the empirical studies you will be using in your analysis. You must learn to be selective in terms of both depth and breadth.

7. Check grammar, spelling, format, APA citation style, etc. The style/format of your paper should be set up exactly according to The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (fifth edition). Avoid excessive use of quotes and plan your paper carefully.

8. The paper is limited to 8-10 pages with 1 inch margins, and font no smaller than 12 point standard fonts. The reference list is not included in the page limit. I will only read the first 10 pages of your paper.

Course Schedule

Note: Schedule may change as we progress through material; however, presentation dates will not change. It is your responsibility to check CourseLink 48 hours before class to note changes in class schedule.

Date	Topic	Important Dates
Jan. 9	Introduction	
Jan. 14	Theories of Sexuality	
Jan. 16	Sexual Science Research Methods	
Jan. 21	Film screening of <i>Orgasm Inc.</i> for your paper	
Jan. 23	Sexual Dysfunction and Therapy	Book choice due today
Jan. 28	Sexual Dysfunction and Therapy	
Jan. 30	Gender and Sexuality	
Feb. 4	Psychosexual Differentiation	
Feb. 6	Cultural Perspectives on Sex	
Feb. 11	Safer Sex	
Feb. 13	Erotica, Pornography, and Behavior	
Mid-Semester Break		
Feb. 25	Kink and BDSM	
Feb. 27	MIDTERM EXAM	
Mar. 4	Book Club Presentations	Presentations 1-5
Mar. 6	Health and Sexuality	
Mar. 11	Book Club Presentations	Presentations 6-10
Mar. 13	HIV Risk and HIV Prevention	
Mar. 18	Book Club Presentations	Presentations 11-15
Mar. 20	Sexuality across the Lifespan	Critical Paper due in class
Mar. 25	Book Club Presentations	Presentations 16-20
Mar. 27	Sexuality across the Lifespan	
Apr. 1	Book Club Presentations	Presentations 21-25
Apr. 3	TBA	

Academic Misconduct

I will not tolerate academic dishonesty. Please see the Academic Misconduct section of the Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures in the 2009-2010 University of Guelph Undergraduate Calendar at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

I will follow disciplinary guidelines set forth by the university should any violations occur.

Missed Requirements

When you find yourself unable to meet in-course requirements due to illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing with your name, address and email contact. Where possible, this should be done in advance of the missed work or test, but otherwise, just as soon as possible after the due date, and certainly no longer than one week later. Note: Appropriate documentation of your inability to meet that in-course requirement is necessary. The course instructor will request it of you.

Students with Special Needs

If you are a student with special needs (e.g. vision impairment, hearing impairment, dyslexia etc.), please discuss them with me during the first week in the semester to ensure that reasonable accommodations can be made. It is your responsibility to make me aware of these needs, and to take any steps that may be required on your part in order to achieve a reasonable accommodation. The Centre for Students with Disabilities (<http://www.sics.uoguelph.ca/csd/>) is an excellent resource.