

Sociology 2800 – Human Sexuality
Winter 2009
Grande Prairie Regional College – Hinton Campus

Instructor: Nancy Robbins

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Class Times: Wednesday at 11:30 to 2:20

Required Texts: Sex Matters for College Students: Sex FAQs in Human Sexuality. Sandra L. Caron. Second Edition. Prentice Hall: 2007

Human Sexuality in a World of Diversity Spencer A. Rathus, Jeffrey S. Nevid, Lois Fichner-Rathus, Edward S. Herold. Pearson Education Canada: 2007.

Course Description: An inquiry into the ideas and behaviour surrounding human sexuality and its implications for individuals, culture and society.

Ground Rules....

Since this course is a study of sexuality, there will be times when we will be discussing, viewing and exploring explicit, sensitive and controversial material. The intention is not to make anyone uncomfortable; rather it is to challenge your ways of thinking about and viewing sexuality. With that in mind, it is important that everyone treat all topics with respect, maturity and dignity. At times, material may be embarrassing and difficult to discuss. No one will be pressured to discuss anything in class that you are not comfortable with discussing. However, it must be recognized that discussion should be thought provoking and is meant to challenge your way of viewing the world. You are encouraged to disagree with me and other students but do so in an intelligent and respectful manner. Come to class prepared to discuss the day's topic and feel free to come see me at anytime about anything that we have discussed or will discuss in class. All conversations between student and instructor are strictly confidential. Since discussions of this nature are, at times, very frank and honest it is expected that all conversations and discussions remain within the classroom setting and that the confidentiality of other students' work and opinions will be respected.

Student Evaluation:

Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Interview and Personal Reflection	15%
Sex Education Assignment and Presentation	25%
Popular Culture Critique	15%
Weekly Reflection / Class Participation	10%

Midterm and Final Exams (Value 15% and 20% respectively): Exams are comprised of two parts. Part one will be multiple choice objectives on Blackboard; part two will be a series of questions requiring written answers.

Exams will take place during class time. Exams are required to be written on the day that they are scheduled – no exceptions.

The final exam is not comprehensive; the midterm is on the first half of the course and the final is on the second half.

Mid Term Exam: February 11, 2009

Final Exam: April 15, 2009 (subject to change)

Interview and Personal Reflection (Value 15%): Students are to interview an individual with a demographic profile that is different from themselves using a set of questions designed to examine attitudes towards homosexuality. Students are also required to formulate their own answers to these questions and then explore a comparison between the student and the interviewed individual.

1. In what ways has the issue of homosexuality or sexual orientation touched your life? (e.g. friends, family members, co-workers, self, experiences, etc.)
2. How did you first learn about homosexuality? What messages did you receive about it?
3. If you were to place yourself on a continuum from a 0 (completely non-accepting of gay and lesbian relationships) to 10 (completely accepting of gay and lesbian relationships) where would you place yourself? Why?
4. How have your feelings and opinions changed over time? What has influenced you most?

(Questions are adapted from Handout 1 in *Of Love and Justice: The United Church of Canada*, 2003).

Students are expected to abide by ethical and moral obligations when completing this assignment. Confidentiality of the interview subject and the subsequent discussion will be maintained. Likewise, student confidentiality will be respected.

Due: March 4, 2009

Sex Education Assignment and Presentation (Value 25%): Students are expected to design an educational session on an issue relating to sexuality for high school students. Students will explore the relationship between sexuality, individual decision making and health outcomes on an issue of their choice. Using a harm reduction approach, students will provide information on their topic that will guide their target audience on responsible decision making. Students will present their educational session to their colleagues and instructor on one of the dates listed below.

Students must submit a written copy of their presentation to the instructor on the day of their presentation.

Topics and presentation dates are on a first come-first served basis. No two students are permitted to do the same topic. Students who do not sign up for their presentation date will have one assigned to them by the deadline. There are a limited number of presentations per day.

Students are responsible for their own audio-visual, handouts, photocopies, faxes, etc.

Creativity in both the topic and presentation are encouraged!

Approval of topic: January 28, 2009

Deadline for sign-up for presentation dates: January 28, 2009

Presentation dates: March 4, 2009; March 11, 2009; March 18, 2009; March 25, 2009

Popular Culture Critique (Value 15%): Sexuality is everywhere around us and nowhere more than in popular culture. For this assignment, choose an example of popular culture (i.e. movie, television show, song, music video, etc.) and describe how sexuality is expressed.

Your critique is recommended as follows:

Part 1: A description of your popular culture. This should be about one page

Part 2: How your popular culture example illustrates the ideas discussed in class. Your paper should focus on at least three examples. This should be about three to five pages.

Part 3: The final part of your essay should answer the following question: What messages does your popular culture example give about sexuality? This should be about one page.

The objective of this assignment is to show that you can apply what you have learned in this course. Therefore, you should clearly specify what topics you will be addressing, how their popular culture example addresses them and how you feel about both the issues explored and your popular culture example.

Due: April 8, 2009

Weekly Reflection / Class Participation (Value 10%): Each week, students are expected to write a minimum of one page on a topic that will be discussed in the upcoming class. This gives students an opportunity to organize their thoughts and to critically examine an issue in advance. Each weekly reflection exercise is to be submitted to the instructor at the start of class.

Class participation is expected in this course. The mark for the weekly reflection / class participation exercise is at the discretion of the instructor but is based upon class attendance, timely submission of weekly reflection writings and class participation.

Due: Weekly starting January 14, 2009

A few notes...

Due dates: Due dates are assigned for a reason. Note that extensions are RARELY given! However, if needed, please see me in advance to discuss why you cannot meet a deadline.

Submission of papers: Assignments and papers are to be typed, spell checked, stapled and neatly presented without any kind of plastic implements attached. They can be submitted to the instructor at the start of class or by fax to the YREC office in Hinton. Students are also required to email a copy of their paper to the instructor to nancypat@telus.net.

Please do not use the drop box under Blackboard as I will not receive it!

I will email you to let you know that I have received your assignment. If you don't hear from me, then I haven't received your paper – it is YOUR responsibility to follow up! If you are late submitting your paper, I will not make a special trip into Hinton to the YREC office to receive it!

Questions regarding assignments: I am always available for questions by email or in person. Please be sure to consult with me prior to the due date.

Sources / Documentation / Plagiarism: Footnotes or endnotes are required for all written work. The MLA format is preferred; however, if you are more familiar with another method, please feel free to use it as long as it is consistent and correct.

Bibliographies are also required where applicable and must be done correctly. Please consult a reference book for assistance or ask me.

Taking something from the Internet? Be sure that your source is reliable and credible and not related to any hate group or illegal activity.

Written work is checked for plagiarism. Unsure what plagiarism is? Consult regulations set out by GPRC at the webpage below if you have any doubts. What happens if you are caught plagiarising? You fail the course – no debate.

<http://www.gprc.ab.ca/downloads/documents/Student%20Misconduct%20Plagiarism%20and%20Cheating.pdf>

Class Participation and Attendance: Attendance is mandatory for this course. Please let me know in advance if you are unable to attend classes.

Behaviour in class: Students are required to be awake, without their cell phone ringing and paying attention in class. Please do not text or receive text messages in class. Please come to class prepared for the day's discussion and topic. Respect for your fellow students is a given. While you may disagree with your colleagues' opinions on specific issues, please show respect for and dignity toward each other.

Abuse of any kind will not be tolerated.

Blackboard: If you are unfamiliar with Blackboard or are lacking in confidence on what to do, please let me know ASAP and I will give you a brief tutorial to help you out. If you don't ask for help, I can't give it!

Information on Grades: Students will receive a percentage mark on all written work and exams in this course. You will also be given by either email or in person a breakdown of your marks on your written work.

At the end of term, your final percentage mark will be translated into a letter grade according to regulations stipulated by GPRC.

Grades will be made available to the student by email or in person in a timely fashion (usually next class). Marks are posted on Blackboard as soon as they are recorded so they may be available in less than a week. Please consult Blackboard before emailing me. If your mark is not on Blackboard, your work most likely has not yet been marked.

I am happy to discuss any grades at any point during the course and at the end of the course in person or by email. Grades are confidential and will only be discussed with the student.

Grades are not changed and are considered final. I am, however, willing to discuss any concerns that you have regarding grading as long as it is respectful and dignified. There are no re-writes or re-submissions of any work because of poor grades.

Alpha Grade	Percentage Range	Descriptor
A+	90-100	Excellent
A	85-89	
A-	80-84	Very Good
B+	76-79	
B	73-75	Good
B-	70-72	
C+	67-69	Satisfactory
C	64-66	
C-	60-63	
D+	55-59	Poor
D	50-54	Minimal Pass
F	0-49	Failure

Course Outline

***subject to change*

- January 7 **Introduction to the study of Human Sexuality**
- January 14 **Theory and Methodology**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapters 1 and 2;
 - Weekly Reflection
- January 21 **Biology and Physiology**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapters 3 and 4; Sex Matters – Chapter 1
 - Weekly Reflection
- January 28 **Gender and its relationship to Sex**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapter 5
 - Sex Education topic and presentation sign-up deadline
 - Weekly Reflection
- February 4 **Love, Attraction, Relationships and Intimacy**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapters 6 and 7; Sex Matters – Chapters 2, 3, 5
 - Weekly Reflection
- February 11 **Mid term Exam**
- February 18 **Reading week – no classes**
- February 25 **Sexual Behaviour / Heterosexuality and Homosexuality / Sex Education**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapters 8, 9 and Epilogue; Sex Matters – Chapters 4, 6, 9 and Conclusion
 - Weekly Reflection
- March 4 **Conception, Pregnancy and Childbirth**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapter 10
 - Interview and Personal Reflection
 - Sex Education Presentations
 - Weekly Reflection

- March 11 **Contraception and Abortion**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapter 11; Sex Matters – Chapter 7
 - Sex Education Presentations
 - Weekly Reflection
- March 18 **Sexuality throughout the Life Cycle**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapter 12
 - Sex Education Presentations
 - Weekly Reflection
- March 25 **Sexually Transmitted Infections / AIDS**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapter 14; Sex Matters – Chapter 8
 - Sex Education Presentations
 - Weekly Reflection
- April 1 **Sexual Dysfunctions / Atypical Sexual Variations**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapters 13 and 15
 - Weekly Reflection
- April 8 **Sexual Violence and Coercion / Commercial Sex**
- Readings: Human Sexuality – Chapters 16 and 17; Sex Matters – Chapter 10
 - Popular Culture Critique
 - Weekly Reflection
- April 15 **Final Exam – time and location TBA (note: date is subject to change)**