

## SOC 251 Syllabus – Fall 2011

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>SOC 251 Human Sexuality</b>
<b>Semester</b>	Fall 2011
<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	Tuesday/Thursday 2:35 to 3:40
<b>Location</b>	PPH 233
<b>Instructor</b>	Melanie J. Davis, EdD
<b>Office Hours</b>	T-TH Thursday afternoon by appointment
<b>Office Location</b>	Rm. 310, Sociology Department, PPH Academic Complex
<b>Phone</b>	908-722-1632 (off campus)
<b>E-mail</b>	Melanie@honestexchange.com (preferred)

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The physical, psychological, relational, and cultural aspects of sexuality influence us from before birth through death. This course will employ interactive class work, lecture, and readings to increase your understanding of lifespan human sexuality; to engage you in critical thinking about sexual messages and issues; to help you identify and critique your sexual values and attitudes; and to enable them to make informed relational and sexual decisions. Due to the nature of the subject matter, classroom discussion and educational materials may incorporate language and images that will challenge your comfort and attitudes.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will

- Gain a broader and deeper understanding of human sexuality from a biopsychosocial perspective
- Critically reflect upon your sexual values, experiences, attitudes and beliefs
- Understand diverse sexual attitudes and behaviors
- Increase your knowledge about sexual health and behaviors

**Disclaimer** - This syllabus is subject to change throughout the semester; you will be notified of any changes.

### TEXT & SUPPLIES

- *Sexuality Now: Embracing Diversity* (3rd) by Janell Carroll. Available from the campus bookstore and Amazon.com.
- 3x5 white index cards, lined or unlined
- 2-pocket opaque folder with your name at the top of the front cover

### EVALUATION

Your grade for this course is based upon the level of scholarship, self-assessment and reflection as demonstrated in completed assignments, coupled with your active participation in class. Class participation includes active engagement with the course material during class, taking part in discussions with peers and the instructor, asking and responding to questions/comments, and helping to maintain a classroom environment that is safe, positive and constructive.

Attendance	10%
Discovering Optimal Sexuality Paper	15%
Journal	10%
Midterm exam	10%
Blackboard Archives Review	10%
Personal Experience Paper	35%
Final exam	10%

### *Extra credit:*

Extra credit is a reward for superior, above-and-beyond work (an A+, if you will). It will be awarded at my discretion. No extra work will be assigned or accepted to help you make up for low grades on assignments. Extra credit will reflect your depth of understanding and/or personal reflection as well as the quality of your

writing and the effort expended to complete the assignment.

Points earned for assignments and attendance will be scaled to 100 before being factored into your final grade. You have one week to discuss graded assignments and exams with me; thereafter, the results will stand. I will apply quantitative and qualitative standards in determining grades.

### Grading Scale

A = 100 – 94

B+ = 89 – 88

C+ = 79 – 78

D = 60 – 69

A- = 93 – 90

B = 87 – 83

C = 77 – 73

F = 59 – 0

B- = 82 – 80

C- = 72 – 70

**If you have earned an A on all assignments and the midterm, you will be exempt from taking the final.** Your course grade will be calculated to reflect an assumed A on the final and will reflect your superior efforts during the semester.

### POLICIES

#### Academic Honesty

It is your responsibility to follow the college's standards of academic honesty as published on page 8 of your Student Handbook. Plagiarism and cheating are grounds for course failure.

#### Accommodations

If you wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability, contact Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Office of Learning Services.

#### Attendance

You are allowed 1 unexcused absence. Otherwise, you must provide an authenticated excuse letter (e.g., a physician's note) for each absence. I reserve the right to lower your grade one half letter grade for each unexcused absence beyond the first. Chronic lateness and early departures will factor into your attendance grade.

- You are responsible for knowing the material presented on the days you are absent, so identify one or two peers you trust to pass along the material.
- If you miss an exam, you may take a different and potentially more difficult exam within 48 hours of the original exam date.
- You are responsible for submitting all assignments on time. Exceptions may be made in the case of excused absence.

#### Courtesy

The use of personal electronics (phones, iPods, Blackberries, etc.) is prohibited during class. Laptops are discouraged because they can distract you and others around you.

### ASSIGNMENTS

Due dates and readings are listed in the Course Assignment Calendar, which will be distributed the first week of class. You are expected to complete the each day's readings/assignments prior to class.

Format for all assignments: White paper, typed double spaced in 12-point Times Roman font. 1" margins on all sides. **Conserve paper: Print on both sides of the paper.** Edit and proofread, as sloppiness will affect your grade.

Submit all assignments on the due date in your personal folder. If you will be absent, you may email me your work by the start of the class period. Late assignments, even if emailed later on the day they are due, will lose two (2) points per day, including weekends. Please note that romantic difficulties, broken printers, busy Computer Lab printers, and demanding work schedules do not count as extenuating circumstances. **I WILL NOT PRINT PAPERS FOR YOU; FIND A PRINTER THAT WORKS.**

#### *Assignment #1: JOURNAL*

The journal consists of 8 one-page journal entries, typed and double-spaced. Answer the assigned question (1 pt) *and* react to one of the week's reading assignments (1 pt). You are not required to reveal details about your personal sexual behaviors or interests. The assigned topics will help you examine your beliefs, assumptions, and values. If you feel you cannot respond to an assigned topic, contact me for an alternate topic.

Your journal grade will be based on submission of all required entries in the correct length and format. Your entries must demonstrate personal reflection on your part, i.e., do not restate the main points of the reading or class discussion; rather, state your thoughts about or analysis of them.

***Assignment #2: DISCOVERING OPTIMAL SEXUALITY***

Read the article, "Building Blocks toward Optimal Sexuality," which is posted on Blackboard. Review the rubric posted in Blackboard and answer the assigned questions in 3 to 5 pages.

***Assignment #3: BLACKBOARD ARCHIVES REVIEW***

Visit the resources posted in the Course Documents section of Blackboard. Select two resources from different areas of the archive (e.g., 1 from Sexualization and 1 from Relationships) and write a 2-page essay describing each resource individually and how they might relate to each other. Look for common themes, impact on people, messages about sexuality, etc.

***Assignment #4: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE ESSAY***

Experience something related to sexuality for the first time, and write a 5-8 page paper about your experience. Describe the experience, explain why you chose it, and address whether it differed from or met your expectations, how it related to your values, how it challenged your thinking, etc. The experience you choose should be challenging or eye-opening to you in some way. However, you are not required to participate in sexual activities or to do anything that would compromise your values or morals.

You may attend a meeting of the campus' Spectrum group or be tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). You may choose to explore art, media, or literature, or you may discuss a course-related topic with a loved one. Your grade will depend in part on your willingness to think deeply about how your sexual values and morals affected your choice of and participation in your experience. Respect the potential for personal growth with this assignment. Do not pick an experience because it is easy; pick one that will teach you something about yourself.

After submitting your topic, you will have 4 weeks to conduct preliminary research and change your topic, if you wish, but you must submit your new topic to me in writing. You may change your topic once. Do not submit a paper with a note saying, "I was unable to find information on...so I decided to write about..." PLAN AHEAD. I will only accept papers on the topic you designated earlier in the semester, unless there are extenuating circumstances you discuss with me well in advance of the due date. If you have concerns about this assignment, contact me immediately.

***MIDTERM EXAMINATION***

The mid-term exam may be based on assigned readings in the textbook, assigned websites in the syllabus, and classroom learning.

***FINAL EXAMINATION***

The final exam may be based on assigned readings in the textbook, assigned websites in the syllabus, and classroom learning. The exam will be posted on Blackboard, and you will complete the exam independently before emailing it back to me on the scheduled final exam date. The professor reserves the right to give students with an A or A- prior to the final the option to be exempt from the final.