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Human Sexuality

SOC/PSYCH 160

Elementary Social Science Credit
4 Credits (see Format & Instructors, p. 5)

Fall 2024

Lectures: MWF 11:00 – 11:50 with Dr. Cabell Gathman
("Cabell" rhymes with "Scrabble"; she/her)

Noland 132

OR

Backup Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/SOC160F24>

Passcode: 971668

Class is typically taught in-person as scheduled, but in some circumstances may be moved online (watch Canvas Announcements and your UW email for notifications).

Please do not attend class if you are ill. We want you to prioritize your own health and well-being as well as that of other members of the community and their own close contacts.

Discussion sections as scheduled:

Section 301	M 3:30 – 4:20	148 Van Hise	Lasya
Section 302	M 4:35 – 5:25	148 Van Hise	Lasya
Section 303	T 9:55 – 10:45	6232 Social Science	Lasya
Section 304	T 11:00 – 11:50	6232 Social Science	Paul
Section 305	T 1:20 – 2:10	B337 Van Vleck	Lasya
Section 308	W 8:50 – 9:40	2333 Sterling	Paul

Campus map with markers for all-gender & ADA-accessible bathrooms:

<https://map.wisc.edu/>

Electronic materials and links available at: <http://canvas.wisc.edu/>

Course Description

In this course, students will be introduced to the diversity of sex and sexuality, with a focus on the contemporary United States. We will study sexuality through a social scientific lens as a multi-faceted social construct that has a range of material and psychological effects on the everyday lived experiences of individuals and groups. Course topics include, but are not limited to, the development of sexuality as a concept and focus of "scientific study," people's embodied, mental, and social experiences of sex, and social, cultural, and legal norms regarding sexual expression and interaction.

Course Objectives

1. Discuss how society influences and develops people's sexuality and sexual identities and how people contribute and react to changing social notions of sex and sexuality.
2. Consider how sex and sexuality are interconnected with master status categories in society, including but not limited to gender, race, age, ability, body size, and socioeconomic status.
3. Analyze how and why sexuality is socially and culturally charged and taboo in some spaces, and how this results in extensive social regulation.
4. Understand sexual health research and everyday sexual well-being, including information about anatomy, contraception, abortion, sexually transmitted infections, and sexual function.
5. Draw on work in sociology and social psychology to consider how sexuality is shaped by social and cultural context, and may provide insight into the structure of society as a whole.

Contact information: Dr. Cabell Gathman ("Cabell" rhymes with "Scrabble")

Office: 3328 Sterling Hall OR
Zoom Personal Meeting Room: <https://uwmadison.zoom.us/my/cabell>
(Zoom via appointment only)

Drop-in hours: M 12pm noon – 1pm; F 1-2pm; by appointment

Email: chgathman@wisc.edu

Please do NOT contact me via Canvas messages. Although Canvas does forward messages to email, the system usually diverts them from Outlook's "Focused Inbox," so it's likely that if you message me through Canvas, I won't see it.

Contact information: Lasya Jarugumilli

Office: 4315 Sewell Social Sciences

Drop-in hours: W 12 – 1pm; by appointment

Email: ljarugumilli@wisc.edu

Contact information: Paul McGovern

Office: TBA (See Canvas Announcements)

Drop-in hours: R 3 – 4pm; by appointment

Email: mcgovern5@wisc.edu

Communication with your teaching team

We welcome student email, but we ask that you follow these basic guidelines:

Please email:

- Requests for minor clarifications regarding course materials and assignments
- Requests to meet outside of normally scheduled drop-in office hours (we may or may not be able to accommodate these)
- More complicated questions, with the understanding that we may need to address them in class or with a one-on-one meeting—giving us lead time allows us to provide you with the best, most complete answer

Please do NOT email:

- Questions answered on the syllabus
- Questions answered in emails sent to class lists

We will do our best to answer email in a timely fashion, which means **within 48 weekday hours**. Response times over the weekend may be longer. Please do NOT send follow-up emails less than 48 hours after your initial email; this does not make us respond faster, but it does make it more difficult for us to prioritize student communications effectively.

You should watch Canvas announcements as they are our primary method of conveying information outside of class (note that you can change your individual Canvas settings to receive email notifications of announcements on the course site or not, as you choose). We may occasionally send time-sensitive information out via email distribution lists, so you should also be sure to check your WiscMail at least daily.

Format and Instructors

This course includes three lectures per week (MWF 11:00 – 11:50), and one discussion section as shown on your course schedule. **NOTE: Our lecture “weeks” in this class begin on Wednesday and end on Monday—discussion sections meet Monday through Wednesday and cover lecture since the previous Wednesday and associated readings.** For example, Week 2 begins with lecture on Wednesday, September 13th, and ends with Section 308 on Wednesday, September 20th; Week 3 then begins with lecture on Wednesday, September 20th. Lectures are in-person, but there is a backup Zoom for occasional virtual sessions as announced via Canvas/email. Similarly, although sections will generally meet in-person, in rare circumstances your TA may need to hold class virtually and will provide details if so.

There is no attendance taken in lecture, but there are regular assignments that require attendance to complete. Lecture Reflections cannot be made up, but you will have multiple opportunities to complete them for credit. There is a weekly Discussion Participation assignment that you will complete in section, but there are three (3) free drops in the category for absences for any reason. There is also a make-up assignment available if you are unable to attend and cannot (or don't want to) use one of your three (3) drops (see Discussion Participation section below).

In addition to 200 minutes of synchronous instructional time per week, you should expect to spend **8-9 hours per week outside of class**, primarily reading and taking notes on assigned materials in order to complete graded assignments and prepare to participate fully in discussion section. The course readings are a mix of popular and more academic styles, but if reading longer pieces tends to be a challenge for you, you may need to be more conscientious about blocking out time outside of class to meet these expectations. If you are making a strong effort but find that you are still not satisfied with the grades you're earning, the instructor and TAs are always happy to discuss strategies for reading, quiz-taking, and exam-writing in drop-in office hours!

Lecture is delivered by the course instructor and will reference general concepts and main ideas from the assigned readings, but the main focus is on additional new information and concepts. Throughout the semester there may also be guest lectures by scholars and activists doing related work.

Discussion section is led by a graduate teaching assistant (TA) and provides an opportunity for students to raise questions about lectures and assigned readings and make connections between those materials and other classes, popular culture/current events, and personal experiences. The TA is there primarily as a subject expert and discussion moderator.

While your TA will make an effort to review course content that we suspect from experience may be particularly difficult, it is your responsibility to raise points of uncertainty or interest and actively participate in setting the agenda for individual discussion section meetings.

Students consistently report that hearing their classmates' perspectives and ideas is one of their favorite parts of the course.

Policy on Children in Class

Caregivers deserve access to education. Many people are adversely affected by both scheduled and unscheduled school closings and other gaps in childcare, and virtual participation is not always available or possible. (Please note that if local K-12 schools are canceled for weather, it is highly likely that we will move lecture online—keep an eye on Canvas Announcements!) **Children who are reasonably believed to be non-contagious are welcome in our classroom spaces.**

You may wish to provide them with a device (and headphones) to keep them entertained, but they are also welcome to listen and participate in class to the extent of their ability. If you anticipate that a child might become disruptive, please just try to sit near an exit so that you can step out with them if necessary.

Accessibility

The policy of the Board of Regents of the UW System is to ensure that no qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied access to, participation in, or the benefits of, any program or activity operated in the UW System. Each qualified person shall receive reasonable accommodations needed to ensure access to educational opportunities, programs and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate.

If you have official accommodations through the McBurney Center, please contact your TA ASAP to discuss how they will be implemented in this course.

If you do not have official accommodations, but there are conditions or life circumstances that interfere with your ability to fulfill your responsibilities for this course, we still encourage you to meet with your TA ASAP to discuss how best to accommodate you. In some cases, we may recommend that you consult with the McBurney Disability Resource Center (263-2742), but we recognize that official channels are not equally accessible to all students, and we want to support you in doing your best work for this course.

“Disability” is a broad category that includes physical, cognitive, and psychological issues, including chronic or mental illness. **Disabled people have the right to an education.**

Course Intro Survey

To get to know you better as people, we ask that you fill out an introduction survey via Canvas **no later than 11:59pm on Friday, September 20th**. We have chosen to put this form online in order to allow you more privacy and flexibility in filling it out. It is also a bit longer than similar forms used in hard copy since you will be able to type responses and you will receive course credit for completion. You should have received section-specific link via email prior to our first class meeting. **Note:** If have trouble with the link, you may need to sign out of your personal Google account, as UW uses Google Apps to record your UW username.

You may decline to answer any questions that you like, but should go through the entire form and submit it to receive pass/fail credit. Your responses will be visible **ONLY** to your instructor and your assigned TA. The completed survey counts for **2% of your final grade**.

Lecture Reflections

There are 15 weeks in the fall semester, most of which (excepting Weeks 13 & 15) include three course lectures. We have divided the semester into six “blocks”: Block 1 (Weeks 1-3), Block 2 (Weeks 4 & 5), Block 3 (Weeks 6 & 7), Block 4 (Weeks 8 & 9), Block 5 (Weeks 10-12), and Block 6 (Weeks 13-15). For each block, you should submit a reflection for ONE (1) lecture. Additional submissions will NOT receive additional credit. Lecture reflections for a particular week are due as a text submission via Canvas no later than 11:59pm on Monday (the last day of each lecture “week”). To receive credit, a lecture reflection should be **at least 250 words** demonstrating engagement with lecture content from **a single date**, for example by:

- Describing your reaction to specific ideas, data, or materials
- Posing questions about the content of lecture or media used in class
- Relating class content (classmates’ comments, lecture, media) to personal experience, current events, or media
- Raising questions or comments that you want addressed in class but may not want directly attached to you

You are never required to share personal information in your reflections, but you are welcome to do so if you like. Reflections are reviewed and graded pass/fail by the course instructor, Dr. Cabell Gathman. Reflections that do not clearly engage with the lecture material as given will not receive credit; **note that often there will be a specific question posed in class that you will need to answer within your reflection for a particular date.**

Due to the large size of the class, Lecture Reflections cannot be accepted past the deadline without prior arrangement. If you anticipate issues with attendance, I encourage you to complete a reflection ASAP in each new block. Each Reflection is worth 2.5 percentage points on your final grade, for a total of **15% of your final grade for the category**.

Weekly Quizzes

To help ensure that students stay caught up on course materials, we will have weekly quizzes in Canvas for Weeks 1-15. These quizzes are open notes/materials and will be available for 24 hours from 1pm on Wednesday through 1pm on Thursday.

If this window won't work for you this semester due to an ongoing commitment (caretaking, employment, religious observance, etc.), please contact the course instructor no later than Week 3 to set up an alternate window for the semester. If you will miss a single quiz for a religious observance (for example, Rosh Hashanah in Week 4), please email the course instructor to have it excused so that it does not count against your drops.

You can take the quiz at any time during this window and refer to any and all personal notes and course materials, including posted lecture slides, but you should not consult with any other person or external source (online searches, etc.) in the process. There is no time limit on the quiz, but it will automatically submit if it is still open when the availability window closes at 1pm on Thursday. You only get **one attempt**, so if your internet or device crashes, you will not be able to reopen/restart that week's quiz.

Quiz scores are published in the gradebook after the course instructor has had time to review them, so usually Friday morning. Your answers will not be visible to you in your student account (except for the Week 1 Practice Quiz), but if you have questions about your performance, you can go over the quiz with the instructor or your TA in office hours, where we will show you your answers and discuss the specifics of what you missed.

You **MUST** take the Week 1 Practice Quiz, which covers this syllabus as well as lectures and two short assigned readings. Unlike subsequent quizzes, the Week 1 Practice Quiz allows unlimited attempts and will show your answers, so you can retake it as many times as necessary to earn 100% within the 24-hour window it is available. The Week 1 Practice Quiz is worth **three (3) percentage points on your final grade**.

In Weeks 2-15, your four (4) lowest quiz scores, including zeroes, will be dropped. There is no quiz for Week 12 due to the holiday break. Your remaining nine (9) quizzes will each be worth four (4) percentage points on your final grade, for a total of **36% of your final grade for the category**.

There are a large number of dropped scores in the quiz category to account for unavoidable absences, technical failures, etc. **Please do not ask members of the teaching team for makeups or extensions on missed quizzes.**

Discussion participation

This is a general explanation of discussion participation as a component of your course grade. You, your classmates, and your TA will cover expectations further in discussion section.

Discussion sections for this course are scheduled face-to-face as required by the university. However, it may be necessary during the semester to move some or all sections online, temporarily or long-term. We have scheduled back-up recurring Zoom meetings as a contingency plan; if a section must be moved online for any reason, you will be informed via Canvas Announcements, so please be sure that you have notifications set up for these!

Students often feel that discussion section is too short—we only get 50 minutes a week and there's a lot to cover! To recognize that these sections are starting points for conversations and the exploration of ideas, you will fill out a brief log at the end of each section identifying ideas that you want to pursue further, both your own and those raised by classmates. **This log is available as an assignment in Canvas that opens at the beginning of your scheduled section for the week and is due 15 minutes after it ends.**

Your log will be graded pass/fail on the thoughtful completion. (You must be present in class to submit—see below for make-up procedures.)

We have 13 section meetings scheduled for the semester. THREE (3) low scores (including zeroes for absence) will be dropped. For the remaining 10 weeks of discussion section, each week's participation grade is worth **two (2) percentage points on your final grade, for a total of 20% of your final grade for the category**. For absences beyond the three drops, see the Discussion Participation Makeup Assignment instructions in Canvas for a full description of the make-up assignment. There is no limit on the number of these makeups that you can complete, but they are graded strictly and since one of the main benefits of discussion section is interacting with your classmates, **the maximum possible score on a makeup is 9/10 points**. (If you anticipate that you might have to miss more than three sections, we encourage you to complete makeups whenever possible, so that if you later are unable to do so, you will still have drops to use.)

Note: If you will be missing discussion on any date for a religious observance, please let your TA know and your absence will be EXCUSED, which means that it does not count against your three (3) drops. If Christian students get Easter and Christmas off automatically, other religious groups should be afforded the same privilege.

Take-Home Exams

There will be three (3) take-home exams for this course. For each exam, you will receive a list of short answer questions one week ahead of the due date. You will be able to select a subset of questions that you feel best equipped to answer. These exams will be open materials; you can refer to all course readings, posted slides, video content, etc. as you write your answers, but you should not consult outside sources such as web searches or other people, and you should write your answers alone. **This also means that you cannot use ChatGPT or other LLM tools at any point in the process**, but since our exams will require you to directly and specifically engage with course materials, this is really to your advantage anyway.

You will submit your completed exam as a file upload to Canvas. Each exam will be graded out of 50 points. **Your lowest exam score, including a zero for non-submission, will be automatically dropped.** This does mean that you can choose to skip an exam, but we strongly encourage you NOT to skip Exam #1 since that will leave you without a buffer for the rest of the semester!

Your remaining two (2) exam scores will each be worth 12% of your final grade, for a total of 24% of your final grade for the category.

Exam #1 will cover class materials from Weeks 1-5. You will receive the list of questions on Wednesday, October 9th, and the exam will be due via Canvas no later than 11:59pm on Wednesday, October 16th.

Exam #2 will cover class materials from Weeks 6-10. You will receive the list of questions on Wednesday, November 13th, and the exam will be due via Canvas no later than 11:59pm on Wednesday, November 20th.

Exam #3 will cover class materials from Weeks 11-14. You will receive the list of questions on Wednesday, December 11th, and the exam will be due via Canvas no later than 11:59pm on Wednesday, December 18th.

Course Grading Scheme

Course intro survey	2%
Week 1 Practice Quiz	3%
Lecture Reflections	15%
Discussion participation	20%
Weekly Quizzes	36%
Take-Home Exams	24%
TOTAL	100%

IMPORTANT note on grades: Grades in this course are not negotiable, but we are happy to discuss course content and strategies for improvement in the future. We do require a 24-hour waiting period between receipt of a grade and discussion thereof so that you can fully read and consider all related feedback. If you have questions about graded work, please set up a time to meet and discuss them with your TA.

Grading Scale

A	92.5+
AB	87.5 – 92.49
B	82.5 – 87.49
BC	77.5 – 82.49
C	69.5 – 77.49
D	57.5 – 69.49
F	<57.5

Statement on academic dishonesty

TL;DR: Life is short; this course has been designed to be extremely hard to fail; please don't cheat. Seriously: You could get a 50% on every graded assignment in this class, and as long as you did all the pass/fail assignments, you would still earn a C!

Quizzes are designed to keep students on top of material and prepared to discuss course concepts in-depth in discussion section, improving the educational experience for everyone. Take-home exams are designed to allow you to express your understanding of course materials in response to questions that are specific to our class lectures and assigned materials. Lecture reflections are graded pass/fail and are designed to allow you to ask questions and talk through your own ideas; if you don't want to express and further develop your own understanding of the world, why bother taking a social science class in the first place?

If you are unsure how to paraphrase or cite appropriately when using sources in your writing, we encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Center on campus or to meet with your TA. We will work with students to help them attribute information and ideas appropriately and highlight their own ideas. Cases of intentional plagiarism, including use of LLM tools like ChatGPT, will be assigned a zero for the assignment and reported to the Dean of Students to prevent a continuing pattern of behavior.

For the university's policy on academic dishonesty and misconduct, see:

<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/misconduct/academic-integrity/>

Please note: A score of “0” received for academic dishonesty CANNOT BE DROPPED OR REPLACED, regardless of the normal mechanisms for the grade category.

Semester Schedule

All readings are available for PDF download or as links in Canvas. There are no required books for this course.

It's to your advantage to complete all readings before class on the listed date in Canvas, in order to get the most out of lecture.

Since all discussion sections meet Monday (after lecture) through Wednesday (before lecture), we will start new topics in lecture on Wednesday & expand on those areas through Friday & Monday of the following week. So for example, the Week 2 Quiz (available 9/18 – 9/19) will cover Week 2 assigned readings, lecture content from 9/11 – 9/16, & discussion content from 9/15 – 9/18).

Week 1 (9/4 – 9/11):	Introduction
Week 2 (9/11 – 9/18):	Concepts of Sex & Sexuality
Week 3 (9/18 – 9/25):	Sexual socialization
Week 4 (9/25 – 10/2):	Sex Education
Week 5 (10/2 – 10/9):	Attraction, Arousal, & Pleasure
Week 6 (10/9 – 10/16):	Sex & the Stigmatized Body

Week 7 (10/16 – 10/23): Erotica, Pornography, Obscenity?

Week 8 (10/23 – 10/30): (Non-)Reproductive Sex

Week 9 (10/30 – 11/6): Managing Sexual & Reproductive Health

Week 10 (11/6 – 11/13): Intimacy & Relationships

Week 11 (11/13 – 11/20): Sexual & Relationship Violence

Week 12 (11/20 – 11/27): Deviance (derogatory) & Deviants (affectionate)

Section does NOT meet Monday 11/25, Tuesday 11/26, or Wednesday 11/27

Week 13 (11/27 – 12/2): Social Constructs & Kinks

There is no in-person lecture on Wednesday (11/27 – view documentary content in Canvas on your own time) or Friday (11/29 – Thanksgiving break)

Week 14 (12/2 – 12/9): Sex Work

Week 15 (12/9 – 12/11): Course Wrap-Up