Sociology of Sexualities
SOCl 498/898-001
Fall 2016
T/Th 2:00-3:15, Burnett Hall 120

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Office Hours: T/Th 11-12, or by appointment

Description

This course examines the theoretical and empirical approaches that sociologists use to understand sexual identities, sexual differences, sexual practices, and sexual desires. We will examine sex and sexuality as it shows up in media, school, church, family, work, and other social institutions and cultural settings. Central to our inquiry will be questions related to power, social control, and morality. By the end of the term, you should be able to: (1) explain the major debates in the sociology of sexualities; (2) identify advantages, drawbacks, and ethics associated with the methodological approaches to study sexualities; and (3) apply sociological analysis to contemporary political debates and social activism.

Overview of Grades

Class attendance and participation  25%
Discussion posts  25%
Short papers (3)  25%
Long paper  25%

Assigned Readings

Note: The following books are required and are available at the bookstore and other book sellers. Other readings listed on the course schedule are also required: journal articles can be accessed by logging into the library website and searching for the appropriate journal title; other readings (marked PDF) are available electronically through UNL’s new learning management system Canvas. You must bring a copy of readings on the day they are assigned.


**Expectations**

This class contains sexually explicit content. You will likely giggle, blush, and find yourself uncomfortable. This class allows (and requires) us to confront and question discomfort and to critically analyze our assumptions and experiences in order to generate productive sociological discussions. You may take class topics personally, since most of us likely have strong opinions and past experiences related to sex and sexuality that shape who we are. I recognize that not all of these past experiences are positive ones and will do my best to lead a class climate that treats our topics with care and mutual respect. If you are concerned about participating in a particular class discussion, please come talk to me in advance.

All students are expected to come to class prepared: this means you have completed the assigned reading before we meet and you have read in advance the discussion posts on Canvas. You have ideally spent some time thinking, in addition to reading, to prepare for the class: write notes of your thoughts, questions, reflections.

Attendance will be recorded and is essential to doing well in the course. You are expected to arrive on time, and remain for the full class period. If you are absent more than two times or are regularly late, I will lower your final grade.

Late papers may be handed in for up to 24 hours but will incur a penalty of one letter grade. Late discussion posts will not be accepted.

Extra credit is not offered. If you are worried about your grade, talk to me well before the end of the semester.
Email is the best way to get in touch with me. During the week, I will respond to emails within 24 hours. Your UNL email address may be used for correspondence related to this class. Students are expected to read email sent to this account on a regular basis.

You are expected to bring a copy of the reading with you to class on the day it is assigned. If it is an electronic reading, you can either print a copy or bring your laptop or tablet with the file loaded onto it. PLEASE DO NOT USE YOUR SMARTPHONE TO VIEW ELECTRONIC READINGS.

Cell phones are distracting and must be turned to silent mode. If you and your phone disrupt a class session, you may be asked to leave. Other devices like laptops are permitted if they help your performance in class. If you appear to be distracted by using a laptop, I will ask you to put it away.

Student Code of Conduct: The student code of conduct applies to all aspects of the course, including but not limited to assignments. If you are unfamiliar with it, please visit http://stuafs.unl.edu/ja/code/three.shtml, paying close attention to section 4. By attending this class you agree to adhere to the academic honor code.

Americans with Disabilities Act: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY. For further information regarding UNL policies in this regard, please visit http://www.unl.edu/equity/ or call (402) 472-2322.

Gender-Neutral Bathrooms: The closest one to Burnett Hall is Andrews Hall 104, 133, 138. See other gender-neutral bathrooms on campus at involved.unl.edu/unl-gender-neutral-bathrooms.

Lactation Rooms: There is a lactation space in Burnett 76. Additional information about lactation spaces is available at http://www.unl.edu/chancellor/policymemoranda/20090901-Lactation-Policy.

Requirements

Note: All grades for this course (except for attendance and participation) will be recorded in Canvas as they are completed. Feedback on papers will be uploaded to Canvas once they are graded.

Attendance and participation (25%): This course is a discussion-based seminar and you are expected to actively participate in every class. In order to do this well, you must complete the
assigned readings in advance and be ready to talk about them. I will keep track of attendance and whether or not you contribute to class discussion, ask questions, and engage with your peers. You may miss two class periods without penalty, but your final grade will be reduced by 2% for each absence thereafter. For extenuating circumstances, you are expected to communicate with me as soon as is possible. You will receive notice of your standing participation grade along with notes from me when I hand back the first two short papers, when you have completed roughly one-third and two-thirds of the course.

**Discussion posts (25%)**: In Weeks 2-8, 10-13, and 15 you will be responsible for posting one set of discussion questions and one response. Please cut and paste your posting (with word count) into the discussion thread for the appropriate date. Do not upload a word document. If your last name begins with A-Mi, you will post discussion questions for TUESDAY readings (due Mon. 8pm) and a response for THURSDAY’s class discussion (due Fri. 8pm). If your last name begins with Mo-Z, you will post a response for TUESDAY’s class discussion and discussion questions for THURSDAY readings (both due Wed. 8pm). Discussion question posts should be 300-400 words and include 2-4 questions. These questions should prompt lively follow-up discussion and should be based on careful reading of the assigned text. It may be helpful for you to include a brief summary of an author(s)’ point or argument, based on which you formulated your question. Responses should be 300-400 words and respond to one of your classmates’ discussion questions. You should include the original question in your response (this does not count toward the word count of your post) and then draw from assigned text and class discussion to formulate a response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-Mi Due Mon. 8pm</td>
<td>Due Fri. 8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mo-Z Due Wed. 8pm</td>
<td>Due Wed. 8pm</td>
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*You may find it useful to read discussion questions and jot down notes in advance of class and to read responses as you draft short and long papers. You may opt out of 2 weeks of posting without penalty (you must skip both question and response).*

**Short papers (25%)**: You will write three short papers (for each, between 1500 and 2000 words) over the course of the semester that reflect on a series of readings. These are due during weeks 5, 10, and 15 and will focus on readings we have read in between. You should not incorporate additional readings or citations in these papers, rather papers should draw out key themes from the readings and bring authors into dialogue with one another. You may choose to
focus on one key theme, compelling question, or methodological issue. Demonstrate that you understand the readings--find what they have in common and where they diverge. For graduate students, you may choose to address how these readings can applied to your research interests.

Each paper should be drafted in Microsoft word or an equivalent and uploaded to Canvas by 8pm Friday on the week they are due (Sep. 23, Oct. 28, Dec. 2).

**Long paper (25%):** You will write one term paper (3000-4000 words, not including citations and notes) that must be uploaded to Canvas by Wednesday, December 14 8pm. Topics for this paper are flexible: you may choose to format this paper like a short paper and focus on a key theme or question in the literature or make connections to your research interests. You may choose to analyze a contemporary event or phenomenon in popular culture. You may choose to examine the impact of a particular piece or theory on the field of sociology. This paper is NOT a research paper (there should be no methods or findings sections) or a research proposal. The bibliography for the paper must expand beyond the readings for the seminar.

You must get approval of your proposed topic by submitting a short written description electronically (in an email to me) no later than October 14 and meeting with me individually shortly thereafter. You should include an initial bibliography with readings from the course in your description.

At various points in the semester, we will designate time for you to think about / talk about / and workshop your paper. I will consider your participation during these check-in points when I grade your final paper. During Week 16, you will share your paper with the class for discussion and feedback that may help you to make final revisions before the paper is due (your draft should be at least 2500 words). If your last name starts with **A-Mi**, your draft is due Mon. 12/5 by 8am and will be discussed in Tuesday’s class. If your last name starts with **Mo-Z**, your draft is due Wed. 12/7 by 8am and will be discussed in Thursday’s class. You must upload your draft paper as an attachment to the Canvas discussion board. In your post (not the attachment), include a 1-2 sentence summary of your paper along with 3-5 questions you would like to discuss with the class.

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1: Sociological Foundations**
**Tues. 8/23**
Introduction to the course and each other

Thurs. 8/25

**Week 2: Theorizing Sex**

Tues. 8/30
Foucault, Michel. 1978. “Scientia Sexualis” from *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*

Thurs. 9/1

**Week 3: History and Social Movements**


Tues. 9/6

Thurs. 9/8

**Week 4: The Tolerance Trap**

Recommended watch: “Further Off the Straight and Narrow” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9maEDZnYLMU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9maEDZnYLMU)

Tues. 9/13
Walters: Preface, Intro, Parts I and II

Thurs. 9/15
Walters: Parts III and IV
**Week 5: Identities and Communities**

*Recommended watch: “That’s Gay: Lady Kisses” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0ql0mDwV74]*

**Tues. 9/20**


**Thurs. 9/22**


*Short paper due Fri. 9/23 by 8pm*

**Week 6: Not Gay**

**Tues. 9/27**

Ward: Chs. 1-3

**Thurs. 9/29**

Ward: Chs. 4-6

**Week 7: Seeing Sexuality through Gender and Race**

*Recommended watch: SNL “It’s Pat” [https://video.yahoo.com/pat-birthday-party-000000920.html]*

**Tues. 10/4**


Meadow, Tey. 2010. “’A Rose is a Rose’: On the Production of Legal Gender Classifications” Gender & Society, 24(6): 814-837.

**Thurs. 10/6**


**Week 8: Black Sexual Politics**

Recommended watch: Beyonce “Formation” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfMlFxrMb18](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfMlFxrMb18)

**Tues. 10/11**
Collins: Intro, Chs. 1, 3, 4

**Thurs.10/13**
Collins, Chs. 5, 7, 9

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**Week 9: Writing Ideas**

*Note: No Discussion Posts Due This Week*

**Tues. 10/18**
NO CLASS: Fall Break

**Thurs. 10/20**
No readings assigned: Come with initial bibliography and idea/question for your long paper

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**Week 10: Politics and Culture**


**Tues. 10/25**


**Thurs.10/27**


**Short paper due Fri. 10/28 by 8pm**
**Week 11: Sexual Institutions**

*Recommended listen: Dan Savage interviews Ken Jennings (starts at ~26:00)*

http://www.savagelovecast.com/episodes/474#.V64GLTkrK2w

**Tues. 11/1**

Connell, Luker. 2007 “Sexual Liberals and Sexual Conservatives” from When Sex Goes to School.


**Thurs. 11/3**


**Week 12: The State and Neoliberalism**

**Tues. 11/8**


**Thurs. 11/10**


**Week 13: Dealing in Desire**

**Tues. 11/15**

Hoang: Intro, Appendix, Chs 1-4

**Thurs. 11/17**

Hoang: Chs. 5-7, Conclusion
Week 14: Writing Development
Note: No Discussion Posts Due This Week
Tues. 11/22
No readings assigned: Come with extended bibliography and one question you are puzzling over re: your long paper

Thurs. 11/24
NO CLASS: Thanksgiving

Week 15: Family Secrets
Tues. 11/29
Gonzalez-Lopez: Appendix B, Chs. 1-3

Thurs. 12/1
Gonzalez-Lopez: Chs. 4-6

Short paper due Fri. 12/2 by 8pm

Week 16: Writing Workshops
Tues. 12/6
A-Mi papers

Thurs. 12/8
Mo-Z papers

Long paper due Thurs. 12/15 by 1pm