



**Psychology/Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies 368**  
**Human Sexuality**  
**Spring 2016**

**Course Information**

**Meeting Days** Tuesday and Thursday  
**Meeting Time** 10:30-11:50 am  
**Location** LBC 211

**Contact Information**

**Name** Dr. Margaret (Maggie) Thomas @psychmaggie  
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**Office hours** Thursdays from 9:00-10:30, by appointment, or if my door is open ☺

**Teaching Assistants**

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**Overview and Goals**

Human sexuality is a highly charged and emotional topic. The way American culture (and many other cultures) treat sexuality is very different than how we treat other human behaviors. Sexuality is one of the only areas of human behavior that simultaneously involves intense emotions, forms the basis of fundamental relationships, can influence identity, and is highly moralized. Thus, to understand human sexuality, we need to know about anatomy, psychology, religious/moral ideologies, society, and so much more. Conversations about sexuality cover everything from birth to relationships to laws to religion to physiology to gender roles to sexual identity and more.

In this course, we will deal with complexity of sexuality. Given the size of this class and the uneven nature of sexuality education/beliefs within the United States and in other countries, this class will consist lecture (to ensure similar content knowledge) and discussion (to learn about your own and others' views). That means that some of what I present or we discuss may make you uncomfortable or be at odds with what you believe. You may find that your classmates hold a wide variety of opinions that are at odds with each other. Additionally, lectures and articles and discussions will be explicit. It is not my intent to shock you or your classmates, nor to make you believe a specific set of ideas about sexuality.

The goals for this course are as follows:

1. To understand the biological, psychological, social, and moral underpinnings to the diversity of sexual behaviors;
2. To improve verbal communication skills;
3. To apply and share knowledge about human sexuality with others;
4. To learn about the methodology and difficulties surrounding the study of sexuality; and,
5. To become more aware of your own individual sexuality and beliefs about sexuality.

## **Required Text**

Hutchison, B. (2013). *Annual Editions: Human Sexuality (34<sup>th</sup> Ed.)*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.  
ISBN: 978-0-07-805117-3

*This book will be used for our discussions. Earlier editions may not have the same articles included.*

Other required reading material will be posted on Moodle (see the schedule on the last page).

## **Classroom Behaviors**

There is one fundamental guiding principle in my classrooms: RESPECT. I give you, my students, respect, and I expect that you will treat me, your fellow classmates, the material we cover, and the classroom itself with respect. Respect has some specific elements in this class.

1. The basic premise of this class is that all types of sexuality between consenting adults is psychologically healthy. Thus, while you may disagree with some things we discuss, present your disagreement in polite terms. Explain how you feel and why. Provide a background or perspective for your own beliefs. Stating that something we discuss, or worse, someone in our class, is sick or wrong is not acceptable.
2. It is NEVER appropriate to ask someone in this class (the instructor or other students) about their personal sexual experiences or proclivities.
3. Nothing shared by another student in this class should leave the classroom. While you are free to share things that you have learned from lectures or readings, personal information shared within the bounds of our class STAYS HERE. With that said, consider self-disclosure carefully. Make sure that you would want to come to class again after making a self-disclosure or whether or not your disclosure may make other students incredibly uncomfortable.

Although not an exhaustive list, the following are other behaviors I consider disrespectful:

- Speaking while other people (myself or other students) are speaking.
- Using language that is derogatory, cruel, or insensitive. For example, use of words such as “gay” or “retarded” *out of context* is not allowed, nor is language that is demeaning to an individual or group.
- Engaging in activities unrelated to class during class time (e.g., listening to music, reading the paper, working on homework for other classes, etc.).
- Using your cell phone during class for calls, text messages, games, the internet, etc. Should your phone ring in class, I reserve the right to answer it (as you can answer mine if it rings).
- Using a laptop for anything unrelated to class. In general, I allow laptops in my class during lectures (not discussion-based days), but I reserve the right to disallow them for individuals or the class as a whole should they become a problem.
- Sending an email without proper etiquette (e.g., no greeting, lack of capitals, etc.).
- Regularly coming to class late (I recognize that this happens sometimes) or regularly missing classes.

## **Grades**

Your final grade for this course will be based out of a total of 400 points. I use the gradebook in Moodle, so you can see your grades as they are given. I assign grades using the following scale:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>
100%	400	A+	77-79.9%	308-319	C+
93-99.9%	372-399	A	73-76.9%	292-307	C
90-92.9%	360-371	A-	70-72.9%	280-291	C-
87-89.9%	348-359	B+	65-69.9%	260-279	D
83-86.9%	332-347	B	0-64.9%	0-259	F
80-82.9%	320-331	B-			

The points break down as follows:

140 points	Quizzes (35% of your grade)
130 points	Discussion Day Activities (32.5% of your grade)
90 points	Class/Homework Assignments (22.5% of your grade)
40 points	Final PSA Assignment (10% of your grade)

In this class I will NOT round grades and there is no extra credit.

#### Quizzes

Each Tuesday of the course (with the exception of the first full week of class) there will be a short quiz covering the lecture material from the previous week. Quizzes are designed to assess goal #1 (content knowledge) in the introduction above. Each of these quizzes is worth 10 points and will consist of 10 multiple choice and/or true/false questions. Quizzes cannot be made up without prior consent from me (meaning that I must know that you are going to be absent before the quiz occurs). At the beginning of class each Thursday we will go over the answers to Tuesday's quiz. Thus, if I do give consent for you to make up a quiz, it must be done prior to the start of Thursday's class. Finally, if you arrive to class on a quiz day more than 5 minutes late, you will not be allowed to take the quiz.

#### Discussion Day Activities

Due to our weekly discussion days, participation on those days will figure in to your final grade. There are 13 discussion days and each day has activities that total up to 10 points. Of those 10 points, up to 7 come from your participation in discussion and the remaining 3 come from your free-writing response.

#### *Participation*

You will get a participation grade for each day of class discussion, which will be based on how you contribute to class discussion and assess goal #2 (verbal communication) in the introduction above. Grades will use the scale below.

Type of contributor				
Exceptional	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Absent
7	6	4	1	0

I define "type of contributor" in the following way:

- *Exceptional contributors* go above and beyond my expectations for student performance and engagement in discussion. Exceptional contributions are not formulaic, but may take the form of a particularly insightful comment or skillful guiding of group discussion.
- *Positive contributors* speak regularly in class, bring up questions of her/his own, respectfully respond to others in the class, do not dominate the discussion, and/or attempt to synthesize ideas or apply concepts.
- *Neutral contributors* do not speak regularly in class, avoid speaking unless called upon specifically, bring up concepts that are completely unrelated, and/or simply reiterate previous points from others or from the reading(s).
- *Negative contributors* derail or dominate class discussions, belittle or berate others in the class, do not acknowledge other perspectives, spend time texting/emailing in class, and/or focus on work for other classes.

#### *Free-writing Responses*

At the start of every discussion day, I will provide a prompt related to concepts in the readings. You will respond to this prompt based on their own ideas and opinions (there is no "right" answer for these assignments). These free-writing responses are designed to facilitate discussion by allowing you to clarify your own thoughts on a topic before discussion occurs. They also provide another way for quieter

students to demonstrate engagement with the material. Finally, free-writing responses are one assessment of goal #5 (awareness of your own views) in the introduction above.

- These will be graded on a 3/1.5/0 system. A 3 will be given for assignments that show a “good faith effort” into engagement with the material. A 1.5 will be given for assignments that engage partially with the material. A 0 is for missing assignments.

#### In-class Assignments

At various points during lectures, you will be asked to respond to an in-class assignment. These assignments may involve responding to a question about personal attitudes, working with a partner on an assignment, or other activities. In-class assignments will not be announced and will be worth one or two points, for a total of 10 points. These assignments cannot be made up.

#### Homework Assignments

Throughout the semester, you will turn in various homework assignments. These assignments are as follows:

1. Journal Assignments (3, each worth 10 points): At three points during the semester (see calendar below), you will turn in a personal journal. In each journal, you will describe and discuss two topics that have been covered in class since your previous journal was turned in. For each topic, you should describe the material covered in lecture and then discuss your own responses to that material. These responses may take the form of what you learned and how this new knowledge has affected your behaviors or current places of confusion or struggle in your own understanding of sexuality (your own or sexuality in general). As such, journals are another assessment of goal #5 (awareness of your own views) in the introduction above. All journal assignments will be turned in with a pseudonym during the semester. At the end of the semester, I will match pseudonyms to your names to assign credit. You will be randomly assigned to Journal Group 1 or Journal Group 2.
2. Research Article Assignments (2, each worth 30 points): Twice during the semester, you will be required to write about a psychological journal article related to sexuality. For each assignment, you will choose from a list of possible articles. You should summarize the main issue or question that the research investigates, outline the method(s) used, and briefly explain the results found. Then you should expand on the research in the article in three ways. First, you should articulate how the methodology used in the article may have influence the results that were presented. Second, you should identify 3 follow-up questions raised by the results of the article. Third, you should choose one of your follow-up questions and identify a method that could be used to study that question – making sure to identify a potential benefit and drawback to using that method. Due to the focus on methodologies, these assignments assess goal #4 (issues of method) in the introduction above.

#### Final PSA Assignment

The final project for this class will be a small group project to design a public service announcement (PSA) about one topic or sub-topic related to sexuality. Given the public nature of PSAs, this assignment is designed to assess goal #3 (sharing knowledge) in the introduction above. Although more information about this will be forthcoming in class, this project will involve a finalized PSA for our class presentations of them and a written component. Grades for the PSA will be based on these aspects, as well as ratings from group members.

#### Guest Speaker Policy

We may occasionally have guest speakers come to our class. In addition to treating them with the respect you treat your classmates, please keep the following in mind when you listen to and interact with guests who are *volunteering* their time.

1. These speakers are people. They may be nervous speaking in front of a class. In addition, they have lives of their own. If you happen to see them again outside of class, do not bring up what they discussed unless they do so first. Exercise discretion.
2. They do not know everything about the topics they present and can only represent their own ideas and perspectives.
3. Recognize that some very specific or personal questions you may have are better suited to private conversations after class.

### **Late Work**

Your best option is to turn in all of your work on time. Assignments are considered late if they are handed in any later than the class period in which they are due. Late assignments will be accepted, but they will be accepted with a steep penalty attached. Specifically, for every day an assignment is late, you will lose 20% of the possible points for that assignment. Thus, even if your assignment is only one day late, the maximum possible score you can receive is an 80% (or a B-), which assumes you get every possible point available. Saturday and Sunday count as “days” in this equation. Therefore, if a paper was due on Thursday and you turn it in on Monday, it is four days late.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

As stated in Earlham’s academic integrity policy, we expect that students will be honest seekers of knowledge for the duration of their academic career. This honesty carries with it the responsibility to do your own work, to avoid doing others’ work for them, and to properly attribute ideas to their original source. Violations of the academic integrity policy will be reported and will result in a penalty fitting the violation. Finally, it is the responsibility of each person at Earlham to uphold the academic integrity policy by holding the self and others accountable. This means that should any person see or suspect a violation of the academic integrity policy, that person is responsible for taking the appropriate action. For more information on Earlham’s academic integrity policy, please see the following website: <http://www.earlham.edu/curriculum-guide/academic-integrity>.

In this course, academic dishonesty could take many forms, such as copying another person’s answers on a quiz, plagiarism of a research article instead of summarizing it using your own words, turning in an in-class assignment for another student, etc. Any of these forms of academic dishonesty, as well as any other forms, will result in a zero on the assignment in question and will be reported to the Associate Academic Dean. Egregious or repeated violations may result in a failing grade.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with any type of documented disability requiring reasonable classroom accommodations need to request accommodation memos for the Academic Enrichment Center. If you are a student with a disability that affects you in an academic setting, please let me know as soon as possible. I am more than willing to accommodate student needs; please tell me about your needs as soon as possible. Many accommodations require early planning, therefore requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible with the Academic Enrichment Center and with me. For more information on Earlham’s commitment to students with disabilities, please see the following website: <http://www.earlham.edu/policies/learning-disabilities>.

**Tentative Schedule – PSYC/WGSS 368  
Human Sexuality**

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	NOTES
1	Jan 14	Welcome, Introduction, Syllabus	
2	Jan 19	Perspectives on Sexuality	
	Jan 21	Discussion Day	AE #8; Peterson & Hyde; Kramer
3	Jan 26	Sex Research	
	Jan 28	Discussion Day	Lyvers; Vance; Rieger; Conley
4	Feb 2	Sex & Gender	
	Feb 4	Discussion Day	Kruger; Padawer; AE #2; AE #32
5	Feb 9	Body Parts lecture	
	Feb 11	Discussion Day	AE #5, Braun, AE #13, Crocker, Boroughs
6	Feb 16	Sexual Arousal & Response	<i>Group #1 Journals due</i>
	Feb 18	<i>No class: Early Semester Break</i>	
7	Feb 23	Sexual Behavior	<i>Group #2 Journals due</i>
	Feb 25	Discussion Day	Taylor; Lovejoy; Backstrom
8	Mar 1	Atypical Sex	
	Mar 3	Discussion Day	Barnett; Perrone; McCarthy; De Villers; Mintz
9	Mar 8	STIs	<i>Group #1 Journals due</i>
	Mar 10	Discussion Day	CDC (pages numbered 1-52); AE #42, #46; Power <i>Research Article Assignment #1 due</i>
10	Mar 15	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>	
	Mar 17	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>	
11	Mar 22	Sexual Orientation	<i>Group #2 Journals due</i>
	Mar 24	Discussion Day	AE #37; Rupp; Swash; Hills; Bogaert
12	Mar 29	Relationships	
	Mar 31	Discussion Day	AE #25, 26, 27; Mitchell; Conley & Moors
13	Apr 5	Sexuality Over the Lifespan	
	Apr 7	Discussion Day	AE #20, #24; Temple; Walz
14	Apr 12	Children or Not	
	Apr 14	Discussion Day	Traister; Truong; Ferdinando; Fleishman; AE #21, #22
15	Apr 19	Sex as Power and Money	<i>Group #1 Journals due</i>
	Apr 21	Discussion Day	Bellhouse; AE #48; Bleakley
16	Apr 26	Sexual Ethics and Legalities	<i>Group #2 Journals due</i>
	Apr 28	Discussion Day	Aviv; Soronen; Kempner <i>Research Article Assignment #2 due</i>
17	May 5 8:00	PSA Presentations	

Note: AE = Annual Editions, read the numbered articles listed for each discussion day

This schedule may change. Any changes made will be announced in class and posted to Moodle.