

Human Sexuality

CPSY 565

Summer, 2011

Mary M. Clare, Ph.D.

clare@lclark.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A graduate survey of human sexuality as a physical, behavioral, social, spiritual experience with immediate and ongoing implications for health of all kinds. Our goal is to establish, develop and improve skills for counseling as they relate to experiences of human sexuality. While behaviors associated in prevailing clinical paradigms with pathology will be included in this survey, the focus of our work is the deep description and understanding of healthy and satisfying human sexual experience. To accomplish this experience and enhance our skills as counselors, we will include consideration of our own histories and vulnerabilities as they influence our capacity to support others' sexual health.

This is a survey course. The reading assignments outlined here are **expected minimum reading**. These readings will provide one shared source of information for us to draw on in class discussions. Our primary goal with this class is to develop individual and shared understandings of counselors' roles in supporting healthy sexuality. The "survey" aspect of this class implies our cooperative investment and involvement in collecting and sharing information from written, a/v and community sources together with our experiences, insights and observations. In this way this class serves as part of your career-long development as a counselor who considers and reflectively supports the sexual health of the clients you serve.

TEXTS:

Patrick J. Carnes (2001). *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction: 3/E*.

Jeffrey Eugenides (2002). *Middlesex*. New York: Picador.

Katherine M. Hertlein, Gerald R. Weeks and Nancy Gambescia, Eds. (2009) *Systemic Sex Therapy*. New York: Routledge.

Moodle postings – articles, etc.

MOODLE:

We will use Moodle for this course, so please register as soon as possible. You likely know the drill, but first go to LC Moodle and sign in w/ your info. Then go to CPSY 565 and enter the magic word (aka enrollment key).

sat

This is actually a good word for this purpose since it invokes associations like sitting and the undergrad college entrance exam – but it also means full in German and truth in Hindi (cool, huh?).

ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Journal Synopses**

One of the most crucial skills for a counselor is to know how to come consistently and compassionately to know her- or himself. This is not news. It also is not altogether easy. Especially when it comes to subjects as systematically tabooed as sexuality. This assignment is intended to support the self-reflective aspect of this class by providing a structure. The process is yours to use as thoroughly as you wish. At minimum, each of us will leave with stronger skills for engaging our next edges relative to the myriad topics (and emotions) influenced by our own and others sexualities.

The assignment: Beginning the first class, we will identify at least one question for all of us to investigate for ourselves in writing over the intervening week. As part of opening each class, we will read and summarize into public highpoints what we wrote. We'll then share this synopsis in small groups.

Your original journal writing will be yours and need not be shared with anyone.

- **Greatest Hits**

Drawing on the shared synopses ongoing classroom discussion, and the readings we'll keep a running list of new guidelines on the board for each class.

The assignment: These guidelines along with any you add will be formalized in a listing including reference citations (see next assignment) that you develop for yourself and turn-in at the end of the term.

- **Hot Topics**

You'll see the schedule has proposed topics and structure. As part of the first class, we'll revisit these – and likely repeat this process during the term to ensure we're covering topics of greatest interest and import.

Each of you will take responsibility for finding more information on at least one of these topics. Individually or in small groups you will look to the literature *and to the community*, to extend your, and thus our, knowledge and skill.

This is our opportunity to find, investigate and demystify our edges. What we're after becoming clearer for ourselves on ways to discern the harmful from the simply uncommon or unfamiliar.

The assignment:

PART I – Using our Moodle page, you'll upload at least two excellent resources linked with the topic of your choosing (p.s., you're not limited to one...). One resource will be research-based, another will be practice-based (if you can find it – story-based if you can't – more on this in the first class). All of us will read/watch what you've posted in preparation for the class in which you engage us in group discussion based on what you've learned.

PART II – The class following your topic presentation, you’ll turn in a brief paper with reference citations summarizing (1) your current understanding of the topic, (2) your sources of information, (3) what you learned about your innocence and or edges in the process, (4) the ways your counseling practice will be influenced given this investigation.

- **Synthesis**

Our last class, we will pull together our shared learning. We will generate a *list of guidelines* based on the investigation we’ve completed. We will also identify *next questions*. Finally we will identify *skills we have developed for continued development as counselors aware and responsive to the sexual interests and concerns of our clients*.

The assignment: Beyond participation in the group synthesis, each of you will answer these questions in brief to submit with your *Greatest Hits* list. These are due **Monday, July 25**.

ATTENDANCE

The success of this class depends on your attendance. In that way attendance in addition to being fully engaged in the course is the most important assignment and expectation of this class. The material we’re working with is potentially discomfoting. It will be different for each of us. It is vital that we create an environment that allows us to go as deeply as we can into the subject matter in the simultaneously public and structured format of a graduate class. My assumption is that you are here because you want this opportunity and are sincere in your wish to be of help to people who are struggling with their sexuality.

EVALUATION

You will submit written self-evaluation via just following the last class. There are two options for this submission: e-mail, or inclusion as a paragraph in your *Synthesis* paper. These evaluations will contain observations of the extent to which you participated in and gained from the class. Areas of evaluation will include: participation as a community member, sincere engagement of the questions raised in the class, and ability to indicate what has been learned (both academically and professionally).

I will evaluate you on these areas based on your class participation, your assignment completion and quality. Your papers will receive evaluations of *CREDIT* or *NO-CREDIT*. If you disagree with an assessment I have made or if you wish to improve your evaluation, you may resubmit an assignment once.

If you have elected to take this course for a grade, the options are ‘A’ or ‘C’. An A will result from completion of all assignments, full participation in the course, and engagement of the ideas and questions posed by this class. If you have elected a pass/no pass option, passing the course will result from the same criteria as earning a grade of A.

DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the social construction of sexuality and sexual functioning relative to social, historical, and cultural contexts, including how these contexts serve to privilege some expressions of sexuality while oppressing others.

2. Understand a variety of human sexuality issues (e.g., gender, sexual functioning, and sexual orientation), human development and sexuality, and the impact of sexuality/sexual issues on family and couple functioning.
3. Develop fluency and comfort talking about sex and sexual functioning with individuals and couples.
4. Learn to assess sexual issues from a bio-psycho-social spiritual perspective that includes an analysis of power imbalances relative to sex.
5. Learn primary treatment approaches and techniques for resolving sexual problems and consider their use within specific cultural and social contexts.
6. Consider treatment issues specific to sex therapy with heterosexual, lesbian, gay, trans, and bi-sexual couples/families.
7. Explore own biases relative to sexual orientation and sexual practices that are likely to influence work with clients.

COURSE DESCRIPTION FROM CATALOGUE

Recent research on sexual health issues of importance to counselors. Issues include sexual health in childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and aging; review of recent research on sexual orientation; and common sexual dysfunction experienced by rape and incest victims and modes of treatment.

RELATED AUTHORIZATIONS

Successful completion of this course as an elective is necessary for fulfillment of degree requirements for any of the specialty areas in the Counseling Psychology Department. If chosen to fulfill elective credit, completion of this course is also necessary for gaining access to licensure as a professional counselor or as a school psychologist.

Human Sexuality

CPSY 565
Summer 2011

--DRAFT-- SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading
May 11	Introduction Definitions Hot Topics	<i>Middlesex</i> , Book 4
May 18	Sex & Addiction Physical Development Social Development	Carnes 1-4 SST 1,2, 12
May 25	Cybersex, Porn, Sex Trade Paraphilias	
June 1	Life Cycle [i.e., birth to death] What's normal? What's enough? --assessment	Carnes 4-6 SST 3
June 8	Gender Roles/Identity	TBA
June 15	Trauma Violence STDs	Carnes
June 22	Arousal & Response Pharmacology	SST 1, 10
June 29	Intimacy, Communication, Sex Relationship Talking about bodies	TBA
July 6	Unusual Normality Polyamory BDSM Sex and Spirit	
July 13	SYNTHESIS	Carnes 7-8 SST 15-17