Course Description:
Sexual wellness is a key component of human wellness. Taking a bio/psycho/social/spiritual approach to human sexuality, this course is designed to increase the student’s comfort and sensitivity to the diversity of sexual issues people face. The course will explore the diversity of human sexuality; paying specific attention to the roles that gender, race, class, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, and ethnicity have on sexuality. Sexual violence will be examined on both macro and micro levels with emphasis on human rights and social justice aspects of vulnerable populations. Sexual concerns of clients will be examined in a variety of practice settings such as case management, psychotherapy, health care, schools, child welfare, aging, and group work. A variety of sex related topics will be covered including sex through the life span, diagnostic interviewing, sexual development, treatment for sexual concerns and dysfunctions, sexual wellness, sex education, sexual physiology, sexual neurology, and sexual diversity. All materials will be taught using the framework of NASW's Code of Ethics for social workers dealing with sexually related matters.

Course Objectives:
In this course students will:
1. Increase their comfort and sensitivity discussing sexual issues as they relate to social work practice
2. Learn the Circles of Sexuality and review developmental theories (including Freud, Erikson, Piaget) as a framework for sexuality development throughout the lifespan.
3. Explore issues of sexual and gender diversity and increase their exposure to sexual minorities, behaviors, and subcultures as it is relevant to social work practice
4. Gain an understanding of the DSM-V classifications for sexuality-related and gender identity disorders
5. Examine the role NASW's Ethics have in informing social work intervention with sexual issues
6. Identify how difference (i.e. culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and class) impacts human sexuality
7. Learn to assess and examine how sexual issues impact communities from a macro perspective (i.e. teen pregnancy in rural communities, or HIV in minority communities).
8. Learn the importance of completing a sex history/assessment of a client and how to apply different treatment models to address the various forms of sexual issues, complaints, and dysfunctions clients present in psychotherapy both in individual treatment as well as in couples therapy
9. Recognize the social justice aspects of sexual violence on both micro and macro levels (i.e. sexual and child trafficking within the USA and from other countries)
10. Be able to assess and identify links between emotional/psychological disorders and sexual issues
11. Be aware of the latest research available in human sexuality as it applies to social work practice on the direct and macro levels

**Required Texts:**

**Recommended Texts:**

Additional articles will be assigned and available on the course page online.

**Suggested Texts For Further Learning:**

**Course Format and Instructional Methods:**
Adult learners acquire knowledge in a variety of ways. Therefore multiple methods of instruction will be used throughout the course. Videos, lectures, discussions, case
examples, student presentations, and guest speakers will be used throughout the semester. Outside of class time students will read independently and complete assignments.

**Office Hours of Instructor:**
The instructor will be available before and after class as well as by appointment. I encourage and welcome you to contact me with any concerns that you may have or ideas that you wish to discuss.

**Class Policies:**
Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes. If you are unable to attend class or hand in an assignment on time please notify the instructor in advance of class by email or phone.

Attendance/Participation counts for 10% of your final grade.

**Class Time:** Class will begin at 6:45pm and end on time at 9:15pm with a short break.

**Class Etiquette:** Cell phones and beepers must be turned off during class. If for personal or professional reasons you must have your phone/beeper on please put it on vibrate mode and make the instructor aware before class.

**Special Needs:** Students who think they may need accommodations because of a disability are encouraged to meet with their instructor, early in the semester. Please speak with the instructor if you have any special learning accommodations to be made or if English is your second language.

**Class assignments:**
ALL PAPER MUST BE HANDED IN ON THEIR DUE DATE

Students are expected to have read all required reading assignments in advance and come to class prepared to discuss and critically appraise these materials.

Please review orientation materials on ethics in social work and the academe, especially those regarding plagiarism. For all written work please use APA style for citing sources though note that an abstract is not necessary in papers.

1. Reaction Papers (40% of grade, 10% each)

Reaction Paper #1 (Due February 7) 3-4 pages
**Look at the news, social media, blogs, etc.** Select an article that deals with a current sexually related issue and has relevance to the diversity human sexuality. **Discuss your opinion of that topic from a critical social work perspective.** How does this topic impact work with clients? How does it address possible issues of diversity such as culture, sexism, homophobia, racism? Using the values of the profession (see the code at http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/default.asp) address the aspects of the article/post.
Reaction Paper #2 (Due March 14) 3-4 pages

Attend/Observe a community or clinical venue that has sexual relevance, as per the course work, and write a reaction paper based on your experience in that place. Here are some examples of appropriate places to visit: a community event in LGBT community such as a talk, a meeting, a Birth Prep Class with expectant parents, a Family Planning Clinic/Planned Parenthood, a play or performance that addresses issues of Gender, Sexual Orientation, or Sexuality, a group or workshop in your agency or another social service that is focused on a sexual issue, a class at the Sexploratrium, a workshop at the Trans Health conference. It must be a new environment to you, and you must enter the space respectfully- potentially explaining your assignment to a liaison.

2. Reaction Paper with Research (Due March 28, 20% of grade) 5-7 pages

This paper is designed to help you academically research a sexual behavior that you know little about or are uncomfortable with. The first part will present your academic research findings on the topic. The second part will explore your own reflection on the topic, including intellectual, emotional reactions and how to prepare yourself to better serve a client someday who may practice the behavior. **You will need to submit which research topic you want to explore to the professor by March 14th.**

**Learning Objectives of Reaction Papers:**
1. An opportunity to reflect on course material through both a personal as well as professional lenses
2. To gain experience in self exploration with regard to sexual issues as they relate to social work practice
3. To increase exposure to the diversity of human sexuality
4. To challenge students' ways of thinking about sexuality from a bio/psycho/social/spiritual perspective
5. Improve understanding of the intersection between the current media, means of evaluation: policy, and human sexuality
6. Papers should be clearly written and in accordance with APA
7. Relevance to social work practice should be discussed in each paper
8. Papers should reflect an understanding of the role that racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, and ethnocentrism play in sexual issues when relevant
9. Reactions should demonstrate an exploration of self in relationship to professional practice

**Final Paper** (Due April 18, 40% of grade) 5-7 pages

Considering the Circles of Sexuality, meet with a person who has a difference from you in one of these circles and interview them about their experience. Choose a difference that is interesting to you. Perhaps speak to a pregnant women or their partner; an LGBQA person; a transgender or gender non-confirming person; an older or younger person who may have come of age in a time where the sexual societal messages are different than when you came of age; a person who has had or whose partner has had an
abortion, a person who is a survivor of a sex crime, etc. Listen to their story. Use the Circles as a way of organizing what you learned.

**Part 1:** Utilize the Circles of Sexuality as you organize the information you learned in the interview. This is NOT to be a transcript. Please interpret the interview and share the areas that you found most interesting.

**Part 2:** This is your personal reflection. What was the process like to talk with someone different than yourself about such a private (and potentially taboo) topic of sexuality? Did you find that you avoided certain questions? If so, why? How did the interview affect your thinking about sexuality?

**Part 3:** Bolster your interview with research from at least five sources using APA format. This can be drawn from in-class readings or additional research.

We will brainstorm in class a list of questions that you may chose to use for your interview. A detailed rubric will be provided for you in class. We will discuss the papers on the last 2 days of class as a group.

**Learning Objectives for final paper:**
1. Experience in discussing human sexuality and interviewing another person.
2. Exposure to difference as it relates to human sexuality
3. To challenge the student to think outside of their usual paradigm
4. Exposure to the diversity of ideas and approaches that are in the literature about human sexual issues
5. Challenge the student to examine new ways and methods of approaching situations as they relate to practice
6. Practice applying the Circles of Sexuality model to a story of human sexuality.
7. Complete independent research in the area of human sexuality as it relates to social work practice

**Class Participation** (Ongoing 10% of grade)
Adult learners acquire knowledge in a variety of ways. Therefore multiple methods of instruction will be used throughout the course. Videos, activities, lectures, discussions, case examples, student presentations, and guest speakers will be used throughout the semester. Therefore, class participation is an important part of class grade and will include engagement as well as respect towards students, professors, and guest speakers.

**COURSE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS:**
Students may not proceed to the next semester or summer semester until all work from the previous semester or summer semester is complete or until a grade of Permanent Incomplete or Unsatisfactory is issued.

**Course Outline**
Overview of the course and syllabus
Introductions
Review of Syllabus and assignments
Intro to SARS: Sexual Attitude Reassessment
Group Agreements
Circles of Sexuality Framework

Class 2: Wednesday, January 24, 2018
Topic: The Role of the Social Worker & Sexual Issues in Practice

Sensitivity to Diversity in Human Sexuality
Boundaries, limits, comfort, transference, & countertransference
Sexuality through the Life Span
Circles of Sexuality
The PLISSIT model
Sexuality in clinical, case work, macro Social Work practice

Required Reading:

Online:
doi:10.1080/02615470701709469

Class 3: Wednesday, January 31st, 2018
Topic: Cultural Context of Sexuality
Presenter: Zelaika Hepworth Clarke, MSW, LSW, MEd, PhD

Social and cultural constructions of sexuality
The sexualized body
The colonization sexuality
Intersectionality with race, poverty, homelessness, institutionalization, religion/spirituality

Required Reading:
Bergman, B. & Bornstein K. (2010). *Gender outlaws: The next generation*. Why you don’t have to Choose a White Boy Name to be a man in this world: Tokawa, K. p.207

**Online:**

**Optional:**

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**Class 4: Wednesday, February 7th, 2018**

**Topic: Deconstructing the Gender Binary: Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming & Intersex Folx**

**Reaction Paper 1 Due**

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**What is Gender?**
Deconstructing the Gender Binary
Social Construction of Gender
Understanding an Intersex Experience

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**Required Reading:**

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**Online:**
Optional on canvas:
Cook-Daniels, L. (2007). Living memory GLBT history timeline: Current elders would have been this old when these events happened... *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 4(4), 485-497

**Class 5: Wednesday, February 14th 2018**
**Topic: Female-Assigned/ Woman-Socialized Sexuality**
 **Presenter: Kim McKay, PhD**

Sexual anatomy of female-assigned people
Societal sexual expectations of girls /women and its effects across the gender spectrum
Medicalization of female sexuality
Female sexual response cycle
Empowering girls /women in clinical practice

**Required Reading:**

**Online:**

**Optional:**
This is the article incorrectly quoted to justify the need for medicalization of female sexuality (you don’t need to read before class, but it is online for you):

Class 6: Wednesday, February 21st, 2018
Topic: Male-Assigned/ Man-Socialized Sexuality

Sexual anatomy of male-assigned people
Societal sexual expectations of boys /men and its effects across the gender spectrum
Erectile Dysfunction, Premature ejaculation, and retarded ejaculation
Misogyny and Toxic Masculinity
Sexual stereotypes of men
Empowering men and boys in clinical practice

Required Reading:
Davidson, Michael. *Pregnant Men: Modernism, Disability, and Biofuturity*, p123

Online:

Watch:
The Mask You Live In Trailer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc45-ptHmxo (write down one phrase that stands out to you to share in class)

Optional:

Class 7: Wednesday March 7th, 2018
Topic: Social Work Practice with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning and Asexual Clients

Social construction, heteronormativity and cissexism
Mental health, substance abuse, and LGBQA clients
Macro/policy issues of the LGBTQIA Community
Outcomes for LGBTQIA youth and family support
Gay marriage

**Required Reading:**

**Online:**

**NO CLASS - March 7th - SPRING BREAK**

**Class 8: Wednesday, March 14th, 2018**
**Topic: Children, Teens, Sexuality Education, and Developmental Theories**

**Second Reaction Paper due**

Psychosexual Development
Queer Identity Formation Theorists
Sexual Issues in therapy with children who have not been sexually abused
Teens and Sexuality
Age appropriate sex education

**Required Reading:**

**Online:**

**Class 9: Wednesday, March 21st, 2018**  
**Topic: Sexual Trauma, Abuse, & Violence**

Sexual Trauma/ Cognitive Therapy Model  
Treatment models for sexual abuse survivors (kids & adults)  
Treatment of children who have had sexual trauma  
Neurology and sexual trauma  
Human Sex Trafficking vs Sex Work

**Required Reading:**

**Online:**

**Class 10: Wednesday, March 28th, 2018**  
**Topic: Normative Spectrum of Sexual Life Styles**  
**3rd Reaction Paper Due**

Consent & Communication  
Kink and BDSM  
Paraphilias  
Polyamorous relationship styles

**Required Reading:**

**Online:**
Class 11: Wednesday, April 4th, 2018
Topic: disAbility and Sexuality
Presenter: Jaclyn Pryor, PhD

Societal sexual expectations of bodies

Sexuality, identity and disAbility
Case issues connected to clients

Empowerment approach

Required Reading:
Chapter 15

Online:
Kukla, E. (2017). In my chronic illness, i found a deeper meaning.

Class 12: Wednesday, April 11th, 2018
Topic: Sexual Issues in Couples Therapy

Evaluation and assessment of a couple’s sexual issues
Systemic issues and sexuality in work with couples
Building intimacy
Out of control sexual behavior
Infidelity
Clinical Interventions when working with couples

Required Reading:

Online:
Please print “sensate focus” from course page

Optional:


Class 13: Wednesday, April 18th, 2018
Topic: Sexuality, Illness, and Aging
** Final papers due today **

Aging and sexuality
Illness and sexuality
Societal Stigma
Sexual Health (HIV, STIs)

Required Reading:

Online:

Class 14: Wednesday, April 25th, 2018

Final papers returned and discussed
Circles of Sexuality Framework
Revisiting why sexuality matters to social work clinical practice and macro practice: policy, research, communities, and administration
Course closure activity