

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
PEABODY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Department of Human and Organizational Development
Human Development Counseling Program
HDC 7500: Special Topics in Human Development Counseling
Human Sexuality: Theory and Intervention

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to human sexuality and human sexual behavior that is positive, humanistic, and research-based. Sexual identity issues will be addressed throughout. We begin with epistemology: How do we know what we (think we) know about sexuality? Our culture is sexually repressed and sexually obsessed. How does this dilemma impact sexual behavior/identity/relationships? Guest lecturers will present different domains of experience in the sexual arena, including LGBT, trans, BDSM, polyamory and swinging, mindfulness practices such as Tantra, and sexuality for persons of color.

I will draw on my experience as a practicing sex therapist for clinical anecdotes, perspective, and practical concerns in working with sexual issues in clinical practice. We will discuss sexual and relationship issues such as sexual disorders (DSM-V), discrepant sexual desire in relationships, infidelity, issues with pornography, out of control sexual behavior, and sex and the conservative Christian community.

Your questions and comments are a vital part of this course!

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By completing assigned readings, assignments, attending all lectures and class meetings, and actively participating in class discussions, students will gain:

1. Confidence and competence in discussing sexual matters openly in a direct, accurate, and respectful manner.
2. Conceptual knowledge about the complexities of human sexual behavior, including physiology and anatomy, desire, arousal, multi-partner relationships, and the spectrum of human sexual behaviors.
3. A thorough introduction to common sexual problems psychotherapists may encounter, including DSM-V disorders, infidelity, discrepant desire, out of control sexual behavior, recovery from childhood and adult sexual trauma, pain syndromes, and more.
4. An introduction to the range of clinical interventions useful in working with sexual issues.

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

Obtain text from Amazon, Barnes and Noble, or other source. Required readings will be posted on Brightspace.

Required text:

Peggy Kleinplatz, ed., *New Directions in Sex Therapy: Innovations and Alternatives*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2012.

Also recommended:

Stephanie Buehler, *What Every Mental Health Professional Needs to Know About Sex*, 2nd ed., New York: Springer, 2016.

Katherine Hertlein, et.al., eds., *Systemic Sex Therapy*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2015.

Laurie Mintz, *Becoming Cliterate: Why Orgasm Equality Matters – And How to Get It*, New York: HarperOne, 2017.

Gerald R. Weeks, et.al., eds., *A Clinician's Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2016.

Class meets in Fridays 4:10 pm – 8 pm and Saturdays 9 am – 5:30 pm.

Attendance is expected at all meetings unless by prior arrangement with instructor.

COURSE CALENDAR

Weekend One: A Developmental Approach to Human Sexuality

I. Introduction to Sexology

READINGS:

- D. J. Williams, et.al., "Introducing a Multidisciplinary Framework of Positive Sexuality," *Journal of Positive Sexuality*, 2015, 1, 6-11. Access at <http://journalofpositivesexuality.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Introducing-Multidisciplinary-Framework-of-Positive-Sexuality-Williams-Thomas-Prior-Walters.pdf>
- Peggy Kleinplatz, et.al., "The Components of Optimal Sexuality: A Portrait of 'Great Sex'," *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 2009, 18, 1-13.
- Bernard Appelbaum, "On the Need for a New Direction in Sex Therapy," Chapter 1 in *New Directions in Sex Therapy: Innovations and Alternatives*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2012, 5-20.
- Doug Braun-Harvey and Michael Vigorito, "A Vision for Sexual Health," Chapter 2 in *Treating Out of Control Sexual Behavior: Rethinking Sex Addiction*, New York: Springer, 2016, 37-48.

II. Physiology/Anatomy, Neurobiology, Psychology of Sex

READINGS:

- Jane Ridley, "What Every Sex Therapist Needs to Know," in Katherine Hertlein, et.al., eds., *Systemic Sex Therapy*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2015, 3-16.
- Stephanie Buehler, "Sexual Anatomy and Psychosexual Development," Chapter 3 in *What Every Mental Health Professional Needs to Know About Sex*, 2nd ed., New York: Springer, 2016, 19-34.
- Laurie Mintz, "Let's Look Under the Hood," chapter 4 in *Becoming Cliterate: Why Orgasm Equality Matters – And How to Get It*, New York: HarperOne, 53-86.

OPTIONAL:

- Sheri Winston, *Women's Anatomy of Arousal: Secret Maps to Buried Pleasure*, Kingston, NY: Mango Garden Press, 2010, 117-139. Terrific illustrations!

III. Sexuality and Gender Identity in Human Development

READINGS:

- Judith Levine, "Good Touch: A Sensual Education," in *Harmful to Minors: The Perils of Protecting Children from Sex*, 2002, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 178-198.
- Christine Murray, et.al., "Lifespan Development and Sexuality," Chapter 5 in Christine Murray, et.al., *Sexuality Counseling: Theory, Research, and Practice*, Los Angeles: Sage, 2017, 137-162.

Weekend Two: Sexual Diversity in Clinical Practice

I. Diversity of Sexual Expression

READINGS:

- Peggy Kleinplatz, "Learning from Extraordinary Lovers: Lessons from the Edge," in Peggy Kleinplatz and Charles Moser, eds., *Sadomasochism: Powerful Pleasures*, Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press, 2006, 325-348.
- David S. Ribner, "Cultural Diversity and Sensitivity in Sex Therapy," Chapter 10 in *New Directions in Sex Therapy: Innovations and Alternatives*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2012, 161-174.
- *A Clinician's Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy*, Chapter 15: "Diversity in Sexual Expression," 231-253.
- D J Williams and Jeremy Thomas, "It's Only a Matter of Time: Insights for Helping Professionals Working with Non-Monogamous Clients," *Journal of Positive Sexuality*, 2016, 2, 32-35. Access at <http://journalofpositivesexuality.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Working-With-Nonmonogamous-Clients-Williams-Thomas.pdf>
 - Margaret Nichols, "Psychotherapeutic Issues With 'Kinky' Clients: Clinical Problems, Yours and Theirs," *Journal of Homosexuality*, 2006, 50, 281-300.

II. Clinical Assessment of Sexual Issues

READINGS:

- *A Clinician's Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy*:
Chapter 2, "Diagnosis of Sexual Disorders," 16-31
Chapter 4, "The Sexual Genogram in Assessment," 66-74.

III. Psychotherapy with Sexual Issues

READINGS:

- Carol Ellison, "Sexual Choreography: 'Am I Enjoying This Right Now?' Not 'How Am I Doing?'," Chapter 9 in *New Directions in Sex Therapy: Innovations and Alternatives*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2012, 141-160.
- *A Clinician's Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy*,
Chapter 11, "Factors That Complicate Treating Sexual Disorders," 176-188.
- Arlene Lev and Shannon Sennott, "Understanding Gender Nonconformity and Transgender Identity: A Sex-Positive Approach," in Peggy Kleinplatz, ed., *New Directions in Sex Therapy*, 2nd ed., 321-336.

- David Treadway, "Hearts' Desires," Chapter 15 in *New Directions in Sex Therapy: Innovations and Alternatives*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge, 2012, 253-266.

Weekend Three: Theory and Practice of Sex Therapy

I. Working with Sexual Issues as a Psychotherapist

READINGS:

- Marion Solomon and Stan Tatkin, "Epilogue: Therapist Self-Care," in *Love and War in Intimate Relationships: Connection, Disconnection, and Mutual Regulation in Couple Therapy*, New York: W. W. Norton, 2011, 193-204.
- Candace B. Risen, "Listening to Sexual Stories," in Stephen Levine et.al., eds., *Handbook of Clinical Sexuality for Mental Health Professionals*, New York: Routledge, 2010, 3-20.
- *A Clinician's Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy*, Chapter 16, "Ethics in Sex Therapy," 254-268.
- Daniel Watter, "Ethics and Sex Therapy: A Neglected Dimension," in Peggy Kleinplatz, ed., *New Directions in Sex Therapy*, 2nd ed., 85-100.
- Richard Blonna, "An Acceptance Commitment Therapy Approach to Sexual Attraction," Chapter 6 in Maria Luca, ed., *Sexual Attraction in Therapy: Clinical Perspectives on Moving Beyond the Taboo – A Guide for Training and Practice*, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014

II. Theoretical Approaches to Sexuality and Sex Therapy

READINGS:

- Consult Assignments in Brightspace and select a theoretical perspective that interests you. Sign up for a group (max 3 persons/group) and coordinate research on your topic. Prepare a 20-minute presentation for class on March 23 – see guidelines for points to cover.

III. Recovery from Sexual Trauma

READINGS:

- Wendy Maltz, "Healing the Sexual Repercussions of Sexual Abuse," in Peggy Kleinplatz, ed., *New Directions in Sex Therapy: Innovations and Alternatives*, New York: Routledge, 2012, 267-283.
- Ruth Cohn, "You Can't Always Get What You Want: Neglect and Sexuality," Chapter 14 in *Coming Home to Passion: Restoring Loving Sexuality in Couples with Histories of Childhood Trauma and Neglect*, Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2011, 93-98.

IV. "Sex Addiction" vs. Out of Control Sexual Behavior

READINGS:

- Doug Braun-Harvey and Michael Vigorito, "The State of the Field," chapter one in *Treating Out of Control Sexual Behavior: Rethinking Sex Addiction*, New York: Springer, 2016, 3-31.
- Paul Joannides, "The Challenging Landscape of Problematic Sexual Behaviors, Including 'Sexual Addiction' and 'Hypersexuality,'" in Peggy Kleinplatz, ed., *New Directions in Sex Therapy*, 2nd ed., 69-84.

V. The Profession of Sex Therapy

READINGS:

- <https://www.aasect.org/aasect-requirements-sex-therapist-certification>
- Peggy Kleinplatz, "The Current Profession of Sex Therapy," in *Systemic Sex Therapy, 2nd ed.*, Katherine Hertlein, et.al., eds, New York: Routledge, 2015, 17-31.
- Leonore Tiefer, "Sex Therapy as a Humanistic Enterprise," *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 2006, 21, 359-375.

GRADING POLICY

Course grade is based upon:

Erotic Lives Response blog due Weekend 1	10 points
Sexual Portrait due Weekend 2	20 points
Group Presentation Weekend 3	20 points
Class participation	25 points
Readings response journal	10 points
Final Exam	15 points

GRADING SCALE

A	94-100	C	77-79
A-	90-93	C-	74-76
B+	87-89	D	70-73
B	84-86		
B-	80-83		

INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Vanderbilt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities that may affect your ability to complete course assignments or otherwise satisfy course requirements. If you may require accommodations, please contact the Office of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services at Baker Building, Suite 108 (615) 322-4705 (V/TDD) to discuss and determine any accommodations. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in Vanderbilt University classes and have not contacted them, please do so as soon as possible. You are also encouraged to see your instructor(s) privately in regards to this matter, ideally no later than the second week of the semester, so that we can ensure that your needs are met appropriately and in a timely manner.

INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

It is our intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is our intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity including gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, religion, culture, perspective, and other areas of human difference. Your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course are encouraged and appreciated.

POLICY ON MANDATORY REPORTING

All faculty (including TAs) must report allegations of sexual misconduct and intimate partner violence to the Title IX Coordinator. Vanderbilt has several programs designated as limited confidential resources, meaning that they will generally not reveal personally identifying information about the incident to others in the University barring situations where failure to report that information could potentially result in further harm to others. These are:

- Project Safe: 304 West Side Row: [615-875-0660](tel:615-875-0660)
- P.C.C. (Psychological & Counseling Center: 2015 Terrace Place: [615-322-2571](tel:615-322-2571)
- Office of University Chaplain & Religious Life: 401 24th Ave. S: [615-343-2288](tel:615-343-2288)

NOTE

At times this semester, we will be discussing topics that may be disturbing and even traumatizing to some students. If you ever feel the need to step outside during one of these discussions, either for a short time or for the rest of the class session, you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to this material, either with the class or with me, I would welcome such a conversation as an appropriate part of your professional development. Learning to manage personal reactions to potentially disturbing material that our clients discuss is an important part of preparing to be a counselor.

VANDERBILT HONOR CODE

Vanderbilt Honor Code

Vanderbilt's Honor Code (https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/the-honor-system/) and Peabody's Honor Code for Professional Students (https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/docs/pdf/grad_resources/Peabody_Honor_Council_Constitution.pdf) govern all work in this course. It is encouraged that you discuss the material covered with peers and assist each other with critiques and reviews of your assignments. However, any written work that you submit is expected to be your own.