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:  
Also recommended:

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.**

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**COURSE CALENDAR**

**Weekend One: A Developmental Approach to Human Sexuality**

**I. Introduction to Sexology**

**READING**


**II. Physiology/Anatomy, Neurobiology, Psychology of Sex**

**READING**


**OPTIONAL:**

III. Sexuality and Gender Identity in Human Development

READINGS:


Weekend Two: Sexual Diversity in Clinical Practice

I. Diversity of Sexual Expression

READINGS:


II. Clinical Assessment of Sexual Issues

READINGS:

- A Clinician’s Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy:
  - Chapter 2, “Diagnosis of Sexual Disorders,” 16-31

III. Psychotherapy with Sexual Issues

READINGS:

- A Clinician’s Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy,
  - Chapter 11, “Factors That Complicate Treating Sexual Disorders,” 176-188.
Weekend Three: Theory and Practice of Sex Therapy

I. Working with Sexual Issues as a Psychotherapist

READINGS:


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:


IV. “Sex Addiction” vs. Out of Control Sexual Behavior

READINGS:

V. The Profession of Sex Therapy

READINGS:
- [https://www.aasect.org/aasect-requirements-sex-therapist-certification](https://www.aasect.org/aasect-requirements-sex-therapist-certification)

GRADING POLICY

Course grade is based upon:

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<td>Erotic Lives Response blog</td>
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<td>Sexual Portrait</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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GRADING SCALE

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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

As we all grow and develop as people and professionals, we constantly strive to improve ourselves in numerous areas of our lives. We value the diversity of our learning community and consider peoples’ varied identities and differences as strengths and resources upon which to build community and facilitate human development. HDC students and faculty welcome your informal and formal suggestions for improvement of our classroom, program and university climate and culture, as well as course materials and content.
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
- P.C.C. (Psychological & Counseling Center: 2015 Terrace Place: 615-322-2571
- Office of University Chaplain & Religious Life: 401 24th Ave. S: 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’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.