

S210: Sociology of Sexuality
Fall 2016
Carnegie 05
Tuesday/Thursday 3:00pm-4:30pm

Instructor: Aisha A. Upton (she/her/hers)
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Course Description:

In this course we will examine social theories and sociological research on the topic of sexuality. We will explore the concept of sexuality as it intersects with race, gender, age, and class. The course will be divided into three different sections. In the first section of the course we begin by defining sexuality and discussing why and how we should study sexuality sociologically. Second, we will focus on theories of sexuality. The third section of the course will focus on applying these theories to everyday life through looking closely at contemporary issues of sexuality and sexuality in popular culture. This course is designed to give you a basic understanding of sociological implications of sexuality in the United States.

Learning Objectives:

This course is intended to help you develop your analytical and critical thinking skills. **You will be asked to move beyond your own experience and perspectives to sociologically analyze and evaluate over-simplified explanations of past and contemporary issues as they appear in our readings.** Learning in this course will occur in a variety of ways: critical reading, investigating empirical evidence, and active class participation.

Course Requirements:

Readings

This course requires **a lot** of reading. There is no traditional textbook for the course. The following books are required for class:

- Foucault, Michel. 1990. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage
- Lee, Shayne. 2010. *Erotic Revolutionaries: Black Women, Sexuality, and Popular Culture*. Hamilton Books.
- Pascoe, C.J. 2007. *Dude, You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Berkeley, CA: UC Press

These books will be supplemented by readings placed on Moodle. One of the best ways to do well in this course is to complete the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss them.

How you will be graded:

- Participation (10 points)
 - Two Page Weekly Response Papers (16 points)
 - Five Page Response Papers (14 points)
 - Exam One (20 points)
 - Exam Two (20 points)
 - Final Paper/Presentation (20 points)
- Total Points Possible = 100*

Your point value will be converted to a percentage grade, meaning:

A 93% and above	C+ 77-79%
A- 90-92%	C 73-76%
B+ 87-89%	C- 70-72%
B 83-86%	D 60-69%
B- 80-82%	NC Below 60%

Class Participation – 10% of your final grade

Because this is a discussion-based class, your participation in class is crucial!

Participation includes, **(1) coming to class**. At no point will I take formal attendance. You are adults and the decision to participate in this course is yours. However, if you are not here to participate, your grade will suffer. In my experience, students who regularly attend classes have a better experience in courses, get the most out of those experiences, and tend to get better grades. I guarantee that you will get out of this course what you put into it. **(2) Reading the required texts**. Again, you will get out of this course what you put into it. The readings for each week may seem daunting – but it would behoove you to not get behind on the reading. **(3) Regularly contributing to class discussions (talking in class)**. Please note that your ability to contribute to class discussions is directly correlated with your class attendance **and** your complete reading of the assigned texts. Not every comment/question must be brilliant and insightful; questions and “thinking aloud” are important to the learning process. I **cannot** stress enough how important contributing to class discussions will be to you, other students, and me as the instructor. Speak up!

Discussion Questions

Each Tuesday class meeting you will be responsible for turning in one insightful discussion question. These may be questions of fact, clarification, context, or analysis **from the text**, but they may **not** be questions of definition. Take the initiative to look up unfamiliar words on your own. You *must* follow these guidelines in order to get full credit. Your discussion question can be turned in on a notecard at the beginning of the class period. You *must* come to class to turn in your discussion question. You may not turn in a discussion question for a week you have missed.

Tip: The readings and current events are both worthwhile places to find material for discussion questions.

Also: The reason for discussion question assignments is to generate class discussion and also to **exercise asking questions**. Questions are what drive research. Every answer starts with a question!

Two Page Informal Writing Responses

Each Thursday Meeting (with the exception of two days when 5 page responses are due: see below). You will turn in a two page informal writing response. These writing responses are not formal papers. The purpose of the weekly two page responses is for you to reflect on the readings/discussions. Do you still have any burning questions? Is there anything that you adamantly disagree with? Is there something that you really like? Do you see a connection to something we've covered in class to your own life or a cultural artifact? Do you just need to rant? Go for it. This is your space to put it out into the world. On the Thursdays these are due, bring some of your thoughts to class to add to our discussion.

Five Page Writing Responses

On two Thursdays of the semester there will be a five-page semi-formal response paper due. In these five page papers I expect you to connect your ideas directly to the readings that we have covered thus far. Do you feel like any of the authors are in conversation with each other? Do you recognize an overarching theme from the readings? These two short papers are great places to start thinking through what may grow into your final paper.

Exams

You will have two exams for this course. The exam format will be **take-home** and **short answer/essay**. The exams will not be cumulative and are designed to help you wrap your mind around concepts for the final paper. Because the exams are take-home, barring any unforeseen emergencies, **there will be no make-up exams**.

Tip: if you know that you are going to miss class the day an assignment is due you must find a way to get the assignment to me before/on the deadline.

There is no extra-credit.

I will not accept late assignments or exams¹.

I will not accept written assignments/exams via email

Life happens. If you have to miss class (for any reason) keep in mind that the discussion questions only require turning in 10 for the semester (and there isn't a discussion question due the week of Thanksgiving) – this means that two missed discussion questions are built into the course.

¹ Please contact me if you experience a personal or family emergency. I am strict about late assignments, but not inflexible.

Additionally: If you are concerned about your performance in the class, the best course of action is to **talk to me immediately** so we can discuss strategies for improvement. Do not wait until the end of the term!

Also: If you would like to dispute a grade, please **wait 24 hours** before contacting me about it. From there we can meet and discuss the grade.

Final Paper and Presentation:

You will be expected to write an 8-10 page term paper on a specific sociohistoric experience, or theoretical point related to the course material. The details of, and a rubric for, this assignment will be discussed in further detail in class. In case you can't wait to hear the details, what I'm asking you to do for this assignment is choose something that interests you and apply what you've learned in class to it. In the last week of class there will be short presentations of your paper.

Other Important Things You Should Know:

Technology policy:

I do not mind if you use technology in the classroom with the exception of cell phones. Again, I will not permit the use of cell phones. Texting, GroupMe, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, and any other app/site that exist to talk to people outside of the classroom have no place in the classroom unless specifically directed. Other technology such as laptops and tablets for **note-taking** are allowed as long as they do not become a distraction to you or other students (again, don't use social media/social networking sites/apps). It's important that we pay attention to each other. In a discussion-based course, we need to be respectful of other people while they are talking. I do not want to ban the use of technology, but I will if I need to.

In-Class Discussion Policy:

In this class we **will** have conversations about sexuality, race, class, and gender. These can be difficult and controversial topics to which we may not all agree. You are welcome to share your own opinions about these topics and are expected to listen to others when they share their opinions, even if you do not agree. Everyone in class is expected to be respectful of others. With that said, derogatory remarks and epithets have no place in the classroom. Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, fatphobia, and ableism will not be tolerated. **WE** need to work together to create a space where students feel safe.

Special Needs

Students with special needs that might impact their ability to complete the course should inform me as soon as possible and provide documentation from university services, so that suitable accommodations can be made.

Academic Dishonesty

Absolutely no incidents of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct will be tolerated.

Sharing Personal Information

Macalester College is committed to fostering a safe and productive learning environment for all students. As a faculty/staff member, it is my goal that you feel able to share information about your experiences as a student; however, please know that I am required to report any disclosure of harm to self or others, or any other reported sexual misconduct of any kind, to the appropriate college personnel who are responsible for responding to such reports. Please keep this in mind when you choose to share information in papers, class, etc.

Tentative Schedule: The schedule for the course is available on Moodle.