American University of Central Asia

Psychology Department

**PSY 370 - Psychology of Human Sexuality**

Spring 2023

Course Syllabus

Course ID: 3697

Course status: Elective

Pre-requisites: none

Credits: 6

Class meeting times: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 14:10-15:25

Venue: room 307

**Instructor:** Mohira Suyarkulova, PhD, Associate Professor, Psychology

Email: [suyarkulova\_m@auca.kg](mailto:suyarkulova_m@auca.kg)

Office hours: Tuesdays, 11:00-13:00 or by appointment, room 315

**Brief course description**

Like other aspects of human existence and behaviour, sex is complexly **biopsychosocial**. That is why this course seeks to incorporate not only the findings of the scientific psychological research of human sexuality, but also to include some aspects of applied field of sex counseling, along with ethnographic studies of various communities, philosophical, sociological and political insights in sexuality studies. We will cover issues of gender and sexual identities and practices, ‘sex acts’, and general cultural concerns about sexualisation of culture, political debates regarding sex work and pornography. The course is divided into three main blocks: key concepts, sexual practices and case-studies. The last section will feature guest lectures by researchers of sexuality in Central Asia.  After taking this course students will become familiar with and deepen their understanding of the competing interpretations of sexual desire, behaviours and subjectivities, and of interplay between the biological, psychological and sociocultural aspects of sexuality.

**Learning objectives and outcomes**:

* Students will gain an understanding of the main concepts, issues and debates in the field of sexuality studies today;
* Students will be able to critically engage with the core problems in the field of psychology of human sexuality, gender and sex and formulate their own informed positions on the matters covered in the course;
* Students will be able to reflect on the implications of the knowledge gained in the course for their own lives - personal, socio-political and professional;
* Students will be able to recognise their their ethical responsibilities as human beings, citizens, professionals and scholars, when discussing and dealing with matters of sex, sexuality and gender.

**Core texts (available in the course’s** [**Google Drive folder**](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ep3oRq2MRXz7Dj5fSQt-lP4S5lwlzk1A?usp=share_link)**):**

* Barker, Meg-John. [The Psychology of Sex](https://drive.google.com/file/d/10lhG_bAd0vPqIJaQk96R4PySzrIJoFpM/view?usp=sharing). Routledge, 2018
* Richards, Christina & Meg Barker. [Sexuality and Gender for Mental Health Professionals: A practical guide](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1L8DrTfdXYhOy-JPRxGek2DZzw60oEcjT/view?usp=sharing). Sage, 2013

**Other essential readings:**

* Johnson, Katherine. [Sexuality: A Psychosocial Manifesto](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xHphs8jK-5wyThiDkCxEy_e4nOPMriha/view?usp=sharing). Polity, 2015
* Fausto-Sterling, Anne. [Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BdrHRnD9WdKpx99MMMleyP9L2fqZxb4_/view?usp=sharing). Routledge, 2012
* Fischer, Nancy L., & Steven Seidman, eds. [Introducing the New Sexuality Studies](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16AKSwLx1-GMuma44Zz5fSRLNQhs_rRrq/view?usp=sharing). 3rd edition. Routledge, 2016

**Class schedule**

| **Week/Date**  **Lec&Sem** | **Topic** | **All readings are found in the class’s** [**Google Drive folder**](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ep3oRq2MRXz7Dj5fSQt-lP4S5lwlzk1A?usp=sharing) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1/Jan 17&19 | Getting curious | *Read the syllabus*  *Submit your question(s)* [*here*](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfNHcnjgttbr7mG6zT6LlOJVunnd9o0xE-4ZOoVEiEgPrfaIg/viewform?usp=sf_link) |
| 2/Jan 24&26 | Introducing: Psychology of Sexuality | Barker 2018, Ch 1 |
| **Part 1: Key Concepts** | | |
| 3/Jan 31&Feb2 | Sexing the Body | Richards & Barker, Ch 3 |
| 4/ Feb 7&9 | Doing Gender | Richards & Barker, Ch 2,4&5 |
| 5/ Feb 14&16 | Mapping Sexuality | Barker 2018, Ch 2;  Richards & Barker, Ch 7-10 |
| **Part 2: Sexual practices** | | |
| 6/ Feb 21 | Theorising Desire | Barker 2018, Ch 3  No class on Feb 23-day off |
| 7/ Feb28& Mar2 | Drawing the Line? | Barker 2018, Ch 4  Richards & Barker, Ch 6, 11&12 |
| 8/ Mar 7&9 | Sexualisation of Culture | Barker 2018, Ch 5 |
| **Part 3: Cases Studies: Sexuality in Central Asia** | | |
| 9/Mar14&16 | Guest lecture: Virginity rituals in Kyrgyzstan | [Elena Kim](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dhZVOnaatGEIHeCUKajVwnDL6nryP8kk/view?usp=sharing) |
| ***10/Mar 20-25 - Spring Break - no classes*** | | |
| 11/Mar28&30 | Independent student work on reflection papers | *Individual consultations* |
| 12/Apr 4&6 | Guest lecture: details to TBA |  |
| 13 /Apr 11&13 | Reading and writing week | *Student reflection papers due* |
| 14/ Apr 18&20 | Student symposium | *Student presentations* |
| 15/Apr25&27 | Film screening and discussion | *All about my mother (1999)* |
| 16/May2&4 | Course Wrap-up and evaluations |  |
| **May 14-20 - Finals** | | |

**Assessment**

| **Attendance and participation** | 10% |  | **A** | 94-100 | **C+** | 77-79 | **D-** | 60-63 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Roleplay exercises (2X10%)** | 20% |  | **A-** | 90-93 | **C** | 74-76 | **F** | 0-59 |
| **Glossary (p/f)** | 20% |  | **B+** | 87-89 | **C-** | 70-73 |  |  |
| **Quizzes (3X10%)** | 30% |  | **B** | 84-86 | **D+** | 67-69 |  |  |
| **Role play reflection papers (2X10%)** | 20% |  | **B-** | 80-83 | **D** | 64-66 |  |  |

**Attendance and participation**

Attendance of all classes is essential for your learning success in this course. Your attendance and participation score is dependent on how consistently you attend classes, how frequently you participate in class discussions, and the quality of your contributions. This will also include various in- and out-of-class learning activities and small writing assignments that will be graded pass/no pass.

**Role play exercises and reflection papers**

At our seminar meetings during weeks 4-8 you will participate in role playing exercises - once as “counselor” and once as “client.” General case descriptions will be provided to you in advance. Before the role playing exercise, each of the participants has to think about their ‘character’ and their problems using the required readings as well as literature from the additional reading list. After the role play you will have to write a reflection paper - one for each role (counselor and client). The papers are expected to be between 5 and 8 pages long with proper citations and bibliography (APA format). All submissions will be checked for plagiarism. You can use [this book](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YWHJ0QG57317YYf6AX67JsNvhF_IQTsA/view?usp=sharing) as a reference on counseling, if needed.

**Glossary**

In this course we cover a lot of new terminology and concepts, that is why one of the assignments here is to keep a glossary of terms. This assignment is worth 10 percent of your final grade. It is not graded, but is evaluated on a pass/fail basis.

**Quizzes**

There will be three quizzes throughout the semester to track your progress and to make sure you are keeping up with the assigned readings. The quizzes may be in multiple choice questions format, or ask for definitions of key terms as well as short written answers to questions related to the course material we are covering in class.

**Additional readings (advised for reflection papers):**

Steven Seidman, Nancy Fischer, Chet Meeks. Eds. *Introducing the New Sexuality Studies*. 2nd edition. Routledge, 2011

Richards, Christina and Meg John Barker, eds. (2015) *The Palgrave Handbook of the Psychology of Sexuality and Gender.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Martin, Emily, “The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles”, *Signs* 16(3), Spring 1991, pp. 485-501

Fausto-Sterling, Anne, “The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough”, *The Sciences* March/April 1993, pp. 20-25

Fausto-Sterling, Anne, “The Five Sexes, Revisited”, *The Sciences* July/August 2000, pp. 18-23

Fausto-Sterling, Anne. *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. Basic Books, 2000

West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman, “Doing Gender”, *Gender and Society* 1(2), Jun 1987, pp. 125-151

Bem, Sandra. (1983), “Gender Schema Theory and Its Implications for Child Development: Raising Gender-Aschematic Children in a Gender-Schematic Society”, *Signs* 8 (4): 598-616

Fausto-Sterling, Anne. (2012). *Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World*. London: Routledge.

Fine, Cordelia. (2010) *Delusions of Gender: How our minds, society and neurosexism create difference*. London: Icon Books.

Rich, Adrienne, “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence”, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 5(4), Summer 1980, Women: Sex and Sexuality, pp. 631-660

Rubin, Gayle S., “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality”, in Carole Vance, ed., *Pleasure and Danger* (Routledge 1984), pp. 143-178

Van Anders, Sari M., “Beyond Sexual Orientation: Integrating Gender/Sex and Diverse Sexualities via Sexual Configurations Theory”, *Arch. Sex. Behav*., 2015

Simon, William and John H. Gagnon, “Sexual Scripts: Permanence and Change”, *Archives of Sexual Behaviour* 15(2), 1986, pp. 97-120

Janssen, Erick and Walter Everaerd, (1993) “Determinants of Male Sexual Arousal”, *Annual Review of Sex Research*, 4 (1): 211-245

Laan, Ellen and Walter Everaerd (1995), “Determinants of Female Sexual Arousal: Psychophysiological Theory and Data”, Annual Review of Sex Research 6(1): 32-76

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978

Weeks, Jeffrey. (2010) *Sexuality*. London: Routledge.

Ferguson, Anne (1984), “Sex War: The Debate between the Radical and the Libertarian Feminists”, *Signs* 10(1): 106-112

Wilchins, Nikki. (2004). *Queer Theory, Gender Theory: An Instant Primer.* New York: Alyson Publications Inc.

Barker, Meg-John, and Julia Scheele. *Queer: A Graphic History*. Icon Books, 2016.

Ghodsee, Kristen. (2018). *Why Women Have Better Sex Under Socialism. And Other Arguments for Economic Independence*. Nation Books

Mole, Richard. Ed. *Soviet and Post-Soviet Sexualities*. Routledge, 2019

Moldosheva, Anara, “‘Moderately passionate, well trained’: discourse on sexuality in Kyrgyzstan”, *NUPI Paper*, 2012

Bagdasarova, Nina, “Securing an LGBT identity in Kyrgyzstan. Case Studies from Bishkek and Osh”, *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 49(1-2), 2018: 17-40

Kim, Elena, (2020) “Re-feminizing the post-soviet women: identity, politics and virginity ceremonies in contemporary Kyrgyzstan”, *Journal of Gender Studies*, 29:6, 706-716

**honour code**

All work submitted must be free of plagiarism and meet the standards outlined in the AUCA Honour Code. Students are responsible for informing themselves regarding the rules of academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in an F for the assignment and possible suspension from the university.

Students are expected to show a respectful and collegial attitude towards the faculty and fellow students, be punctual and submit all assignments according to deadlines stated in this syllabus or otherwise announced by the instructor.