

Sociology of Sexualities
SOCIOLOGY 3U03

Fall 2019
Online course

Professor Tina Fetner
soc3U03@mcmaster.ca

Course Description

Sexuality may seem to be a personal, private, intimate topic reserved for diaries and best friends. However, in this course, we will see that sexuality is really a social phenomenon, encompassing a broad range of emotions, actions, identities and communities. We use sexualities to define ourselves and the world we live in, to draw boundaries between types of people, and to mark borders between wrong and right. In this course, we will explore the social aspects of sexuality and consider how sexual experiences are shaped by, and interpreted through, historically specific social contexts.

Using the tools of sociology, we will analyze gender and sexual behaviors, identities and communities. We will examine the social organization of sexuality and how sexuality contributes to social organization. We will consider various types of social control over sexual behavior, as well as responses to that control. We will enter into the hidden worlds of sexual expression and exchange, and keep our eyes as much on the taboos themselves as on the actions they censure.

Learning Outcomes

When you have successfully completed this course, you will be able to:

- discuss and evaluate sociological theories of sex and sexuality
- apply these sociological theories to a variety of social phenomena
- understand empirical approaches to examining sexuality, including behaviour, identity, desire, and community
- communicate concepts related to the sociology of sexualities clearly and effectively
- evaluate evidence and logic for claims relating to the sociology of sexualities

Required Readings

The following textbook is required. Other works will be made available on Avenue to Learn. Please note that all assigned readings and course materials must be completed on a weekly basis.

Kathleen J. Fitzgerald and Kandice Grossman. 2018. *Sociology of Sexualities*. Sage Publishing.

Grading

Grades will be calculated according to the following formula:

Sexual hierarchy exercise	5%
Weekly assessments (best 7 of 9):	35% (7 weeks, 5% each)
Midterm exam:	25%
Final exam:	35%

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means

and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, which can be downloaded from the [Office of Academic Integrity website](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained. In assignments, complete citations are required for all quotes and paraphrases. Consult the required writing style guide for information on how to properly cite the work of others.
2. Improper collaboration in group work. In this course, I encourage students to work together to understand concepts, discuss ideas, study for exams, etc. Improper collaboration would be defined as using the work of others to get out of doing your own work, claiming the work of others as your own, etc.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course, we will be using the "originality check" feature in Avenue to Learn.

Review of Marks

I will be diligent in marking all assignments fairly and accurately. Nonetheless, occasionally students disagree with the marks they receive. When this occurs, I will be happy to review the mark of any assignment or exam, if the procedure outlined below is followed. ***Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.***

To request a review of a mark, write a brief (<1-page) memo describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error. I recommend giving yourself a cooling-down period of 24 hours before submitting your request. Submit this memo to me via email. You may submit requests for review no later than two weeks after assignments/exams are handed back to the class.

Late Assignments and Absences

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf>) is a self-reporting tool for undergraduate students to report absences that last up to 3 days. This form allows students to request accommodation for any missed academic work. This tool cannot be used during any final examination period. You may submit a maximum of one Academic Work Missed request per term. It is your responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a non-medical reason, you must visit the office of the Associate Dean of your Faculty. You may be required to provide supporting documentation. Any disruption this causes to turning in assignments on time, completing exams, and so forth, must be addressed directly with your instructor as soon as possible.

For late assignments without approved excuses, you must make arrangements directly with your instructor to submit the assignment. Assignments will be marked down by five percentage points for each day it is late, including weekends and holidays.

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

I hope that this online course gives you all the flexibility you need for your observance of religious, Indigenous and spiritual observances. If you require additional accommodations, please contact me (Dr. Fetner) as early in the term as possible to make individual arrangements. Here is McMaster University's official statement on religious, Indigenous and spiritual observances:

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

Accommodations

I am committed to working with students with disabilities to make individualized accommodations according to each student's specific needs. All such arrangements must be made through Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Please submit a request for accommodations through the [SAS website](#) as early in the term as possible; these will be automatically sent to me (Dr. Fetner) for approval. Please feel free to contact me to discuss individual arrangements or concerns. All discussions and arrangements will be kept confidential.

Email

Please consider email equivalent to any other form of written communication. Students who write to their professors and teaching assistants are expected to follow rules of spelling, grammar and punctuation. In addition, please include a proper greeting, such as "Dear Dr. Fetner," and a closing that includes your full name, such as "Sincerely, Jane Lee." For some items, it is also helpful to have your student number. Email failing to meet these standards may be returned unanswered. Email containing questions that can be answered by referring to this syllabus or to Avenue to Learn may not be answered. All email communication must come from your mcmaster.ca email account.

Note on unforeseen circumstances

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and the Avenue to Learn course website weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Course Schedule

Module	Module Learning Outcomes	Reading assignments
Module 1: Introduction to sociology of sexualities Sept 3-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand structure of course, expectations, assignments, procedures, how to contact professor • Appreciate the importance of sociological approaches to sexuality • Recognize social influences on sexual behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course syllabus • Short videos
Module 2: social construction of sexuality Sept 9-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain social construction as a sociological concept • Recognize the historic & cultural specificity of social identity categories • Describe the key concepts of heteronormativity, compulsory heterosexuality, sexual identity • Explain the social control of sexuality through the lens of family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook chapter 1 • Khan reading
Module 3: theory, science, and sexuality Sept 16-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the history of scientific approaches to sexuality in Europe, US and Canada • Explain how scientific process was intertwined with the historical record of power and inequality • Describe the basic components of theories of sexuality, including early medical/sexology, psychoanalytic, poststructural, sociological 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook chapter 2 • Broich reading
Module 4: gender and sexuality Sept 23-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate between the distinct but related concepts of sex and gender • Recognize how sex and gender are both socially constructed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook chapter 3 •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain key concepts, including gender essentialism, gender roles, gender regimes • Describe how gender is a social institution • Identify key terms to describe gender identity, including trans and cisgender 	
<p>Module 5: sexuality and inequality</p> <p>Sept 30-Oct 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify forms of legal and illegal discrimination against LGBT individuals • Explain pregnancy discrimination and the motherhood penalty • Recognize the role of sexuality in state formation • Describe the Female Refuges Act and discuss the social control of women's sexuality in Canada • Identify and analyze the intersections of race, gender, class and nation in producing sexual citizens and objects of state intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook chapter 4 • Brownlie reading
<p>Module 6: LGBTQ activism</p> <p>Oct 7-13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize how sexuality has been a social force that organizes neighbourhoods and communities • Describe the special role that WWII played in building LGBTQ communities • Identify the unique role that trans women of colour played in developing the contemporary LGBTQ movement • Explain how right-wing opposition movements have affected LGBTQ activism • Discuss changes in attitudes toward lesbian and gay people over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook chapter 5 • Fetner 2016 • Video: Sylvia Rivera

<p>Fall Break</p> <p>Oct 14-20</p>		
<p>Midterm Exam</p> <p>Oct 21-27</p>		
<p>Module 7: sexuality, school and work</p> <p>Oct 28-Nov3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the role of schools in constructing/enforcing sexual hierarchies • Identify trends in anti-LGBTQ safety and harassment in schools • Discuss the persistence of anti-LGBTQ discrimination in the workplace • Define the concept “hook-up culture” and discuss its role on university campuses • Explain the history of sexual harassment policy • Discuss gaps between sexual harassment policy and enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook chapter 7 • News article: “Workplace Sexual Harassment an ‘Epidemic’ in Canada”
<p>Module 8: religion, family and sexuality</p> <p>Nov 4-10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how all religious traditions claim moral authority over sexuality • Trace the historic shift from religious to secular understandings of sexuality • Describe how states and religious institutions can be tightly or loosely coupled • Explain the role of social rituals in enforcing sexual hierarchies • Identify the changes in religion’s inclusion of LGBTQ people over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook ch 8
<p>Module 9: sexuality and reproduction</p> <p>Nov 11-17</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize bodies as a socially constructed site of sexuality • Outline how pregnancy, childbirth and access to care is unequally distributed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook ch 9

	<p>across the U.S. and Canada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how social inequalities intersect with the social control of reproduction and sexuality • Discuss the role of the state in the social control of sexuality 	
<p>Module 10: sexual violence</p> <p>Nov 18-24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the significance of gender and sexuality in sexual violence • Explain the concept “rape culture” • Apply the concepts of hate crimes and ritualized illegal violence to sexual violence • Assess how intersecting inequalities affects risk of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook ch 12 • NWAC Fact Sheet: MMIWG
<p>Module 11: what’s the big idea?</p> <p>Nov 25-Dec 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on the overarching themes, or “big ideas” from this course • Identify sexuality as a social construction • Articulate sexuality as a social institution • Explain how the social organization of sexuality both reflects and contributes to social inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review course materials
<p>Final Exam</p> <p>During exam period</p> <p>Exact dates TBD.</p>		