Syllabus for HS 3630F: Sexuality, Gender & Health

Instructor: Dr. Treena Orchard

Class: Mondays 1.30-2.30 + Wednesdays 12.30-2.30
Room: TC-341
Office Hours: 3.30-5.00 pm Wednesdays or by appointment, Rm 208 HS Bldg.
E-Mail: torchar2@uwo.ca

Course Description
This is an advanced undergraduate course in health sciences that explores how sexuality, gender, and health are experienced, valued, and socially constructed. The materials selected provide a sound overview of the basic concepts and theoretical approaches related to these three issues and also introduce students to some of the newer fields of research that are emerging. The more traditional areas of concentration include the body, heterosexuality and gender, reproductive health practices, HIV/AIDS, and health and healing in post-colonial settings. Topics that could be considered more cutting-edge include sex and gender among gay men and transgendered individuals, bio-technologies and the redefinition of life and death, structural/symbolic violence, and the ethical and emotional challenges of conducting fieldwork. By examining classic and modern contributions to these diverse fields of study, students will be equipped with foundational theoretical and methodological skills as well as a critical awareness of how health is experienced, embodied, and impacted by larger factors of economy, politics, gender, and sexuality.

Class Format
The basic format for each class will be as follows: an overview of class objectives and an interactive lecture led by me with significant class discussion and involvement. Although I am going to lecture and lead the discussions on the assigned readings and some additional contextual information, students are encouraged to participate and share their perspectives as much as possible.

Evaluation

**Class Attendance** 5%
**Write-ups on selected readings (n=2)** 20%
**Applied Assignment** 35%
**Final Exam** 40%

Details

**Class Participation and Attendance (5%)**
Given the relatively small size of the class and the marks allotted to attendance, you must take part in every class. Regular, punctual class attendance is critical and any absence, along with repeatedly late arrivals to class, will affect your mark.

**Reading Write-Ups (20%)**
During the course of this class you will write two critical summaries based on in-class readings of your choosing, and each one is worth 10% of your total mark. While this may seem like a lot of writing, in an upper year class like this illustrating how you understand and apply aspects of the
readings is very important. This approach also helps ensure that you are completing the assigned
materials and allows for feedback on your writing skills and analytical development.

Each assignment should be 2 double-spaced pages or between 500-600 words, and if you
exceed this limit marks will be deducted. Each write-up must contain an introductory paragraph,
which introduces the topic of the assignment, a description of the 2-3 main points or themes to be
explored from the readings, and a concluding sentence that clearly articulates the importance of
your topic in relation to the broader subjects of sexuality, gender, and/or health. The next portion
of the write-up, basically the body section, is where you discuss your perspectives regarding the
2-3 points that constitute the focus of the assignment. I recommend that 1-2 well-organized
paragraphs be used to analyze each point to be discussed. In academic writing, one paragraph
consists of 5-7 sentences, and this rule must be adhered to. Each assignment must wrap-up with a
concluding paragraph, which summarizes the main points examined and reiterates the
importance of your topics with respect to sexuality, gender, and/or health. This paragraph must
contain original writing and not be cut and pasted from the introductory paragraph. Use APA
style for in text citations and references (2-3), which can be on a separate page. ONLY paper
copies handed in class will be accepted.

Applied Assignment (35%)
Representations of sexuality, gender, and health are produced in a myriad of different ways
depending upon the contexts, cultures, and time period in which they are based. Some examples
of these contexts include the popular media (i.e., Internet, television, music, magazines, other
forms of advertising), health-related settings (i.e., health clinics, hospitals, student health
services, the gym), or university environments (i.e., on-campus groups, pubs and restaurants,
seasonal advertising, courses offered). For this assignment, each student will select one of the
three contexts listed above and examine how it shapes or influences the representation,
production, and/or communication of 2-3 key issues you have selected to focus on that relate to
and inform your understandings of sexuality, gender and/or health. Some examples: ‘The
representation of teenage sexuality in contemporary vampire movies/series’; ‘Representations of
gender and health in men’s magazines’; ‘Silenced sexualities: representations of lesbian and gay
experiences in mainstream health settings.’

Each student is required to describe the selected topic, the specific issues in relation to the
topic that will be examined in the assignment, situate the issues to be examined within the
published literature on the area(s), analyze (not describe) the main themes for the assignment, and
provide a concluding discussion regarding the significance of your selected topics/issues in
relation to your broader understandings of sexuality, gender, and/or health. The assignment
should be 8-10 pages, including references (8-10 academic references, no Internet sources unless
this is your selected “context”), and be double-spaced. Specifics with respect to paragraph
structure, introductory and concluding sections, and APA referencing and in-text citation are the
same as the guidelines for the writ-ups described above. I will post examples on Sakai to give you
a sense of how this assignment has been approached by other students who have taken our class.
It is advisable to arrange a brief meeting with me before you begin your research, to make sure
that you are on the right track.
Final Exam (40%)
The final examination is comprehensive and will consist of short answers (30%) and 2 essay questions (35% each). The short answers are primarily from the first few lectures and I will hold a vote towards the end of class, during which you indicate the top 6 lectures from the term. I will then devise the essay questions based on these lectures. The essay questions are very open-ended, which gives you ample room to answer them in your own voice.

Grading scheme:
I use the format provided below for grading, which is the university-wide scale that has been approved by the UWO Senate. It should also be noted that I DO NOT round grades up and a 79% is a 79% and not an 80%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Superior work, above average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Competent work, meeting requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Fair work, minimally acceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 50</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Policies:
Late assignments
This class is evaluated primarily through examinations, which must not be missed unless in the case of a medical condition, family emergency, or other unforeseen circumstances. A note from your Physician indicating the nature of your condition must be submitted to the School of Health Studies Main Office, and only upon receipt of such a letter will I reschedule an examination. You may visit Western’s Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness at: [https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm](https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm) for further details. With respect to the written assignments, nothing past the due dates will be accepted without a Doctor’s note, and the extended deadline will only be up until 1 week after original due date.

Electronic devices
Cellular phones must be turned off during class and lap-top computers will only be allowed to be open during lectures if you are making notes regarding lecture materials.

Student Code of Conduct
The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at The University of Western Ontario, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For more information, visit [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf).

English Proficiency for the Assignment of Grades

Accommodation for Medical Illness or Non-Medical Absences
The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that
medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm. Documentation is required for non-medical absences where the course work missed is more than 10% of the overall grade. Students may contact their Faculty Academic Counselling Office for what documentation is needed.

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner. Documentation for any request for accommodation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Academic Counselling Office of the student’s Faculty of registration. For BHSc students, you may go to the School of Health Studies Office in HSB room 222.

**Scholastic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Additionally,

1. All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

2. Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

**Support Services**

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/
2. Student Health -- http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html
3. Registrar’s Office -- http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/
4. Ombuds Office -- http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/
Creating a “healthy” classroom
Teaching and learning is a two-way process and to ensure the best and most productive experience for us all I ask that we all be considerate of the following: arrive on time, do not be disruptive, respect one another, and be willing to challenge yourself.

REQUIRED Materials: available in the Bookstore
- Course Reading Package

First class, September 9 & 11, 2013: Introduction to the course and to one another. Viewing of the film Quinceanera and class discussion

Topic 1, September 16 & 18, 2013: Overview and Key concepts


Topic 2, September 23 & 26, 2013: The Body


Topic 3, September 30 & October 2, 2013: ‘Other’ Sexualities and Genders: Experiences of Gay Men and Transgendered People
**FIRST WRITE-UP DUE**
Schilder, Arn; Treena Orchard; Christopher Buchner; Mary Lou Miller; Kim Fernandes; Steffanie Strathdee; and Robert Hogg (2008). ‘It’s like the treasure’: Beliefs Associated with Semen Among Young HIV-Positive and HIV-Negative Men Who Have Sex With Men. Culture, Health & Sexuality, 10(7), 667-679.

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OR

Bauer, Greta; Rebecca Hammond; Robb Travers; Mathhias Kaay; Karin Hohenadel; and Michelle Boyce (2009). “I Don’t Think This Is Theoretical; This Is Our Lives: How Erasure Impacts Health Care for Transgender People”, *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS CARE*, 20(5), 348-361.

**Topic 4, October 7 & 9, 2013: At the Intersection of Sexuality, Gender, and Health: Sara’s Story**


**Topic 5, October 16, 2013: Reproductive Health Practices and Moral Dilemmas: Male and Female Circumcision**


**Topic 7, October 28 & 30, 2013: Doing Ethnography and the Challenges of Fieldwork**

**SECOND WRITE-UP DUE**

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**Topic 8, November 4 & 6, 2013: Health and Healing in Post-Colonial Settings**


**Topic 9, November 11 & 13, 2013: Violence, Everyday and Gender-Based**


*Applied assignments due.* This date is somewhat flexible based on your other course requirements

**Topic 10, November 18 & 20, 2013: Bio-Technologies and the Redefinition of Life, Death, and Human Value**


**Last week, November 25 & 27, 2013: Summary of course, discussion of final exam essay questions, and viewing of the film Hedwig and the Angry Inch.**