SYLLABUS: Sociology of Sexuality

Description: This course examines sexual attitudes, beliefs and behaviors from a sociological perspective. We will consider how the biology of sex gets sociologically constructed. We will go back and forth between basic information about sex in relation to social contexts and the issue, meaning and enactment of personal choice.


Requirements for your grade: Your grade will be based on the successful completion of two quantitative (multiple choice) exams—a midterm and final based on the readings (40 points each, 80 points total), and one research project: an oral presentation (group or individual) on a sociological theme (10 points for the oral presentation, 10 points for the one-page summary with a one page research bibliography. Each person will turn in his or her individual contribution summary/biblio.). Total of 100 possible points. NOTE: There will be NO make-up exams. If you cannot complete the assignments when they are due, please do not enroll in this course.

Course Outline

May 9: Introductions. What does sociology offer the study of sexuality?
1). The concepts of personal choice, sex versus gender; 2). the methods for sex studies.
Required Reading (RR): Choices, Chapters 1, 5 and 3.

May 11: Diversity in sexuality: the difference culture makes—U.S. values vs. others.
RR: Choices, Chapters 2, 6, 9.

May 16: Sexual literacy: knowing the biology of behaviors.
RR: Choices, Chapters 4, 14.
May 18: Emotional literacy: communication and its problems  
RR: Choices, Chapters 10, 17.

May 23: Sexual Behaviors and more problems  
RR: Choices, Chapters 7, 15.

May 25: Exam review and oral presentation preparation

May 30: MIDTERM EXAM

June 1: Planning to reproduce in the life course  
RR: Choices, Chapters 8, 11

June 6: Sexual Reproduction  
RR: Choices, Chapters 12, 13

June 8: Variant Sexual Behaviors and Sex Commercialization  
RR: Choices, Chapter 16

June 13: Impacts of Choice, Health and Disability  
RR: Choices, Chapter 18.

June 15: FINAL EXAM

June 20: RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

June 22: COMPLETING PRESENTATIONS