



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 4452G-001
Special Topics: Social Construction of Sexuality
Winter 2022
Mondays 6-9pm, SSC5406

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Silcox
Office Hours: TBA. [Book via: Calendly](#)
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Course Description:

In this course, students will explore the topic of sexual deviance from social constructionist, socio-historical, and criminological lenses. Using these lenses, we will discuss how understandings of sexuality have shifted over time and how broader social structures influenced Western notions of normalcy, pathology, perversion, and deviance. We will pay particular attention to forms of sexuality that have been criminalized or considered taboo. While this is not a psychology course, we will also explore the medicalization of sexual deviance. As a fourth year seminar course, students are expected to come to class prepared to engage with the material and submit work containing original analysis.

***Prerequisite(s):* Enrolment in fourth year of one of the honours specializations or honours double majors in sociology or criminology**

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

***Antirequisite(s):* N/A**

Course Format:

This class will meet online Mondays between 6pm and 9pm until the end of January at which point the university will decide if our class will continue online or move to in-person learning. If we move to in-person learning, live streaming of the classes will be available if the technology is available and functioning in the classroom. Recordings of live classes, whether online or in-person, may not be available and students are responsible for making arrangements with peers to share notes if they miss class.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand and interact with complex and diverse theories related to sexual deviance
- Critically consider and evaluate competing theories
- Understand how social structures have impacted notions of deviance
- Synthesize and critically evaluate complex material clearly in presentations and in writing

Required Text(s):

Required readings will be available via Western Libraries or as PDFs/URLs on OWL.

Method of Evaluation:

Participation (graded throughout term)	15%
Weekly Reading Journals (graded throughout term)	20%
Two Seminar Presentations (15% each)	30%
Argumentative Essay (Mar. 20)	35%

Evaluation Breakdown:

****IMPORTANT NOTE #:** Any changes to the method of evaluation, breakdown or due dates will be posted on OWL. As well, all expectations and guidelines will be provided on OWL.

1. Participation: 15%

In order to make this class educational and enjoyable, there will be plenty of opportunity for you to participate in discussions, voice your opinion, pose a question or make a comment about the material or discussion. As a fourth year seminar course, students will be expected to have read the required readings and demonstrate their understanding of key concepts in discussions. To earn an A-range grade, students attend all lessons, participate regularly in every class, demonstrate a thorough understanding of course material, and be able to draw analytical connections to other sources and knowledge. To demonstrate analytical connections, consider the following:

- How can reading X be used to understanding reading Y?
- How do course concepts relate to other courses taken?
- How can readings from week 6 help us better understand readings from week 2?
- Can readings be used to help us understand pop culture, laws, dominate ideologies, etc.?

Discussing sex and sexuality can sometimes be uncomfortable or sensitive for some students. Our classroom will be a safe space for us to share opinions or thoughts on these topics. I want to encourage everyone to think about how our words can affect others in the classroom so that we can maintain a dialogue that's respectful and open to engaging with a variety of opinions and thoughts.

There are 10 weeks of class (excluding week 1). Each week's participation grade is worth 10 marks for a total of 100 marks. A perfect weekly grade on participation is rare as there are always ways improve.

****Missed classes will receive a 0/10.** If using an SRA, students may submit a 2-3 single-spaced document outlining some of the insights they had with the assigned readings. Students may consider answering their own discussion questions from their weekly reading journals.

2. Weekly Reading Journals: 20%

Each week, students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of assigned readings by submitting a short summaries of each assigned article/chapter that include (1) main ideas or themes, (2) a list of key terms and definitions, (3) any questions or confusing on the reading, and (4) a few interesting points the class can consider for discussion. Students are to avoid direct quotes whenever possible and put

all weekly entries into their own words. These will be due on OWL by 6pm on Mondays each week and subject to Turnitin.com analysis.

There are 10 weeks of class (excluding week 1) and students are expected to complete 8 weekly reading journals each worth 12.5 marks for a total of 100 marks. Students are not expected to submit a weekly reading journal on weeks that they are delivering a presentation. Like the participation grade, perfect grades on weekly reading journals should be considered rare.

**Missed weekly reading journals will receive a 0/12.5. If using an SRA, students may submit a weekly reading journal 48 hours following the due date. E.g., Week 2's reading journal is due Jan. 17 @ 6pm. If using an SRA, the due date becomes Jan. 19 @ 6pm. S

Students are encouraged to attend class even if they have not submitted a weekly reading journal so that they can earn participation marks.

3. Two Seminar Presentations: 30% --- refer to guidelines posted on OWL for specific requirements

Each student will be responsible for two seminar presentations that will last roughly 90 minutes (~30 minutes of speaking time and ~60 minutes of class discussion). During the presentation students will

- briefly summarize and identify key themes in the assigned readings;
- make connections within the fields of sociology, criminology, history or psychology (e.g., theories, laws, politics, historical eras, changing medical or psychological perspectives, etc.);
- identify any interesting pop culture or media examples (optional); and
- pose discussion questions throughout the presentation to spark dialogue among

Students will sign up for presentation dates during the first week of class.

4. Argumentative Essay: 35% -- refer to guidelines posted on OWL for specific requirements

This term, students will write one argumentative essay, based on pre-determined topics, making use of both class material and academic sources. Failing to provide in-text citations will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Students will upload their essays on OWL.

Due Date: Mar. 20 @ 11:55pm on OWL. If using an SRA, the due date becomes Mar. 22 @ 11:55pm on OWL

All written work, including weekly reading journals, presentations, and essays will be subject to similarity testing on OWL via Turnitin.com.

How to Contact Me & Get Important Information:

- All important information can be found on the OWL. Check OWL regularly for course updates.

If a student has a question not addressed on the outline, in class lessons, or on OWL, they may:

- Ask a question before, during, or after class
- Visit virtual office hours
- Send an email with the **subject line SOC4452** (follow up if no response within 48 hours)

Important Policies

Policies for Assignment Deadlines:

Participation & Weekly Reading Journals

- See above for policies on missed classes/participation and missed/late weekly reading journals.

Late Essays

- Students can use 'self-reported absences' (SRAs) for missed or late assignments without documentation. SRAs excuse late or missed assignments for up to 48 hours as per school policies. E.g., If a student uses an SRA for the essay due Mar. 20 @ 11:55pm, the essay becomes due Mar. 22 @ 11:55pm. For more information on SRAs, see below.
- Late assignments without an SRA or accommodations will incur a penalty of **10% grade reduction per day late** (including weekends). Papers will not be accepted 5 days after the due date.
- All late assignments must be uploaded on OWL.

Late Presentations

- Late presentations will NOT be accepted without an SRA or approved academic accommodation.

EXTENSION REQUESTS: Requests for extensions must be made **well before the due date** and may be granted if there are legitimate medical or compassionate grounds. Documentation must be submitted.
→ see Policy on Accommodation and Academic Considerations below.

A Note on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for 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 (www.turnitin.com).

Policies on Examinations

There are no exams in this class.

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:

Laptops are permitted in class, but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.html.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work

Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a *Self-Reported Absence (SRA)* form online provided that the absence is **48 hours or less** and the other conditions specified in the [Senate policy](#) are met. Two important exceptions to this rule: SRAs will NOT be allowed for final examinations or assessments worth more than 30% of a given course. Students whose absences are expected to last **longer than 48 hours**, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a [Student Medical Certificate](#) (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds) to your Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf

Accessibility Options:

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

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 web site: www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health@Western (www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.