

Portland State University  
**UNST 266A Sexualities Sophomore Inquiry**  
Winter 2010

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Drop-In Office Hours: Thursday 2-3pm

To Schedule an Appointment call: 725-3516

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**Course Description:** This course explores sexuality in the United States from a variety of social and cultural perspectives. We will look at the social production of sexualities and consider the impact of this process on social identities, cultural expectations, power dynamics, and political formations. The course includes an exploration of the relationships between sexuality, gender, race, social class, and citizenship status.

**Reading Materials:**

Required textbook: Strombler, Mindy, et al. eds. *Sex Matters: The Sexuality and Society Reader*, Third Edition. (Allyn & Bacon, 2010). Book is available for purchase at the PSU Women's Resource Center (Montgomery Hall) during the first week of classes and thereafter at In Other Words Bookstore, 8 Northeast Killingsworth Street, (503) 232-6003.

**Honor Code:** You are expected to uphold Portland State University's student conduct code. This code prohibits "academic dishonesty" defined as "knowingly or intentionally seeking to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or participation in such acts. This includes, but is not limited to: (a) cheating, (b) fraud, (c) plagiarism, such as word for word copying, using borrowed words or phrases from original text into new patterns without attribution, or paraphrasing another writer's ideas; (d) The buying or selling of all or any portion of course assignments and research papers; (e) Performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) for other persons; (f) Unauthorized disclosure or receipt of academic information; (g) Falsification of research data; and (h) Unauthorized collaboration." Any assignments found to be in violation of the code will receive a failing grade, and all participants will be subject to disciplinary action. Any questions about this policy may be directed to the Office of Student Affairs, Smith Memorial Student Union.

**Accessibility:** Students with disabilities who may need disability-related classroom accommodations for this course are encouraged to contact Disability Services (ext. 5-4150), and to consult with the professor.

**Course Changes:** Please keep in mind that this syllabus is subject to change (with reasonable notice). Readings, topics, and assignments may be added or removed depending on the needs and interests of the class as a whole. If you miss class, it is always your responsibility to find out what you missed, including changes in assignments or readings.

**Assignments:** Select any combination of assignments from the list below which equal 80 points. Plan on completing assignments worth a potential 40 pts by the end of week five, February 2. The rest of your assignments can be completed anytime before the end of the last regular meetings of the class, Thursday, March 11. (We will meet during our scheduled final exam period, but I will not accept any further assignments during finals week, unless you have arranged this with me in advance.) During the final exam period, you will list the assignments that you completed, give yourself points for each one, and a final grade for the course.

Mentor attendance and participation are required and will be worth up to 20 points of your final grade.

**1) Written Learning Plan (10 pts):** Create a written learning plan during the first two weeks of the term which expresses your goals for the course and states how you anticipate putting your plan into action during the term. Your goals might be related to developing academic skills such as learning to read against the grain instead of assuming that everything you read is “true” and “correct” or working on a new system of taking notes as you read or becoming more familiar with library resources. You might consider tackling larger questions like why history is a relevant area of study or to what extent you believe in the social construction of sexuality. Perhaps more personal goals will be your focus like developing supportive friendships with other students or learning to juggle work, family and school in better ways than you might have done in the past.

**2) Reflection Journal (10 pts for each set of three pages):** Keep an informal journal which records your responses to the content of the course materials. Avoid stringing together a series of short responses to individual articles. Work on themes which draw on two or three assigned articles for each set of three pages.

**3) Group Book Project (20 pts):** You will each be part of a book group. Groups select a book from a list provided. Each group will read and discuss the book either in on-line conversations through BlackBoard, face-to-face meetings or conference calls. Each member of the group will be responsible for representing your book to other members of the class. Choose from the following books or suggest your own:

- Leslie Feinberg, *Drag King Dreams*
- Julia Alvarez, *Once Upon a Quinceanera*
- Kate Bornstein *Gender Outlaw*
- Kate Bornstein, *My Gender Workbook*
- Noelle Howey, *Dress Codes: Of Three Girlhoods- My Mother’s, My Father’s, and Mine*
- Amber Hollibaugh, *My Dangerous Desires*
- Audre Lorde, *Zami*
- Joan Nestle, *GenderQueer: Voices from Beyond the Sexual Binary*
- Dorothy Allison, *Two or Three Things I know for Sure*

**4) Attendance (20 pts, 1 pt for each full class attended)**

**6) Written Self-Evaluation (10 pts):** At the end of the term, write a detailed evaluation of your performance in the course. This should be at least two to three full pages typed and read more like a cohesive essay than a list of achievements.

If you submitted a learning plan at the beginning of the course, use this as a template for evaluating your progress toward your learning goals. How well did you fulfill your learning plan? What things demonstrate your progress? Did your goals change during the course of the term? How and why? How did you select your assignments for the course? How well did they serve your learning plan? Where might you go with your learning goal next term?

If you did not submit a learning plan, consider some of the following things. Did you develop goals during the course of the term? What were they and what progress did you make toward your learning goals? What aspects of the course were engaging to you and why? Did you read the course materials deeply and fully? Why or why not? How did you select the assignments and how successful were you in fulfilling those you selected?

**7) Self-Designed Project (20-40 pts):** Design, carry out, and present to the class a project which represents the central meaning of the class to you. This could be an art project, a web page, a blog, a traditional research paper, an action project, a short story, a video, a journalistic article, a performance piece or anything else which encapsulates what you take from the course. Decide for yourself how many points to assign this project: 20, 30 or 40.

**Schedule of Readings:**

Week One: Chapter One

Week Two: Chapter Two

Etc. etc. etc.