

Human Sexuality and Disability
Course Syllabus—Summer A—2008
RCS 6470

Instructor: Mary Ellen Young, Ph.D., C.R.C.
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Office hours: Before or after class or by appointment
Classroom location: HPNP G201
Times: Tuesdays, Periods 2-4 (9:30 am-1:45 pm)
Thursdays, Periods 2-3 (9:30 am-12:15 pm)

Course Description: Rehabilitation professionals learn the physiological and psychological aspects of human sexuality and the impact of disability and chronic illness on a person's sense of sexuality and sexual functioning.

Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the sexuality issues of rehabilitation populations, including persons with spinal cord injury, neuromuscular diseases and post-polio syndrome, multiple sclerosis, amputations, cancer, brain injury, blindness and visual impairment, deafness and hearing impairment, cardiovascular disease and stroke, cardiac and pulmonary disease, mental retardation, chronic mental illness and chemical dependency disorders.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the biological aspects of human sexuality, including anatomy, physiology, and human sexual response, in addition to issues in contraception, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual dysfunction.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the psychosocial aspects of human sexuality, including sexuality throughout the life span, dating and relationship issues, gender identity, sexual orientation, pornography, sexual disorders, sex therapy and sexual victimization.
4. Students will explore their own values and beliefs about sexuality.
5. Students will develop an awareness of ethical and professional issues concerning sexuality in rehabilitation counseling and explore interventions and treatment modalities for various sexual concerns and dysfunctions of people with disabilities.

Methods:

Lectures, discussion, readings, films, student assignments.

**Values, self-exploration,
and self-disclosure:**

Because (1) our views on sexuality are rooted in our personal values and cultural belief systems and (2) these values and beliefs may impact our capacity to work effectively as rehabilitation counselors, students are asked to complete a number of individual self-exploration exercises. In order to protect student privacy, however, these exercises will not be turned in to the professor or shared with other class members. Any self-disclosure about sexual beliefs, behaviors, or experiences is completely voluntary and any student may choose not to self-disclose at any time. It is expected that students will show respect for others who have differing values, beliefs, and practices.

**Attendance and class
participation:**

Student attendance in class is required. Excessive or unexcused absences will negatively impact final grades. Students who register for this course should understand that sexually explicit readings, materials, discussion, and films are a necessary part of the course content and may create feelings of discomfort or distress for an individual. Any student who believes that such feelings will have a negative impact on his or her completion of the coursework should discuss this with the instructor in a timely manner. Students are expected to participate in class discussions and assignments.

Course evaluation:

A confidential course evaluation will be completed by students the week before the final exam. Students are encouraged to bring questions or concerns about the course to the attention of the instructor at any time during the semester.

Textbooks:

Sipski, M. L., & Alexander, C. J. (1997). *Sexual function in people with disability and chronic illness: A health professional's guide*. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen.
(Recommended)

Crooks, R., & Baur, K. (2002). *Our sexuality* (9th ed.) Pacific Grove, CA: Wadsworth.
(Required)

Student evaluation: Students will be evaluated by two multiple choice examinations and by their presentations on disability and sexuality topics. Points will be assigned as follows:

First examination	100 points
Second exam	100 points
Student presentations	100 points

Grades will be assigned as follows:

Grading scale:	A	90-100%
	B+	86-89%
	B	80-85%
	C+	76-79%
	C	70-75%
	D	60-69%
	E	less than 60%

Guidelines for student presentations:

1. Conduct a literature search and prepare a bibliography (APA style) of 10-20 articles specific to the topic of sexuality and your assigned disability (including material from Sipski and Alexander, as appropriate, and articles from Dr. Young's collection).
2. Prepare a resource list of materials (including web sites and listservs) that pertain to your disability and sexuality topics.
3. Prepare a 3-5 page summary of issues surrounding your assigned disability and sexuality, including the following:
 - a. Specific physiological or psychological problems that are a result of the disability itself.
 - b. Sexual issues related to the disability that might impact an individual's ability to establish satisfactory sexual relationships, for example, body image, communication, or medication management.
 - c. Specific strategies (medical or counseling) for assisting clients with disabilities to develop satisfactory sexual relationships.
4. Prepare a 25-minute presentation of your topic to share with your classmates. Feel free to be creative and entertaining with your presentation. Include your summary, bibliography, and resource list as handouts.
5. Students papers will be evaluated on (1) adequacy and appropriateness of written response to #3 above (40 points), (2) clarity of writing and use of APA style in paper and

resource list (10 points), (3) appropriateness and thoroughness of resource list (20 points), (4) presentation content (20 points), and (5) presentation style (10 points).

Extra credit opportunities:

Students will have 8 opportunities to earn extra credit points (maximum 16 points added to exam grades). One point will be earned by bringing in an item reflecting sex in the media, two points if the item pertains to sexuality and disability. Media may include print newspapers, magazines, TV, movies, music, or Internet/web items or articles. In order to receive credit, you must be present at the end of the class period, share your item with the rest of the class, and turn in something to me with your name on it representing the item.

Topic Outline and Required Readings

Week 1—May 13

Topics:

Introduction to course
Research, values and vocabulary
Disability and sexuality

Readings:

Crooks & Baur, “Perspectives on Sexuality,” “Sex Research: Methods and Problems,”
“Gender Issues,” pp. 1-80.

Sipski & Alexander, “Impact of Disability or Chronic Illness on Sexual Function,”
“Medical Sexual History and Physical,” “Sexual Evaluation,” “Psychophysiology
and Laboratory Testing,” pp. 3-69

Week 1—May 15

Topics:

Reproduction 101
Anatomy and physiology

Readings:

Crooks & Baur, “Female Sexual Anatomy and Physiology,” “Male Sexual Anatomy and
Physiology,” pp. 81-145, “Conceiving Children,” pp. 335-369.

Extra Credit 1

Week 2—May 20

Topics:

Human sexual response
Medications and their impact
Sexuality and reproductive health among women with disabilities
Sexual victimization
Abuse and disability

Readings:

Crooks & Baur, “Sexual Arousal and Response,” pp. 146-181, “Sexual Coercion,” pp.
548-580.

Sipski & Alexander, “Basic Sexual Function Over Time,” “Medications and Their
Impact,” pp. 75-115.

Nosek, M. A., Rintala, D. H., **Young, M. E.**, Howland, C. A., Foley, C. C., Rossi, D., & Chanpong, G. (1996). *Sexual functioning among women with physical disabilities*. Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 77, 107-115.

Nosek, M. A., **Young, M. E.**, Rintala, D. H., Howland, C. A., Foley, C. C., & Bennett, J. (1995). *Barriers to reproductive health maintenance among women with physical disabilities*. Journal of Women's Health, 4(5), 505-518.

Sipski & Alexander, "Sexual Abuse and People with Disabilities," pp. 577-616

Young, M. E., Nosek, M. A., Howland, C. A., Chanpong, G., & Rintala, D. H. (1997). Prevalence of abuse of women with physical disabilities. Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 78(12) Supplement 5, S34-S38.

Nosek, M. A., Howland, C. A., & **Young, M. E.** (1997). Abuse of women with disabilities: Policy implications. Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 8(1&2), 157-175.

Extra Credit 2

Week 2—May 22—students will attend domestic violence workshop or do alternative assignment

Week 3—May 27

Topics:

Aging and sexual functioning
Psychosocial issues and sexuality
Sexuality throughout the life span

Readings:

Crooks & Baur, "Love, Attraction, Attachment and Intimate Relationships," "Communication in Sexual Behavior," "Sexual Behaviors," "Sexuality During Childhood and Adolescence," "Sexuality and Adult Years," pp. 182-266 and 370-427.

Rintala, D. H., Howland, C. A., Nosek, M. A., Bennett, J. L., **Young, M. E.**, Foley, C. C., Rossi, C. D., & Chanpong, G. (1997). Dating issues for women with physical disabilities. Sexuality and Disability, 15(4), 219-241.

Extra Credit 3

Week 3—May 29

FIRST EXAMINATION

Week 4—June 3

Topics

Sexual orientation
Sexual disorders and treatment

Readings:

Crooks & Baur, “Sexual Orientations,” “The Nature and Origin of Sexual Difficulties,”
“Sex Therapy and Enhancement,” pp. 267-297 and 428-471.

Sipski & Alexander, “Living with a Disability: A Woman’s Perspective,” “Living with a
Disability: A Man’s Perspective,” “Sexuality Education and the Team Approach,”
“Disability and the Lesbian, Gay Man, or Bisexual Individual,” “Management of
Erectile Dysfunction,” “Management of Other Male Sexual Dysfunctions,”
“Management of Female Sexual Dysfunction,” pp. 119-146

Extra Credit 4

Week 4—June 5

Topics:

Atypical sexual behavior
Ethical practice in rehabilitation
The disability perspective from a wellness perspective

Readings:

Crooks & Baur, “Atypical Sexual Behavior,” pp. 526-547.

Nosek, M. A., Howland, C. A., **Young, M. E.**, Georgiou, D., Rintala, D. H., Foley, C. C.,
Bennett, J. L., & Smith, Q. (1994). Wellness models and sexuality among
women with physical disabilities. Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling,
25(1), 50-58.

Extra Credit 5

Week 5—June 10

Topics:

Prostitution
Pornography
Spinal cord injury

Readings:

Crooks & Baur, “Sex for Sale,” pp. 581-597.

White, M. J., Rintala, D. H., **Young, M. E.**, Hart, K. A., & Fuhrer, M. J. (1992). Sexual
activities, concerns, and interests of men with spinal cord injury living in the

community. American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 71(4), 225-231.

Extra Credit 6

Week 5—June 12

Topics:

Contraception

Sexually transmitted diseases

Readings:

Crooks & Baur, “Contraception,” “Sexually Transmitted Diseases,” pp. 299-334 and 472-525.

Extra Credit 7

Week 6—June 17

Sexuality and Disability Student Presentations:

Deafness and hearing impairment

Blindness and visual impairment

Epilepsy

Mental retardation/developmental disabilities

Mental illness and substance abuse

Cardiac and pulmonary disease and cerebrovascular disease and stroke*

Brain injury*

Cancer*

Neuromuscular diseases including cerebral palsy, post-polio syndrome and multiple sclerosis*

Amputation*

Readings:

*Chapter in Sipski & Alexander on each topic

Articles from Dr. Young’s collection

Extra Credit 8

Week 6—June 19

SECOND EXAMINATION

Academic Issues

ACCOMMODATIONS: *The course instructor wants every student to have the opportunity for a positive learning experience. This includes my willingness to provide accommodations to students with disabilities. Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to me when requesting accommodations.*

COUNSELING: *Students may occasionally have personal issues that arise in the course of pursuing higher education or that may interfere with their academic performance. Students facing problems are encouraged to seek confidential assistance at the University of Florida Counseling Center, 352-392-1575, or Student Mental Health Services, 352-392-1171. Visit their web sites for more information: <http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/> or <http://shcc.ufl.edu/smhs/>.*

Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from the Alachua County Crisis Center: 352-264-6789.

STUDENT HEALTH: *The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services, including primary care, women's health care, immunizations, mental health care, and pharmacy services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: www.health.ufl.edu/shcc*

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: *Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic integrity (see Student Conduct Code, the Graduate Student Handbook or this web site for more details: www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.php*

The Honor Code

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

Cheating. The improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit. Taking of information includes, but is not limited to, copying graded homework assignments from another student; working

together with another individual(s) on a take-home test or homework when not specifically permitted by the teacher; looking or attempting to look at another student's paper during an examination; looking or attempting to look at text or notes during an examination when not permitted. The tendering of information includes, but is not limited to, giving of your work to another student to be used or copied; giving someone answers to exam questions either when the exam is being given or after taking an exam giving or selling a term paper or other written materials to another student; sharing information on a graded assignment.

Plagiarism. The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the work is published or unpublished, or simply the work of a fellow student. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on an exam, term paper, homework, or other written materials or oral presentations for an academic requirement; submitting a paper which was purchased from a term paper service as your own work; submitting anyone else's paper as your own work.