

**WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITY HEALTH**

PH 365: Human Sexuality Course Syllabus

Course Information

Class Location:	Online
Class Meeting Time:	Asynchronous
Instructor:	Ms. Mary Catherine Rush, MSPH (she/her/hers)
Office Location:	Academic Complex Room 129C
Instructor Office Hours:	In-person, via phone, or virtually Mondays and Wednesdays 10:00 am-12:00 pm OR by appointment
Instructor Email:	mary.rush@wku.edu
Instructor Office Phone:	270-745-5129

- If you have any questions about the course content, assignments, or organization, please contact the instructor.
- Please make sure you include your **name** and which **class** you are in.
- Communications received outside of 8:00 am—5:00 pm CT will typically be responded to the following workday during the work week.
- If your message is sent over the weekend, please allow 48 hours for a response.
- If you **DO NOT** receive an email response within the time periods listed above, please follow up.
- For technical support with Blackboard or Zoom please contact [IT Services](#).

Course Description

PH 365: Human Sexuality examines sociological, physiological, and psychological aspects of human sexuality in relation to family life, courtship, marriage, reproduction, education, and aging. It includes information on sexual assault, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV/AIDS.

Prerequisite Courses

21 hours of Foundations and Explorations Courses, or junior status

Required and Optional Texts and Tools

Required Textbook	Human Sexuality: Diversity in Contemporary Society, Eleventh Edition by William Yarber and Barbara Sayad ISBN-13: 978-1260888591
Optional Resources	In addition to the textbook, there will be links to websites, videos, articles, and other supplemental materials posted in the course content in Blackboard. Students are expected to read all materials posted unless explicitly marked as optional.
Optional Tools	Students will also need Microsoft Word (or another program that is compatible) and Microsoft PowerPoint (or compatible program).
Technology	This course uses Blackboard . Make sure your computer system requirements meet the WKU requirements for online learners .

Course Goals

The overall goals of this course include:

1. To introduce the core concepts of human sexuality across the globe and in society
2. To develop practical skills and exposure to communication, critical thinking, problem solving, self-reflection, and independent work ethic
3. To create a safe, active, and anti-oppressive learning environment where students can develop their skills and interests as adult learners

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Deconstruct the contemporary and historical views on human sexuality.
2. Critique methods that have been utilized in sexuality research.
3. Classify appropriate terminology to describe male and female reproductive anatomy and physiology.
4. Organize and differentiate psychosexual development throughout the lifespan and related theoretical perspectives concerning sexual development.
5. Examine and reflect upon individual sexuality and relationships, including sexual identity, sexual values, gender roles, gender identity, sexuality through the lifespan, sexuality and disabilities, and sexuality and communication.
6. Critique contemporary societal concerns related to solitary and shared sex, same-gender orientation and behavior, same-sex marriage, and homo-/bi-phobia.
7. Outline the influence of culture, religion, politics, and the media on the spectrum of human sexual behaviors.
8. Distinguish sexual problems including sexual coercion, rape, and abuse; sexually transmissible infections; atypical sexual behaviors; and sexual dysfunction.

Course Grading
Point Breakdown

Quizzes	50 points
Participation	50 points
Self-Reflections	50 points
Critical Thinking Assignments	50 points
Media Analysis Project	100 points
Final Individual Project	100 points
Total	400 points

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Points	Percentage
A	360-400	90-100%
B	320-359	80-89%
C	280-319	70-79%
D	240-279	60-69%
F	< 240	< 60%

Trigger Warning

The content in this course focuses on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. You may find some of the readings, graphics, and assignments emotionally challenging, or difficult, especially topics that challenge your world views or are perhaps reflective of lived experiences. If you feel intellectually or emotionally disturbed by what you learn in class, don't assume that you should be concerned. It may only mean that you are engaging with novel perspectives, which is what college is all about. However, if you find yourself distressed, please reach out to me and/or seek support from a loved one, WKU Counseling Center, or another mental health service. Alternative assignments may be possible in some cases.

This is a blanket trigger warning for this course. I will do my best to include topic-specific trigger warnings each week as well. I encourage you to review the course topics, schedule, and text and reach out to me if there are any specific areas you are concerned about.

Please carefully consider the following course topics and activities list. Remember that this is an elective course, and if you feel that you will not be able to complete these assignments, it is recommended that you do not take this course.

Course Topics

- Cultural, Historical, and Research Perspectives on Sexuality
- Sex, Art, the Media, and the Law
- Sexual Anatomy and Physiology
- Developmental and Social Perspectives on Gender, Gender Roles, and Sexuality
- Sexual Orientation, Identity, and Behaviors
- Sexual Individuality and Sexual Values
- Sexuality Across the Lifespan
- Sexuality and Communication in Intimate Relationships
- Human Sexual Arousal, Response, and Expression
- Solitary Sex and Shared Sex
- Variations in Sexual Behavior
- Contraception and Abortion
- Reproduction, Reproductive Technology, Conception, Pregnancy, and Childbirth
- Sexual Health, Sexual Function, Sexual Difficulties, and Sexual Dissatisfaction
- Sexual Enhancement and Sexual Therapies
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS
- Sexual Consent, Sexual Assault, and Sexual Misconduct

Course Activity Descriptions

All assignments are due **11:59 pm Sunday evening CT** (discussion posts are the exception to this rule). Written assignments are to be double-spaced, one-inch margins, and in a standard font. References and citations should be used and should be in APA format. The [WKU citation guide](#) is an excellent tool for assistance with APA if you are unfamiliar. This link is also included in Blackboard. Assignments should be uploaded as word documents or PDFs.

Class Readings

Students are responsible for textbook reading as well as reading/watching weekly material posted on Blackboard. Content may include power points, recorded lectures, videos, podcasts, or other medium. Content will be checked for accessibility; however, if there are issues accessing any content, please notify me immediately so I can fix it. Anything posted in course content is required unless otherwise noted by me.

Quizzes

There will be quizzes throughout the course of the semester. Students will access these via Blackboard. These quizzes are designed to ensure students are keeping up with and comprehending course materials. Students may use their notes and course material for the quizzes; however, answers must be in the student's own words. These are untimed and may only be completed once. *Objectives 1-8*

If a student misses a quiz, they will be allowed **one** makeup during the semester, otherwise, late quizzes will not be accepted.

Participation

Students will participate by completing discussion board posts in response to questions related to what we are learning. When there is a discussion board assignment, you will post three times. One will be a direct response to the question in the forum that must be submitted by **Wednesday night** of the week the discussions are due, and the other two will be additional posts commenting on your classmates' posts or comments that are due by **Sunday night** at the end of the week. *Objectives 1-8*

Self-Reflections

Periodically there will be self-reflection assignments. These self-reflections are meant to help you reflect on your own thoughts, opinions, and knowledge of human sexuality. There will be 10 topics you can choose from. During the semester, you will choose **five** of those ten topics to complete. These reflection assignments are meant to be written in essay form and do not require outside references. They do require proper formatting, critical thinking, introspection, and timeliness. *Objectives are dependent on which reflections are chosen.*

Critical Thinking Assignments

Students will be assigned two critical thinking assignments. These are informal written assignments meant for you to introspectively evaluate and analyze your attitudes, behaviors, and growth in relation to human sexuality. One will be due at the beginning of the semester and the other will be due towards the end of the semester. You will respond to prompts for these assignments. Additional instructions can be found on Blackboard. *Objectives 5-8*

Projects

Over the course of the semester, you will work on two different projects. One will be a media analysis where you will examine how the media portrays aspects of human sexuality. The second will be your choice between a field trip or an interview. There are several topic ideas for you to choose from for these assignments. You may also come up with your own topic proposal as long as it is approved by me. Detailed instructions can be found on Blackboard. *Objectives 5-8*

Extra Credit

There is one extra credit activity available to students for this course. Additional extra credit opportunities will be considered based on evaluation of the class progress according to my discretion. You cannot receive over 400 points in this class.

- If you meet with me at least once outside of class during the semester (Zoom or In Person; see my office hours above), you will be awarded 2 points toward your final grade.

Course Policies

General Statement

I understand that college can be a very difficult and stressful time. Please know that I am here to work with you, and I am here to support you. I can only help you to the extent you are willing to communicate and work with me. Do not be afraid to reach out to me with questions or concerns. I want everyone to succeed.

Caveat: This syllabus and the course schedule are subject to change at my discretion.

Inclusion Statement

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to ensuring all members of our campus community have access to equitable and inclusive learning, working, and living environments. At the heart of our mission, we seek to provide holistic education and employment experiences that prepare students, faculty, and staff to become effective scholars, contributors, and leaders in our diverse and evolving communities. Consistent with our campus purpose statement and creed, this classroom will be a respectful space, welcoming all sexes, races, ages, national origins, ethnicities, gender identities/labels/expressions, intellectual and physical abilities, sexual orientations, faith/non-faith perspectives, income levels and socio-economic classes, political ideologies, educational backgrounds, primary languages, family statuses, military experiences, cognitive styles, and communication styles. If at any time during this course you are excluded or feel a sense of alienation from the course content, please feel free to contact me privately without fear of reprisal.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

The history of our community and land gives us the opportunity to recognize, respect, and appreciate our place within that history. Western Kentucky University (WKU) honors and acknowledges the Indigenous peoples' land on which this University was built. All land in the state of Kentucky was once Indigenous territory, which is why it is our duty to acknowledge that WKU exists on Native land. This particular region of Kentucky was home to both the Shawnee (Shawandasse Tula) and Cherokee East (ᏍᎪᎵᏁᎶ ᏌᎠᎳᎡᏉᎦᏰᎩ Tsalaguwetiye) tribes.

We also honor and acknowledge the former residents of Jonesville. According to the Jonesville History Project, “Jonesville was a predominantly African American community in Bowling Green, Kentucky, which was demolished in the 1960s to make way for the expansion of the WKU campus. This incident echoed a pattern across the country where the power of eminent domain was utilized to seize property from minority communities for large public works projects under the guise of urban revitalization.”

Attendance Policy (See [University Policy](#))

It is the policy of Western Kentucky University that class attendance is an important part of a student's educational experience and is a requirement for success in courses. Registration into a course obligates the student to be regular and punctual in class attendance. **The instructor should be notified by e-mail or telephone if a student is unable to attend before class begins. All students are given FIVE free excused absences that do not need an explanation. Beyond those five days, absences will need to be formally excused.** Alternative plans are in place for students who will be in isolation, quarantine, receiving care from a health care facility or unable to attend in-person class meetings due to medical reasons. Such students will participate in class activities online. Similarly, class activities will shift online, should the instructor be unable to meet with students in-person for medical reasons. We will do our best to follow all safety protocols to ensure the smooth running of the class.

Late/Makeup Work Policy

Due dates for every assignment are provided on the course schedule and posted on Blackboard. Unless otherwise stated, assignments are due on those days. Late work is discouraged as it can impact your learning and overall performance in the course. However, I recognize that sometimes “life happens.” In these instances, please communicate with me **before the assignment deadline to propose an assignment extension**. Communication is key here.

If you do not communicate with me prior to the assignment deadline, then point deductions will occur for any assignment submitted after the deadline. There will be no penalty within the first 24 hours of the deadline to account for unforeseen circumstances. Following the first 24 hours, a deduction of 10% of your final grade per day will take place (weekends included). In case of documented emergencies or extenuating circumstances, exceptions may be considered. Please contact the instructor as soon as possible. I will evaluate these instances on a case-by-case basis.

Further, grading for late work will not be considered a priority for the instructor. Your grades may be delayed if your work is late.

Make-up Projects will only be allowed under circumstances that are recognized by the instructor or university such as death in the immediate family, excuse from a doctor, sickness, or emergencies. This will have to be discussed prior to the exam date. Conditions for the make-up will be set by the instructor. Note: plan your end of semester travel wisely.

Make-up Quizzes are allowed according to the **one-strike policy** listed under the course activity descriptions. If a student misses a quiz, they will be allowed one makeup during the semester for any reason, otherwise, late quizzes will not be accepted.

ADA Policy

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a Faculty Notification Letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Title IX Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct/Assault

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding [WKU's Title IX – Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#) policies. Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are “Responsible Employees” of the University and **MUST** report what you share to WKU’s Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU’s Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159. Sexual Assault Resources: <https://www.wku.edu/titleix/>

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Western Kentucky University does not discriminate against any student or exclude any student from its educational programs or activities, including classes or extracurricular activities, on the basis of pregnancy and/or pregnancy-related conditions such as, but not limited to, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom. Students who seek pregnancy or pregnancy-related accommodations should make their requests as soon as possible via WKU’s Title IX Website at www.wku.edu/titleix/ under the heading, “Pregnancy or Pregnancy-Related Conditions.” Students can also contact the Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir, via email at ena.demir@wku.edu or by phone at (270) 745-6867 to request accommodations or seek assistance. We encourage students and faculty to work together to establish a plan that allows the student to complete the class and coursework without jeopardizing academic integrity and course standards. The Title IX Coordinator can help facilitate conversations between students and faculty regarding appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

If you are a WKU student and believe that you have experienced an incident(s) of discrimination or harassment based on pregnancy (or pregnancy related conditions or issues), please report it to the Title IX Coordinator via email at ena.demir@wku.edu or by phone at (270) 745-6867.

Additional resources for pregnant and parenting students can be found on WKU’s Title IX Website at www.wku.edu/titleix/.

WKU Policy on Plagiarism

To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one’s own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of students must be their own. Students must give the author(s) credit for any source material used. To lift directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage after having changed a few words, even if the source is cited, is also plagiarism. **Students’ work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.**

WKU Policy on Cheating

No student shall receive or give assistance not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or in the preparation of an essay, laboratory report, problem assignment, or other project that is submitted for purposes of grade determination. Cheating will result in an automatic zero on the assignment.

Policy on ChatGPT and Generative AI Tools

In general, I expect that the work you submit in this class will be your own and you are not authorized to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Tutor.ai, etc. for completing assignments. However, there may be specific assignments or activities in which we may utilize these tools to enhance your learning experience. In these instances, I will provide you with additional information about the assignment and how AI will be employed and cited. Again, unless permission is granted, you are expected to complete assignments **without substantive assistance** from others, including AI tools. If you are unsure if you are using AI tools appropriately in this course, I encourage you to visit with me. Examples of how to cite AI tools are available at <https://libguides.wku.edu/stylewrite/ai>. Any submitted assignment/activity found to have been entirely generated through AI will result in ZERO points.

WKU Writing Center

Students are encouraged to use the services of the [Writing Center](#) for their projects/papers. Face-to-face and online reviews are available.

Policy on Regular and Substantive Interaction

The U.S. Department of Education requires that distance education courses must include regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty. For more information about Regular and Substantive Interaction at WKU, please visit the [Regular and Substantive Interaction in Online and Distance Learning webpage](#).

In this course, regular and substantive interaction will take place in the following ways:

- Weekly announcements with information about upcoming course materials, reminders, and updates
- Timely and constructive feedback on assignments provided within one week of submission
- Weekly office hours availability
- Faculty-responses and facilitation with discussion board conversations
- Providing information related to course content to further student understanding

Additional Resources for Students

- Academic Integrity: <https://www.wku.edu/handbook/academic-dishonesty.php/>
- Student Handbook: <https://www.wku.edu/handbook/index.php>
- Student Resource Portal: <https://www.wku.edu/online/srp/>
- Syllabus Information: <https://www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo/>
- Student Tutoring Services: <https://www.wku.edu/startcenter/>
- Free Tutoring at the WKU Learning Center: <https://www.wku.edu/tlc/>
- Public Health and Medicine Library Guides: <https://libguides.wku.edu/publichealth>
- WKU Counseling Center: <https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/>
- WKU Student Accessibility Resource Center: <https://www.wku.edu/sarc/>