



## Sociology 4452G-001

### Social Construction of Sexuality

Winter 2025

<b>Delivery Method</b>	<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
In-person	See Brightspace	See Brightspace

<b>Course Instructor</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Dr. Julie McMullin	<a href="mailto:mcmullin@uwo.ca">mcmullin@uwo.ca</a> Department of Sociology

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***This syllabus is subject to change. Please see the course OWL Brightspace site possible updates***

#### Course Description

This course will explore the social construction of various forms of sexuality from sociological, criminological, historical, cultural, raced, classed, gendered and queer frameworks. The course will examine theoretical conceptions of normalcy and move into discussions about both legal and illegal forms of sexuality.

**Antirequisite(s):** None

**Prerequisite(s):** Registration in third year or above in any Department of Sociology module, or fourth year in any module.

Unless you have either the prerequisites 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.

**Course Weight:** 0.50

## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Understand and be able to explain how sexuality and deviant sexuality are socially constructed.
- Understand and be able to explain how social structure, place, and time impact constructions of sexuality and its expressions.
- Creatively engage peers in presentation of course material.
- Critically evaluate and synthesize course material in presentations and writing.
- Further develop critical thinking, research, and writing skills.

## TEXTBOOK AND OTHER LEARNING MATERIALS

**Required textbook:** Ralston, Meredith (2021). *Slut-Shaming, Whorephobia, and the Unfinished Sexual Revolution*. McGill-Queen's Press.

Print (\$35.65) and e-book versions of the text are available at the bookstore. [Click here for information about the textbook costs.](#)

**Students need to purchase this edition. Older editions will not be sufficient.**

**Additional required readings will be available through OWL. Additional course material (e.g., videos, readings) will be posted on the OWL Brightspace site.**

### **COMMUNICATION:**

Students are responsible for checking the course [OWL Brightspace](#) site on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

The best way to reach me is through email ([mcmullin@uwo.ca](mailto:mcmullin@uwo.ca)). I will endeavour to reply to messages within 24 hours between Monday and Friday and within 48 hours on Saturday and Sunday.

### **COURSE CONTENT AND SCHEDULE:**

Students should check the course [OWL Brightspace site](#) frequently to access the online lessons, course material, and for key deadlines.

### **METHOD OF EVALUATION:**

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

**As flexible deadlines are used in this course, requests for academic consideration will not be granted.**

### **What does this mean?**

For attendance: 2 absences are allowed.

For weekly questions/muddy points: These are due two days before class, but you will be able to submit answers for an additional week.

Students are expected to attend all classes and to come to class prepared to critically discuss the readings and other course material.

Students are expected to submit each assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 72 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. **Should students submit their assessment beyond 72 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 5% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade.**

Students will be required to upload all assignments to OWL Brightspace.

<b>Evaluation Component</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Percentage of Grade</b>
Participation	Attend class; actively participate in class discussions; answer online questions; demonstrate accomplishment of learning objectives.	<b>On-going</b>	20%
Paper Proposal	Students will submit a two page paper proposal that includes the general topic, preliminary research question, preliminary outline, and proposed bibliography.	<b>January 31</b>	10%

Seminar facilitation	Students will lead the class discussions of the weekly course readings. This will require short summaries of the readings, critical evaluations (including developing one question for critical thought) and the development of creative group work projects.	<b>Date to be determined during the first class.</b>	30%
Final Paper	Students will write a research paper of approximately 3500 words. The paper will use primary academic sources (10-15) and will address a specific research question.	<b>April 4</b>	40%

**Online Assignments:**

This course requires students to complete online assignments which involves writing answers to weekly survey questions. Completion of these surveys will count toward your participation grades. These surveys and other course material are available on OWL Brightspace.

Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL. If you need assistance, support is available on the [Owl Brightspace help page](#).

**STUDENT ABSENCES:**

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

University policy on academic considerations are described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found here. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.”

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#). Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is always required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described elsewhere in this document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

### **Artificial Intelligence:**

Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploring a topic, with students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Essays and written assignments should reflect the student's own thoughts and independently written work. Students should also generate their own figures (e.g., graphs, diagrams) rather than using AI generated ones. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and effective learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows you to produce original written contributions. The same principles also apply to the use of translation software to support the writing the essays and other written assessments.

## **Academic Policies:**

**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:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**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.

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 (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.



**Copyright:** Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Absence from Course Commitments: Students must familiarize themselves with the Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf)

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is always required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described in the course outline. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the Student Medical Certificate [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

**Note:** missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty Academic Counselling Office.

**Missed Tests and Exams:** Students with an approved absence from an in-class test will be required to write a make-up test. The make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test. Course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the make-up test/exam slots.

Students with an approved absence from a final exam in December or April will be required to write a makeup exam known as a Special Examination. Permission to write a Special Examination may be granted on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documentation provided to the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

Students who fail to write a make-up test or special examination will receive a grade of zero on that assessment.

No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

**Religious Accommodation:** Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#) . Where a student will

be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

**Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:** In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL Brightspace for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

**Accessibility Options:** Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD)

[http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing.

The accommodation policy can be found here:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf) . Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

[www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated_exams.html) .

**Mental Health:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western

<https://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:** Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html) .To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca) .

**Additional resources:**

Registrar Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <http://westernusc.ca/services>

**Course Selection:** Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any antirequisite courses they may have taken.

If a student enrolls in a course for which they do not have the prerequisites, they may be removed from the course and have it deleted from their record. This decision may not be appealed. A student will receive no adjustment to their fees in the event that they are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

If a student takes a course that is antirequisite to a course previously taken, they will lose credit for the earlier course, regardless of the grade achieved in the most recent course.

Please visit your Home Faculty Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic

related matters:

[https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty\\_academic\\_counselling.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html) .

**Bookstore:** Search for Textbook availability and cost

<https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search>