Instructor: Janeane N. Anderson, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Contact Info: jnanders@usc.edu (email); (214) 240-7141 (cell)
Office: TBA
Office Hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays 11:00 am – 12:00 pm and By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
How individuals and groups communicate about sex and sexuality—whether it is for information-seeking purposes, to express sexual identity, to communicate physical and/or emotional needs and desires, or to advocate for one’s sexual health—is an important aspect of human development and interpersonal interaction. This course will explore various aspects of sexual communication from theoretical and practical perspectives. Students in the class will learn about sexual scripts and their impacts on men and women's psychosocial and behavioral development, maintenance and dissolution of sexual relationships, safer-sex negotiation and sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention, the university as a sexual arena, and how new media technologies impact our perceptions and discussions of sex and sexuality. The goal of this course is to prepare students to engage in thoughtful, informed dialogue about sex-related topics (e.g., sexual health, healthy relationships, disease prevention, social justice advocacy) and gain practical skills that will aid them in their personal sexuality navigations.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1) Describe the challenges associated with sexual communication in various interpersonal and relational contexts.
2) Describe the implications of new technologies and social media for sexual communication.
3) Apply current health behavior theories to contemporary health justice-related issues.
4) Demonstrate an ability to use communication concepts to analyze human behavior and to apply those concepts to improve social and professional life.

REQUIRED READING
All of the course readings are available on Blackboard (blackboard.usc.edu). The readings are organized under the Readings/Resources tab with a folder for each week of the semester. All readings should be completed prior to class time on the day that they are assigned in the syllabus.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu or to the Department of Public Safety http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-
safety. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men [http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/] provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [http://sarc.usc.edu] describes reporting options and other resources.

**SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute [http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali], which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html] provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information [http://emergency.usc.edu] will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

**DISABILITY SERVICES**

All accommodation requests based on a disability will be taken seriously and honored by the instructor. Any student requesting academic accommodation based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to your instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.

**ESL**

Please inform me as soon as possible if English is not your primary language, and you believe you may require special accommodations.

**EXPECTED CLASSROOM DECORUM/CLASS POLICIES**

**Attendance**

Simply, your attendance is expected, required and desired! Much of the learning in a communication class comes from participating in class discussions, so it is very important you attend every class—on time, every time, for the entire time. Students who miss more than two classes will have their grades reduced and risk failing the course. While University sanctioned absences will NOT count as one of your two absences, you must make sure that you have let me know in advance when you are missing class. Furthermore, you are responsible for turning in any work that is due that day in advance and/or setting a date for you to make up work you missed. You should take a proactive role in this process and should not wait for me to discuss it with you.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students must be on time for class each day. Arriving late, leaving for any considerable portion of the class, or leaving class early is discouraged. Two (2) “lates” or “leaves” equals one unexcused absence. The University of Southern California prohibits the rewarding of points solely on a student’s physical presence in a class. However, they allow the use of unexcused absences and excessive tardiness to count against a grade. This includes leaving class early.
Technology in the classroom

The Rules
During lecture, you may...

✓ Use paper and pens, laptops, iPads and similar devices for note-taking purposes only.
✓ Jot a note about something you want to look up, and then look it up later.

Ringers must always be turned off, and phones must be stowed in such a way that audible sound will not be produced if/when the phone vibrates.

Offenders will lose participation points. The instructor maintains the right to prohibit the use of laptops, iPads, etc. during class time for all students if these rules are violated and/or if their use harms class participation.

FINAL EXAMINATION
The day and time for the final examination can be found in the Official University Final Examination Schedule. For this course, the final exam will be held on Tuesday, May 9, 2017 from 8-10am.

You must take your final exam on this date and time. Please put this in your calendars now. Per University policy, the final examination cannot be changed unless it conflicts with another USC final examination. If you have such a conflict, please notify me immediately.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS
Reflection papers 20%
Exams (Midterm & Final) 25%
Sexual health advocacy project 30%
Student mini talks 15%
Class participation 10%

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Reflection papers (2 required @ 50 points each; 100 total points possible)
Reflection papers are opportunities for students to synthesize course readings, lectures and classroom discussions. Students are also invited to reflect on their own experiences as they identify unifying themes among course-related materials and suggest practical application. Reflection papers should be 3-5 double-spaced, typewritten pages. Generally, papers will be graded on the depth of reflection, effectiveness of the written communication, and the way the author incorporates course materials, personal experience and potential future application. Due dates are listed in the syllabus course schedule.

Course Exams: Midterm (50 points) & Final (75 points) = 125 total points possible
The course will include two exams—a midterm and a final. Each exam will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions based on readings and lectures. The exam will be administered in class on the date listed in the syllabus.

Sexual health advocacy project: 150 points
Groups of 4-5 students will work together to complete a sexual health advocacy project directly related to improving the sexual communication skills of an identified audience. This project provides students with an opportunity to examine a sexual health/sexual communication topic of interest and devise an innovative way to address a problem or issue, using a media platform of their choice.
Projects must be pre-approved and in-class workshop time will be given with prior notice. Each group will present their results in a 15-minute presentation during the final class period.

Please note that any student with a major or minor in Annenberg, or any student taking at least one Annenberg class per semester, has access to the Adobe Creative Cloud. For technical support, I encourage you to visit the spiffy new Annenberg Digital Lounge (http://www.annenbergdl.org/) in the Wallis Annenberg Hall, Room 301 (Hours of operation: Monday–Thursday, 9 am–10pm; Friday, 9am–5pm; Support starts at 10 am).

Final Project (85 points)
I want you to create something that has personal meaning (life/career/relationships) and practical applicability (larger community context). Final project ideas include (but are certainly not limited to):
- Website (live, operable)
- Podcast (weekly broadcasts)
- Social marketing campaign
- Health intervention
- Smartphone app
- Online magazine
- Scholarly paper

Final project proposal (15 points)
Each group must submit a 2-paragraph description of their chosen project on Thursday, February 9.
The project proposal must include the following: 1) A brief description of your chosen project topic, 2) A brief description of your project deliverable, including the target audience and the medium, and 3) A timeline for how you plan to complete the project. The instructor must approve all final projects. Each group member will receive full credit as along as email your final project proposal by the due date. We will also workshop projects during class on Tuesday, February 14 and Tuesday, April 11.

Community-based organization (CBO) informational interview (20 points)
Once a project topic has been chosen and approved, group members should select an organization in the greater Los Angeles area (public or private, not-for-profit or for-profit, outside of USC) whose mission/purpose/programming addresses some aspect of sexual health and improved sexual communication (e.g., HIV/AIDS service organizations, reproductive justice organizations, sexual assault services, divisions within the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health). Students will contact the organization, arrange a visit, tour the program (all students must attend) and interview a key informant who should be the coordinator or the director. The purpose of this CBO informational interview is to gather real-world, on-the-ground insight into health promotion projects being conducted within LA. Interview data should aid in the development of the group’s final project, specifically a) effective health promotion methods, b) theories of behavior change, and/or c) suggestions for change, future innovations.

Project summary (30 points)
In addition to the final project, each group will submit a 3-page project summary that details the development of their sexual health advocacy project. This summary should answer the following questions: 1) How did you complete the project? (e.g., technical details, project timeline) 2) What motivated you to do this project? (e.g., a conversation with a friend, a news article) 3) What were you trying to communicate? (Think of this like the thesis for a written paper) 4) How does this project relate to topics covered in this class? Discuss your project in conversation with the course readings and
lectures. Findings from the CBO informational interview should also be incorporated into the project summary. (Please note that the bulk of your project summary should address this question).

**Student mini talks: 75 points**
Students will deliver a 6-8 minute individual presentation (PPT) on a current sexual health topic of their choice. Topics can include current news events, new local/national/international legislation related to sexual health or reproductive justice, review of disease prevention programs or interventions, or new media technologies (e.g., smartphone apps) that impact sexual communication. Topics must be pre-approved (via email) by the instructor, and PowerPoint slides should be emailed at least one day before class. Two (2) student mini talks will be delivered each class session, unless otherwise specified. The presentation schedule is available on Blackboard.

**Class participation: 25 points**
Your attendance and participation during class meetings is encouraged and expected. You are expected to respond to course materials and to complete and discuss exercises in class meetings. Your participation each week will be evaluated on a 5-point scale. Your final participation score will be computed by adding your participation scores across all weeks of the semester and your 10 highest scores will be counted toward your final grade.

**MAKE-UP WORK**
Make-up work will be allowed without penalty for excused absences only. You cannot make up participation points. For unexcused absences, there will be a full letter grade loss on the evaluation of that assignment for each day that it is late. Make-up work will not be accepted after the class which is one week after the original due date.

**GRADING SCALE**
Your final grade will be determined by summing scores on all assignments completed this semester. Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(93-100%)</td>
<td>465-500 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>(90-92.9%)</td>
<td>450-464 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>(87-89.9%)</td>
<td>435-449 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(83-86.9%)</td>
<td>415-434 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>(80-82.9%)</td>
<td>400-414 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>(77-79.9%)</td>
<td>385-399 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>(73-76.9%)</td>
<td>365-384 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>(70-72.9%)</td>
<td>350-364 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>(60-69.9%)</td>
<td>300-349 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(00-59.9%)</td>
<td>000-299 Points</td>
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**ADDITIONAL NOTES ABOUT GRADING**
Grading questions should be addressed in a timely manner. There is a 24-hour “wait period” after receiving a grade, but then you should address questions within the next 5 days. You must submit your complaint/rationale to me in writing, accompanied by a copy of the graded assignment. Complaints or requests for reconsideration of a grade will not be considered unless they are submitted in written form.

**Before you formally challenge a grade,** consider the following questions during the 24-hour wait period:

1. Was your assignment submitted on time?
(2) Did you follow the directions of the assignment?
(3) Did you turn in your best work? If it was a written assignment, did you use proper grammar and syntax? Did you misspell words? Is your work neat and professional? Did you use weird spacing in an effort to make the paper appear longer than it really is?
(4) If the work was an oral assignment, did you complete the assignment within the a priori guidelines?
(5) Did you wait until the last minute to complete the assignment?
(6) If you are missing participation points, were you absent the day of the classroom activity? Do you contribute to class discussions?

GOOD THINGS TO KNOW
Reading Assignments: Reading assignments noted on the class schedule are all accessible as PDF documents on BlackBoard. Please complete all readings prior to class.

Attendance: Attending class is a course requirement. You should be aware that: (a) material presented in class is often not available from other resources, (b) I assume you receive any announcements or handouts provided during class, and (c) missed points from in-class assignments cannot be made up under any circumstances.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will be docked 10% of the total possible points for that assignment per day that the assignment is late. You are welcome to submit work in advance of class; however, work submitted via email will not be accepted without prior approval.

Illnesses and Other Personal Emergencies: If you experience an unavoidable personal situation that prevents you from completing work on time, you should inform me before the work is due. Extensions will be granted for substantiated and documented emergencies.

Make-up Exams: Make-up exams are scheduled only in cases of substantiated and unavoidable conflicts. You must notify me prior to the exam to re-schedule.

Academic Misconduct: Please be aware that dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions.

Group Responsibilities: Group projects often involve conflicts among group members. I expect that all group members will contribute to the final project, and that the group will work actively to address the conflicts that arise. If a conflict emerges within the group or problems arise because work is not shared equally, you should make me aware of those problems sooner, rather than later. Effective conflict resolution requires that problems be identified and addressed prior to the end of the semester.

Class Conduct: The content of this course can give rise to sensitive discussions at times. All students are expected to engage the course material in a mature and sensitive manner. I also expect that you will treat one another with respect both in and out of the classroom by supporting one another’s contributions to class discussion and respecting each other’s privacy.
## CLASS SCHEDULE

All reading assignments should be completed prior to the class session on the day they are listed. Blackboard (BB) will be utilized for grading and posting of assignments as well as for the posting of additional readings. **Note that the reading assignments are provisional, so always check the assignments as posted to Blackboard or sent via email before completing them.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
<th>Assignment/Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Course Overview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1/12 | Let’s talk about sex, baby!: The transactional nature of U.S. sexual communication | (1) Byers, E.S. (2011). Beyond the Birds and the Bees and Was it good for you?: Thirty years of research on sexual communication. *Canadian Psychology*, 52, 20-28.  
(3) Davis et al., 2006. “I can’t get no satisfaction”: Insecure attachment, inhibited sexual communication, and sexual dissatisfaction. *Personal Relationships*, 13, 465-483. | Personal Statement due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, January 13 |
| 1/24 | Sexual Communication in the Family (cont’d) | | In-class Group Exercise |
| 1/31 | No class session held | View Netflix documentary (TBA) in lieu of class attendance | |
| 2/2 | Erotic Jurisprudence: Case study of Islamic sexual ethics | Guest lecture: Maytha Alhassen, USC Department of American Studies & Ethnicity  
Readings will be provided by guest lecturer and posted | |
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2/14 | WORKSHOP DAY  
(Final Project) | |  |
| 2/16 | Trends in sexual communication among sexual minorities (MSM/MSMW/Transgender) | **Guest lecture: Derek Dangerfield, USC Keck School of Medicine, Department of Preventive Medicine**  
http://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2012.763186  
http://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-014-0472-2  
http://doi.org/10.1007/BF02701260  
http://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-014-0319-x |  |
Lannutti, P. J., & Monahan, J. L. (2004). Resistance, |  |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/7</td>
<td>Midterm Exam Review</td>
<td>No class sessions No course readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/14,</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td>No class sessions No course readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/11</td>
<td>WORKSHOP DAY (Final Project)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/13</td>
<td>Sexual Health Interventions &amp; Community-based sexual health research</td>
<td>Mini presentations: UMMA Community Clinic/Fremont Wellness Center, Student Health Leaders (SHLs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>GROUP PRESENTATIONS</td>
<td>Project Summary Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/25</td>
<td>GROUP PRESENTATIONS</td>
<td>Project Summary Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>Course wrap-up, Online evaluations</td>
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* FINAL EXAM: May 9, 2017 8-10 am in ASC 328*