

USCAnnenberg

COMM 406 (4 units, 20622R)
Communicating about Sex
Tu/Th 11-12:20 ASC 231

Instructor:	Jillian Pierson, Ph.D.	I encourage you to connect with me outside of our regularly scheduled class meetings! I'm available many times other than what is listed here as my official hours.
Office Hours:	Mon 1-2 Thurs 10-10:50 and by appt in ASC G21 or on Zoom	If my office hours aren't convenient for you, I'd be glad to meet you at other times, either in-person or by Zoom or on the phone. Email me with several suggested options that work in your schedule if you'd like to set up an alternate meeting time. You might text me to see if I'm in my office before heading over—even the official hours sometimes are disrupted by meetings or talks I'm attending, so it's a good idea to check first.
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Course Description

We're good at joking about sex, fear mongering, and titillating. Where we get awkward is when the conversation gets real. Social science research consistently finds that communication about sex is positively related with all kinds of desirable (pun noted) sexual health outcomes; but culturally and socially created sexual scripts tend to inhibit frank conversations. Incorporating readings, lectures, and discussion, we will engage in an open, research-based conversation about sex and sexuality. We will investigate the ways in which communication and sexuality relate to one another and learn about current research and theory.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- explain the advantages and disadvantages of the ambiguity of sexual terminology
- recognize and recall major terms and theories in the field of sexual communication
- identify media and society's influences on sexual relationships
- describe the role communication plays in sexual health
- apply communication theories and concepts to specific communication scenarios
- create effective communication promoting sexual health

Required Course Materials

All assigned readings will be posted to Blackboard and should be completed prior to class on the day they are listed on the course calendar. The complete bibliography will be posted on Blackboard.

Tentative Course Schedule *Subject to Change:*

	Date	Topic	Assignment due	Read before class
1	Jan 9	Intro and welcome		
	Jan 11	A brief history; some “facts of life”	Student Info Form	Byers (2011); Nagoski (2021)
2	Jan 16	Sexual scripts		Simon & Gagnon (2003); Carpenter (2001) LaFrance (2010)
	Jan 18	The gendered roles we play	Reading response	Frith & Kitzinger (2001) Vannier & O’Sullivan (2011); Meenagh (2020) Uwujaren (2015)
3	Jan 23	Communication with friends	Reading response	Busse et al; McDavitt & Mutchler; Trinh
	Jan 25	Communication with partners	Reading response	Miller-Ott & Lindner; Montesi et al 2010 Rubinsky & Hosek (2019)
4	Jan 30	Hookups &	Sexpectations	Fielder et al; Garcia et al, Wentland & Reissing; Holman & Sillars; Wade (2017)
	Feb 1	Friends with benefits	Reading response	Bisson & Levine; Epstein et al; Stein et al. (2019)
5	Feb 6	Self-disclosure, stigma &	Reading response	Coffelt & Hess; Denes; Denes & Afifi
	Feb 8	Privacy management	Reading response	Anderson et al. (2011) Nichols; Redlick
6	Feb 13	Negotiating safe sex	Reading response	Broaddus et al; Horan; Horan & Cafferty (2017)
	Feb 15	Consent and coercion	Reading response	Gutzmer et al; Wright et al.; Brady et al. (2018); Roupenian (2019)
7	Feb 20	Consent and coercion (cont.)	Reading response	Littleton et al (2009); LaBrie et al. (2014); Katz et al. (2019)
	Feb 22	Sexual health campaigns	Reading response	Garcia et al. (2018); (Gunther-Grey et al. (2013)Keene et al. (2020); Moyer-Gusé et al. (2021)
8	Feb 27	“Coming out”	Reading response	Manning a, Manning b Venetis et al. (2017)
	Feb 29	Sexual identity	Reading response	Rubinsky & Cooke-Jackson (2017); Abdi & Van Gilder (2016); Silva (2018)
9	Mar 5	Midterm	Midterm	

WILL BE REVISED & UPDATED FOR SPRING 2025

	Mar 7	Communication in families	Reading response	Holman & Kellas (2018); Eisenberg et al. (2006); Estrada-Martinez et al. (2021)
Enjoy spring break! No class meetings March 11-15				
10	Mar 19	Talking about porn	Reading response Hot topic due	Dawson et al. (2020); Kohut (2018); Klein (2016); Ezzell et al. (2020)
	Mar 21	Sex in the digital age	Reading response	Burkett (2015); Dir & Cyders (2015; Guest & Denes (2022)
11	Mar 26	and online dating	Reading response	Fansher & Eckinger (2021); Lundquist, & Curington, (2019); Noland (2021)
	Mar 28	Infidelity & Non-monogamy	Reading response	Sheff (2020); Clarke et al. (2015); Thompson & O’Sullivan (2016)
12	Apr 2 Apr 4	Hot topic presentations Hot topic presentations	“Hot Topics”	tbd
13	Apr 9 Apr 11	Hot topic presentations Hot topic presentations		tbd
14	Apr 16	Culture and ethnicity	Reading response	Choudhry et al. (2022); Dogan et al. (2022); Liu (2012)
	Apr 18	People with disabilities; sexual minorities	Reading response	DeSantis et al. (2018); Peta et al. (2016); Platt & Bolland (2018); Schiappa (2021)
15	Apr 23	Sex work	Reading response	Ali et al. (2022); Basu & Dutta (2009); Jansson et al. (2022)
	Apr 25	Moving forward		tbd
	May 7	11 - 1 This is the university-scheduled time for the final exam when we will meet for final project presentations.	Final project	

Course Policies

Respectful conversation: We may touch on topics that some students feel sensitive about during class. If you find yourself having an emotional response, please reach out to me. Know that I want everyone to feel comfortable engaging in productive, open conversation, including at the times we don’t agree with one another. If I get something wrong, I’d like to hear from you in a respectful way; I have an open mind and like most people, I am still learning and evolving.

I also hope you'll be mindful that we all come to the classroom from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. We can't truly understand another person's perspective, but we can listen with acceptance and empathy.

Attendance and Participation

1. To get the most out of this class, you must show up for our meetings. While it is normal to miss a few times during the course of a semester, you cannot "take" this class without attending regularly.
2. Of course you may occasionally have to miss class for illness or other reasons. When you are absent, I do not need to hear an excuse. I do not take attendance after the first few weeks of class. However, if you have to miss several classes, I would appreciate your letting me know what is going on so that I don't worry about you.
3. If you miss class, please ask two peers for notes, check Blackboard, and complete any alternative "participation" activity provided within one week of the missed class.
4. After six absences, regardless of the reason, your overall grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade. Each two additional absences from thereon in will reduce the grade by another one-third. For example, if your final grade averaged to a 92 (A-) but you were absent eight times, your grade would be recorded as an 86 (B).
5. If you add the class late, you are still responsible for the material and assignments you missed. Please submit any homework and participation assignments no later than Thursday of the fourth week of class.

No laptops or electronics.

In order to create the best possible learning environment, I ask you to not use your laptops, tablets, or phones. I completely understand the temptation, but I think we all benefit from focusing without technology. Current research shows that taking notes by hand is more effective than typing them. Read the articles posted on Blackboard for a lengthier discussion of this policy. (Sometimes students have documented reasons for using laptops for note-taking; exceptions are made only for students with such documentation from OSAS or those who have been assigned as official notetakers.)

Please bring pen and paper to class meetings for note-taking and activities. If you are using an iPad or other tablet instead of pen and paper, that is acceptable as long as you keep your device open to the note-taking app only.

Communication

Please be sure to read your USC emails and Blackboard announcements daily on weekdays. I reply to my emails within 24 hours (although on the weekends I may take longer). If you don't hear back from me promptly, feel free to send me a follow-up after a day has gone by.

Timely submission of work: If your assignment is late, it will be marked down by one third of a letter grade for every day it is late. Also, please be aware that if you end up handing a paper in late, it falls to the bottom of my stack of things to do and will most likely not be returned to you in a very timely manner.

Sometimes a student has a true emergency. Please contact me as soon as possible if something prevents you from submitting your work on time.

Accidentally uploading the wrong assignment or using a format not accepted by Blackboard is not a valid excuse for a late submission.

Back up your work: Computer failures are sadly not uncommon. Please cover yourself by regularly saving your work to cloud storage and to an external storage device.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Generative AI (such as ChatGPT, Bard, Claude and many others) is a tool which offers opportunities and raises concerns. As the technology rapidly evolves, we students of communication need to be thoughtful and ethical consumers of the technology. For our class, there may be times when it is appropriate to use AI, such as for brainstorming topic ideas. But please keep in mind some important notes when using generative AI:

1. You must **give credit** to the specific AI used in your assignment. Check Blackboard and the specific assignment instructions for information about how to do that appropriately. Failing to cite AI use is an academic integrity violation and will be treated as such, with potentially serious consequences.
2. Generative AI often is incorrect and gives **misinformation** through its “hallucinations.” You cannot rely on AI output; you have to check for correctness.
3. The **quality of the prompts** shapes the quality of the output of generative AI. As these tools develop, our skills in “conversing” with them will need to change and grow too.
4. AI should never be a substitute for your own **thoughtful, critical contributions** to the subject matter. Expressing oneself through writing is an important part of learning, refining thought, and demonstrating understanding that cannot be ceded to AI tools.

These are just a few of many considerations that I wanted to highlight at present. I expect my own knowledge and policies in this arena to evolve, and I welcome your thoughts.

Electronic submission of assignments

Please upload your assignments to Blackboard only. If you have trouble with Blackboard, reach out to Blackboard support directly for help—service is available 24/7 at 213-740-5555. Blackboard submissions that have uploaded successfully automatically generate an email to the student who submitted them. If you don’t get the email, you have not

submitted your assignment.

If Blackboard has a problem, you may email your assignment as proof that you completed it by the deadline. However, I can only grade in the Blackboard environment so you will still need to upload there as soon as the system is functioning.

Grading

I believe an “A” represents excellent, thoughtful, and enthusiastic work. A “B” represents really good work. A “C” merely meets all the requirements of the assignment. If you are disappointed by a grade, please write me an email requesting a conversation. I would be happy to discuss my feedback with you and to help you improve for the next assignment.

The grading scale for this class will be that an A is equivalent to 94 or above; A- is 90-93; B+ is 87-89; B is 84-86; B- is 80-83; C+ is 77-79; C is 74-76; C- is 70-73; D+ is 67-69; D is 64-66; D- is 60-63; and F is 59 and below.

- A Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
- B Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
- C Satisfactory; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.
- D Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
- F Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.
- P/ NP To earn a passing grade, you must have a C- or higher. You also may not omit any major assignments or exams regardless of your average score in the class.

Grades will be based on the following:

Misc in-class and homework	5%
Reading Responses	10%
Expectation paper	10%
Discussion starter / blog	15%
“Hot Topic” presentation	20%
Midterm exam	20%
Final project	20%

ASSIGNMENTS

One key to success will be reading all of my directions carefully. Some directions are in this syllabus, but more will be given in class and posted on Blackboard. Always feel free to ask questions; I'd much rather clarify expectations in advance than learn afterwards that you didn't fully understand the assignment.

In-class work/homework

I will occasionally ask you to submit something as homework (such as the student information sheet) or to do something in class that I'll give you credit for in this category. These items are not evaluated so as long as you complete the task on time, you'll receive full credit. If you miss a class, check Blackboard for alternative participation activities.

Reading Responses (15 1-2 page submissions)

This class thrives on great conversation based on the shared background of our assigned readings. To support your timely reading, you will submit Reading Responses based on each set of readings. Your responses are due before class and no late responses will be accepted.

In total, you will write 15 of these brief papers. You will not submit a Reading Response on the date you are assigned your blog post/discussion questions. That leaves three extra dates of assigned readings where you do not have to submit a response.

Sexpectations (approximately 3-5 page paper)

Our goal for this assignment is to become more critical consumers of sexual information and content provided in pop culture and to consider how those portrayals can affect viewers "in real life."

Choose an artifact in pop culture that you believe reflects unrealistic or inaccurate portrayals of sex. You will then write a three to five page critique of the artifact in which you will:

1. Briefly introduce the artifact.
2. Describe what messages are being conveyed and tie those into:
 - a. the framework of norms or scripts, citing at least one reading as support for that framework
 - b. an additional outside source (a source not assigned as a class reading) that contributes to your analysis
3. Discuss what influence the artifact's portrayal would likely have on audiences.
4. Include a list of references (in addition to the 3-5 pages) in APA style, and a link to the artifact when relevant.

An artifact could be a scene from a movie, TV show, a music video, or a commercial. (If you'd prefer a different type of artifact, please run your idea by me.)

Discussion Starter/

Magazine Article or Blog Post (approximately 3-5 page paper plus 3 disc questions)

Your task is to read several readings on one topic and turn them into a blog post or magazine article. The idea here is to take the assigned readings from a particular week (tbd) and translate them from academic writing into an understandable, appealing article. You should write for an audience of laypeople in an engaging way, drawing out themes from the readings and providing your own reflection (although this is not a place to share personal anecdotes).

You will then be expected to take a leading role in class discussion on the day you've been assigned. Bring to class a very brief summary of the readings to share, and three questions based on the readings to start the conversation during our meeting.

“Hot Topics” in Sex and Comm (outline and informal 5-7 minute presentation)

This is an opportunity for you to learn more about a topic of interest and share it with the rest of us. You may choose something we covered in class but didn't get into deeply enough, or you may investigate something new. Your topic is subject to my approval in advance.

You will research the topic using a minimum of five sources (a minimum of two should be academic, scholarly sources, meaning from peer-reviewed journals); assemble an outline that incorporates the sources; and then take over teaching the class for 5-10 minutes on the day you're assigned.

Exam

The midterm exam will cover readings, lectures and class discussions. Be prepared to not merely recall the concepts, but to apply them to novel scenarios.

Final Project

Your final project should reflect knowledge gained throughout the semester from our assigned readings, lectures, and conversations, and also from your own independent research. The project may take one of several forms, including the following:

- Plan for a sexual health campaign
- Plan for a community intervention
- A research proposal

Any of these projects will reference a minimum of eight academic sources. If you prefer to do a creative project, you will need to accompany the work with an annotated bibliography with at least eight academic sources.

You will present your project during our final exam period (at the time scheduled by the university).

Honoring Native Lands

Our USC campus is located on the traditional land of the Tongva People. It is a complicated reality that we exist in a space which for many years belonged to the Tongva who have been here for at least 10,000 years. I would like to acknowledge the unjust, violent history that unfolded over many years before the establishment of this university, and to show appreciation and humility toward indigenous communities and the sacrifices they have been forced to make.

Looking Ahead

I look forward to spending the semester with you, discussing and learning more about this interesting and important topic.

Course Bibliography (subject to change)

Week 1

Byers, S. E. (2011). Beyond the birds and the bees and was it good for you?: Thirty years of research on sexual communication. *Canadian Psychology, 52*(1), 20-28.

Nagoski, E. (2021). *Come as you are: The surprising new science that will transform your sex life*. Simon and Schuster.

Week 2

Carpenter, L. M. (2001) The ambiguity of “having sex”: The subjective experience of virginity loss in the United States. *The Journal of Sex Research, 38*(2), 127-139.

Frith, H., & Kitzinger, C. (2001). Reformulating sexual script theory: Developing a discursive psychology of sexual negotiation. *Theory & Psychology, 11*(2), 209-232.

La France, B. H. (2010). What verbal and nonverbal communication cues lead to sex?: An analysis of the traditional sexual script. *Communication Quarterly, 58*(3), 297-318.

Meenagh, J. L. (2020). ‘She doesn’t think that happens’: When heterosexual men say no to sex. *Sexualities, 13*63460720936460.

Simon, W., & Gagnon, J. (2003). Sexual scripts: Origins, influences and changes. *Qualitative Sociology, 26*(4), 491-497.
doi:10.1023/B:QUAS.0000005053.99846.e5

Uwujaren, J. (2015). How Women Are Pressured into Being Sexy, But Punished for Being Sexual. *Everyday Feminism*

Vannier, S. A., & O’Sullivan, L. F. (2011). Communicating interest in sex: Verbal and nonverbal initiation of sexual activity in young adults’ romantic dating

relationships. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40(5), 961-969. doi:10.1007/s10508-010-9663-7

Wade, L. (2017). *American hookup: The new culture of sex on campus*. WW Norton & Company.

Week 3

Busse, P., Fishbein, M., Bleakley, A., & Hennessy, M. (2010). The role of communication with friends in sexual initiation. *Communication Research*, 37, 239-255.

McDavitt, B., & Mutchler, M. G. (2014). "Dude, you're such a slut!" barriers and facilitators of sexual communication among young gay men and their best friends. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 29(4), 464-498.

Miller-Ott, A. E. & Linder, A. (2013) Romantic partners' use of facework and humor to communicate about sex. *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*, 14:1, 69-78.

Montesi, J.L., Fauber, R. L., Gordon, E. A., & Heimberg, R. G. (2010). The specific importance of communicating about sex to couples' sexual and overall relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 28(5), 591-609.

Rubinsky, V., & Hosek, A. (2019). "We have to get over it": Navigating sex talk through the lens of sexual communication comfort and sexual self-disclosure in LGBTQ intimate partnerships. *Sexuality & Culture*, 1-17.

Trinh, S. L. (2016). "Enjoy Your Sexuality, but Do it in Secret" Exploring Undergraduate Women's Reports of Friends' Sexual Communications. *Psychology of women quarterly*, 40(1), 96-107.

Week 4

Bisson, M. A., & Levine, T. R. (2009). Negotiating a friends with benefits relationship. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 38(1), 66-73.

Epstein, M., Calzo, J. P., Smiler, A. P., & Ward, L. M. (2009). "Anything from making out to having sex": Men's negotiations of hooking up and friends with benefits scripts. *Journal of Sex Research*, 46(5), 414-424.

Fielder, R. L., Carey, K. B., & Carey, M. P. (2012). Are hookups replacing romantic relationships? A longitudinal study of first-year female college students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, (52), 657-659.

Garcia, J. R., Reiber, C., Massey, S. G., & Merriwether, A. M. (2012). Sexual hookup culture: A review. *Review of General Psychology*, 16(2), 161-176.

Holman, A., & Sillars, A. (2012). "Talk about "hooking up": The influence of college student social networks on nonrelationship sex." *Health Communication, 27*, 205-216

Stein, J. B., Mongeau, P., Postheher, K., & Veluscek, A. (2019). Netflix and chill?: Exploring and refining differing motivations in friends with benefits relationships. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, 28*(3), 317-327. (addition Sp 2021)

Week 5

Anderson, M., Kunkel, A., & Dennis, M. R. (2011). "Let's (not) talk about that": Bridging the past sexual experiences taboo to build healthy romantic relationships. *Journal of Sex Research, 48*(4), 381-391.

Coffelt, T. A., & Hess, J. A. (2014). Sexual disclosures: Connections to relational satisfaction and closeness. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy, 40*(6), 577-591.

Denes, A., & Afifi, T. (2014). Pillow talk and cognitive decision-making processes: Exploring the influence of orgasm and alcohol on communication after sexual activity. *Communication Monographs, 81*, 1-26.

Nichols, W. L. (2012). Deception versus privacy management in discussions of sexual history. *Atlantic Journal of Communication, 20*(2), 101-115.
doi:10.1080/15456870.2012.665346

Redlick, M. (2017). The perceived threat of sexual communication, number of previous sexual partners and topic avoidance in romantic relationships. *Psychology & Sexuality, 8*(1-2), 148-157.

Week 6

Brady, G., Lowe, P., Brown, G., Osmond, J., & Newman, M. (2018). 'All in all it is just a judgement call': Issues surrounding sexual consent in young people's heterosexual encounters. *Journal of Youth Studies, 21*(1), 35-50.

Broaddus, M. R., Morris, H., & Bryan, A. D. (2010). 'It's not what you said, it's how you said it': Perceptions of condom proposers by gender and strategy. *Sex Roles, 62*(9-10), 603-614.

Gutzmer, K., Ludwig-Barron, N. T., Wyatt, G. E., Hamilton, A. B., & Stockman, J. K. (2016). "Come on baby. You know I love you": African American women's experiences of communication with male partners and disclosure in the context of unwanted sex. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 45*(4), 807-819.

Horan, S. M. (2016). Further understanding sexual communication: Honesty, deception, safety, and risk. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 33*(4), 449-468.

Horan, S. M., & Cafferty, L. A. (2017). Condom communication: reports of sexually active young adults' recent messages with new partners. *Journal of Health Communication, 22*(9), 763-771.

Roupenian, K. (2019). Cat person. In *The Best American Magazine Writing 2018* (pp. 473-494). Columbia University Press.

Wright, M. O., Norton, D. L., & Matusek, J. A. (2010). Predicting verbal coercion following sexual refusal during a hookup: Diverging gender patterns. *Sex Roles, 62*(9-10), 647-660.

Week 7 consent and coercion

Katz, A. J., Hensel, D. J., Hunt, A. L., Zaban, L. S., Hensley, M. M., & Ott, M. A. (2019). Only yes means yes: sexual coercion in rural adolescent relationships. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 65*(3), 423-425.

LaBrie, J. W., Hummer, J. F., Ghaidarov, T. M., Lac, A., & Kenney, S. R. (2014). Hooking up in the college context: The event-level effects of alcohol use and partner familiarity on hookup behaviors and contentment. *Journal of Sex Research, 51*(1), 62-73.

Littleton, H., Tabernik, H., Canales, E. J., & Backstrom, T. (2009). Risky situation or harmless fun? A qualitative examination of college women's bad hook-up and rape scripts. *Sex Roles, 60*(11-12), 793-804.

Week 7 sexual health campaigns

Garcia, J., Perez-Brumer, A. G., Cabello, R., & Clark, J. L. (2018). "And Then Break the Cliché": Understanding and Addressing HIV Vulnerability Through Development of an HIV Prevention Telenovela with Men Who Have Sex with Men and Transwomen in Lima, Peru. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 47*(7), 1995-2005.

Gunther-Grey, J., Wolitski, M., & Reitmeijer, O. R. (2013). Building Our Understanding: Key Concepts of Evaluation Applying Theory in the Evaluation of Communication Campaigns. *Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*.

Keene, L. C., Dehlin, J. M., Pickett, J., Berringer, K. R., Little, I., Tsang, A., ... & Schneider, J. A. (2020). #PrEP4Love: success and stigma following release of the first sex-positive PrEP public health campaign. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 1-17*.

Moyer-Gusé, E., Chung, A. H., & Jain, P. (2011). Identification with characters and discussion of taboo topics after exposure to an entertainment narrative about sexual health. *Journal of Communication, 61*(3), 387-406.

Week 8

Abdi, S., & Van Gilder, B. (2016). Cultural (in) visibility and identity dissonance: Queer Iranian-American women and their negotiation of existence. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 9(1), 69-86.

Manning, J. (2015a). Communicating sexual identities: A typology of coming out. *Sexuality & Culture*, 19(1), 122-138. doi:10.1007/s12119-014-9251-4

Manning, J. (2015b). Positive and negative communicative behaviors in coming-out conversations. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 62, 67-97.

Rubinsky, V., & Cooke-Jackson, A. (2017). "Where is the love?" Expanding and theorizing with LGBTQ memorable messages of sex and sexuality. *Health Communication*, 32(12), 1472-1480.

Silva, T. J. (2018). 'Helpin' a buddy out': Perceptions of identity and behaviour among rural straight men that have sex with each other. *Sexualities*, 21(1-2), 68-89.

Venetis, M. K., Meyerson, B. E., Friley, L. B., Gillespie, A., Ohmit, A., & Shields, C. G. (2017). Characterizing sexual orientation disclosure to health care providers: Lesbian, gay, and bisexual perspectives. *Health Communication*, 32(5), 578-586.

Week 9

Eisenberg, M. E., Sieving, R. E., Bearinger, L. H., Swain, C., & Resnick, M. D. (2006). Parents' communication with adolescents about sexual behavior: A missed opportunity for prevention?. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 35(6), 893-902.

Estrada-Martínez, L. M., Grossman, J. M., & Richer, A. M. (2021). Sex behaviours and family sexuality communication among Hispanic adolescents. *Sex Education*, 21(1), 59-74.

Holman, A., & Koenig Kellas, J. (2018). "Say something instead of nothing": Adolescents' perceptions of memorable conversations about sex-related topics with their parents. *Communication Monographs*, 85(3), 357-379.

Week 10

Burkett, M. (2015). Sex(t) talk: A qualitative analysis of young adults' negotiations of the pleasures and perils of sexting. *Sexuality & Culture*, 19(4), 835-863.

Dawson, K., Nic Gabhainn, S., & MacNeela, P. (2020). Toward a model of porn literacy: Core concepts, rationales, and approaches. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 57(1), 1-15.

Dir, A. L. & Cyders, M. A. (2015). Risks, risk factors, and outcomes associated with phone and internet sexting among university students in the United States. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 44, 1675-1684.

- Ezzell, M. B., Johnson, J. A., Bridges, A. J., & Sun, C. F. (2020). I (dis) like it like that: Gender, pornography, and liking sex. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 46(5), 460-473.
- Guest, C., & Denes, A. (2022). Too much too soon?: Perceived appropriateness of sexting across stages of relationship development and attachment tendencies among emerging adults. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 137, 107429.
- Klein, M. (2016). Kids need porn literacy. *Psychology Today*.
- Kohut, T., Balzarini, R. N., Fisher, W. A., & Campbell, L. (2018). Pornography's associations with open sexual communication and relationship closeness vary as a function of dyadic patterns of pornography use within heterosexual relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 35(4), 655-676.
- Wright, P. J., Tokunaga, R. S., & Kraus, A. (2016). Consumption of pornography, perceived peer norms, and condomless sex. *Health Communication*, 31(8), 954-963.

Week 11 online dating

- Choi, K. W. Y., Choi, E. P. H., Chow, E. P. F., Wan, E. Y. F., Wong, W. C. W., Wong, J. Y. H., & Fong, D. Y. T. (2021). *The experience of using dating applications for sexual hook-ups: A qualitative exploration among HIV-negative men who have sex with men in Hong Kong* Informa UK Limited. doi:10.1080/00224499.2021.1886227
- Fansher, A. K., & Eckinger, S. (2021). Tinder tales: An exploratory study of online dating users and their most interesting stories. *Deviant Behavior*, 42(9), 1194-1208. doi:10.1080/01639625.2020.1734170
- Lundquist, J. H., & Curington, C. V. (2019). Love me Tinder, love me sweet. *Contexts (Berkeley, Calif.)*, 18(4), 22-27. doi:10.1177/1536504219883848
- Noland, C. M. (2021). Negotiating desire and uncertainty on tinder during the COVID-19 pandemic: Implications for the transformation of sexual health communication. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, 24(7), 488-492. doi:10.1089/cyber.2020.0685

Week 11 Infidelity and non-monogamy

- Clarke, V., Braun, V., & Wooles, K. (2015). Thou shalt not covet another man? Exploring constructions of same-sex and different-sex infidelity using story completion. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 25, 153-166.
- Sheff, E. (2020). Polyamory is deviant—but not for the reasons you may think. *Deviant Behavior*, 41, 882-892.

Thompson, A.E. and O'Sullivan, L.F. (2016) I can but you can't: Inconsistencies in judgments of and experiences with infidelity. *Journal of Relationships Research*, 7, 1-13.

Weeks 12 & 13

Readings will be selected to correspond with the "hot topic" presentations.

Week 14 culture and ethnicity

Choudhry, V., Petterson, K. O., Emmelin, M., Muchunguzi, C., & Agardh, A. (2022). 'Relationships on campus are situationships': A grounded theory study of sexual relationships at a Ugandan university *Public Library of Science (PLoS)*. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0271495

Dogan, J. N., Thorpe, S. Y., Malone, N., Jester, J., Stevens-Watkins, D., & Hargons, C. (2022). 'My partner will think I'm weak or overthinking my pain': How being superwoman inhibits black women's sexual pain disclosure to their partners. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-15. doi:10.1080/13691058.2022.2072956

Liu, M. (2012). Speaking the unspeakable: An exploratory study of college women's sex communication in Shanghai, China. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 22(2), 197-213. doi:10.1080/01292986.2011.642396

Week 14 sexual minorities

De Santis, J. P., Quidley-Rodriguez, N., Valdes, B., Alves, S. L., & Provencio-Vasquez, E. (2018). Contemplating co-occurring cultures: A grounded theory study of sexual decision making among Hispanic men who have sex with men. *Hispanic Health Care International*, 16(2), 85-98.

Peta, C., McKenzie, J., Kathard, H., & Africa, A. (2016). We are not asexual beings: Disabled women in Zimbabwe talk about their active sexuality. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 1-15.

Platt, L. F., & Bolland, K. S. (2018). Relationship partners of transgender individuals: A qualitative exploration. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 35(9), 1251-1272.

Schiappa, E. (2021). A brief history of defining sex and gender. In *The Transgender Exigency* (pp. 15-32). Routledge.

Week 15

Ali, S., Chaudhuri, S., Ghose, T., Jana, S., & Dolui, R. (2022). Sexual health communication between sex worker mothers and their children in India. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 24(4), 533-547. doi:10.1080/13691058.2021.1871648

Basu, A., & Dutta, M. J. (2009). Sex workers and HIV/AIDS: Analyzing participatory culture-centered health communication strategies. *Human Communication Research*, 35(1), 86-114. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2958.2008.01339.x

Jansson, M., Smith, M., Benoit, C., Magnuson, D., & Healey, P. (2022). Challenges and benefits of disclosure of sex work to intimate partners. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 1-13. doi:10.1080/00224499.2022.2092587

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#)

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class is prohibited without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services

(OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is also prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems

[Annenberg Student Success Fund](#)

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

[Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund](#)

Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

[Counseling and Mental Health](#) - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

WILL BE REVISED & UPDATED FOR SPRING 2025

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

[TrojansAlert](#)

TrojansAlert is an alert system that allows university officials to contact you during an emergency. It is your connection to real-time updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information. Visit the website to sign up.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on [Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness](#).

[ITS Customer Support Center](#) (CSC): (213) 740-5555

WILL BE REVISED & UPDATED FOR SPRING 2025

The ITS Customer Support Center (CSC) provides support to the USC community for connecting to the USC Network and using supported applications. For help with network connectivity and software, contact CSC. Walk-in support is available in Leavey Library's Information Commons.

[Violence-Free Campus](#)

Visit the [website](#) to read more about prohibited behaviors, reporting responsibilities and where to report.

Student-Athlete Travel Excuse Letters

Prior to a university-sponsored away competition, Student-Athletes are responsible for providing their Instructor with a Competition Excuse Letter (provided by their academic counselor) for the classes missed while on the road (i.e., excused absence). It is the responsibility of the Student-Athlete to provide the letter prior to leaving on their trip and to make arrangements for a make-up of any missed assignments or exams. Please refer to the [SAAS site](#) where they detail travel and travel excuse letters.