EPS 150: Sex Education and Policy
Lecturer: Nancy Rydberg
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WhatsApp: +256 788733220
Office hours: Wednesdays 9:00-11:00am CST (or by appointment)
Office Location: We can talk using the Ultra Conference tool in Canvas, or via Skype. My Skype name is nancy.rydberg

Course Description
This course explores sexuality and education in policy and practice in US schools. In Module 1, we examine the recent history of sex education policy in the USA and then explore two examples of sex education from other parts of the world in order to expand our ideas about sex education’s possibilities. In Module 2, we explore the two major frameworks for sex education policy in the USA and the camps that support these frameworks. In module three we examine the formal and informal practice of sex education in schools and the ways it is experienced by students. We conclude by exploring alternatives to the status quo of sex education in the USA.

Course Policies

Accessibility
Your success in this class is important to me. I am committed to creating an environment that is respectful, welcoming, and accessible to all students regardless of opinion, identity, or personal attribute. We all have different learning styles and I am eager to help you achieve and exceed the learning goals of the course. Please talk to me as soon as possible about your individual learning style so we can work together to make the course accommodating for you.

I encourage persons with disabilities or particular needs that impact on performance to meet with me to co-design accommodations, if necessary. I will maintain strict confidentiality of any information you share. Students with disabilities may also want to register with the Office of Disability Resources. (See student resources on the final page of this syllabus for more information.)

Plagiarism
Plagiarism and academic dishonesty are very serious offenses and will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, when you claim other’s work as your own. Here is a handout from the UW Writing Center about how to cite sources:
http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf
Here is a resource for understanding academic dishonesty:
https://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/students/
Class Participation
Your grade will be calculated based on your class participation (80%; this includes your participation in discussion boards and your weekly reflective one-age journal entry) and your final project (20%).

Content note:
This class will ask you to learn about, reflect on, and discuss topics that may be controversial or personally challenging, particularly relating to gender, sex, and sexuality, and including such topics as discrimination and violence. I ask that you engage thoughtfully with course concepts while being mindful of your continuing mental and emotional health. If you are concerned about your ability to participate in a particular class session, please contact me as soon as possible so that we can work together to find the best approach to that topic for you.

Guidelines for Class Discussions
1) We must respect everyone in the class. We challenge ideas, not people.
2) Pay careful attention to what your classmates are saying/writing even when you disagree with their statements. Comments that you make (asking for clarification, sharing critiques, expanding on a point, etc.) should reflect that you have paid attention to the person’s comments.
3) In order to avoid making offensive statements about groups of people, avoid talking about other people or groups of people. This means only talk about your own experiences or information and stories for which you can provide a credible citation.
4) If someone writes something you find hurtful or offensive, you have the right to say, “Ouch” to notify the group about the statement. We will not ask you to explain yourself, but the instructor will join the discussion board to reflect with the group about what might have been offensive.

Email Policy
I will respond to all student emails within 48 hours.

Assignments

Weekly journal entries
By Friday each week, students should write a one-page journal entry reflecting on the course material in relation to their own experiences, perspectives, or observations. These response papers will only be read by the instructor, so it is a space where students can explore issues that they might find more difficult to discuss in a more public space.

Discussion assignments:
During each module, students will be required to participate twice in a discussion post. In the first round of the discussion assignment, each student will be assigned one of the following roles:
1. Synthesizer – Respond to the following questions: How do these readings relate to one another? What are the questions, dilemmas, or debates? What are the main issues in these readings?

2. Questioner – Ask three open-ended discussion questions, questions written to provoke analysis.

3. First Responder – Take the first response at the questions! Respond to one or two of the questions raised by the questioner.

4. Contributor – Build on the questions and responses provided by your peers.

The first-round discussion posts should be submitted between Monday and Wednesday. Student can then check in again and make a second post responding to their colleagues between Thursday and Friday.

**Final Project (choose one of the following):**

1. **Policy brief:** Write a paper directed to a specific audience (e.g. state representative, a local school board, UNESCO) advocating for the adoption of a certain position or attitude related to sex education or sexuality in schools.
   - Here is a guide for how to write a policy brief: https://writingcenter.unc.edu/policy-briefs/
   - Here you can find a guide for how to write each section of the policy brief: http://fordschool.umich.edu/files/policy-writing.pdf

2. **Lesson plan:** Design a lesson for an audience and setting of your choice, addressing an issue or topic related to sex education or sexuality in schools, including objectives, rationales, and instructions for the facilitator.
   - Some examples of sex education lesson plans:
     - The Dutch sex education lesson for Kindergarteners found in at this website that we viewed in week 1: https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/spring-fever
     - Also lots of examples for different grade levels at this website: https://3rs.org/3rs-curriculum/3rs-curric-search/

3. **Write a curriculum guide for your own sex education curriculum.** While most curriculum guides are quite extensive, this can be a short document that sketches out the following information regarding your curriculum:
   - The goals of your sex ed curriculum
   - The values/ideals transmitted through the curriculum (e.g. empowering individual choice, promoting family values, or promoting rights and respect)
   - Brief list of the topics to be discussed in the curriculum with concepts defined
   - How, where, and by whom sex education occurs (e.g. via peer educators in afterschool clubs, or in a traditional classroom setting with a teacher leading discussions)
   - The age groups this curriculum is designed for
   - Rationale for this curriculum: a brief argument explaining why this curricular design is the best way to approach sex education (e.g. why include these topics and why teach sex education in this way). This rationale can be woven throughout the guide or it can be a separate section.
Feel free to use some of the curriculum guides we have explored in the course content for inspiration, such as the 3rs curriculum or the SIECUS guidelines, but remember, your curriculum guide does not need to be as comprehensive.

- Statements of guidelines should be between 700 and 1000 words.
- Papers should be between 750-1500 words and use appropriate citations.

**Final project check-in**

Students should submit a two-paragraph description of their final project by June 30. In these paragraphs, the student should identify which of the three types of projects they have chosen. For check-ins related to policy briefs, students should identify their intended audience for the brief and a concise overview of their recommendations. For the lesson plan, students should specify the topic they will be covering, the intended age group for the lesson plan, and the teaching methodology they will use. Finally, for the curriculum guide, the student should briefly discuss their ideas about how, where, and by whom sex education should be taught.

**Late Policy**

Late assignments will have a 6% reduction rate from the original grade for each day the assignment is late, so if the student would have received a 100% on the assignment, it would be 94% if it is one day late. If it is two days late, it would receive an 88%. Any special circumstances should be discussed with me in advance of the assignment due date.

**Course Calendar:**

| Week 1: Introductions and Module 1: History of US sex ed and examples from elsewhere |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Read/View                       | Intro/Mod 0     | Mod 1 Readings, Viewings, Lectures |               |                 |                 |                 |
| Discuss                         |                 | Synthesizer Questioner | First Responder | Second levels of contribution | Contributors post to all class |                 |
| Reflect                         | Meet with Nancy via Skype |                 |                 | Personal Reflection post in journal |                 |                 |

| Week 2: Module 2: Sex Education policies in the USA |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Read/View                       | Mod 2: Readings, Viewings, Lectures |               |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Discuss                         |                 | Synthesizer Questioner | First Responder | Second levels of contribution | Contributors post to all class |                 |
Week 3: Module 3 Social inequalities and (formal and informal) sex education

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Week 4: Module 4: Alternatives to the Status Quo

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Content:

Module 1: History of US Sex Education and Examples from Elsewhere


Dutch Sex Education:

[https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/spring-fever](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/spring-fever)

- lesson plan for kindergarteners.
- Two videos for middle schoolers and kindergarteners.

**Module 2: Sex Education Policies in the USA**


SIECUS Guidelines for creating comprehensive sexuality education (pp 1-20)

**Module 3: Social inequalities and (formal and informal) sex education**


Lockhart, P.R. (2018, Apr 26). Black girls are disciplined more harshly in school. Dress codes play a big role. *Vox*.

**Module 4: Alternatives to the status quo**


