

<b>Denver Family Institute</b>	
<i>Sexual Diversity, Attitudes &amp; Behavior</i> 2 Credit Hours 17.5 AASECT CE's	
<b>Instructor</b> <b>Neil Cannon, Ph.D.</b> AASECT Certified Sex Therapist	<b>Spring Quarter 2011</b>
<a href="mailto:neil@doctorcannon.com">neil@doctorcannon.com</a>	P: 303.670.5600 M: 303.550.3895

**COURSE SYLLABUS****COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The intention of this course is to help prepare students to have compassion for any client situation related to sexuality even if the student doesn't fully understand it, can't relate to it, or it goes against the student clinicians personal beliefs. This course explores sexuality from a sexological and socio-cultural perspective with the intention of establishing the context to understand a client's sexual template, attitudes and behavior. Content covers a broad array of alternative forms of sexual expression and sexual orientations, including the Paraphilias. The class will examine hyper-sexuality, problematic sexual behavior and "sex addiction." We will discuss the nuances of providing therapy to sexual minorities including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, Queer, Questioning and Intersex (GLBTQQI) populations. The course will address gender-related issues, myths and power dynamics. The course will include developmental sexuality from childhood to geriatrics. The needs of special populations will also be addressed, i.e., those with mental, emotional and physical disabilities. The course will introduce therapeutic awareness and support strategies for medical factors including the impact of STD's, pregnancy, pregnancy termination, contraception, fertility, illness, disabilities, substance abuse, and sexual pharmacology. Students will be taught how to initiate therapeutic dialog about sex and will gain a heightened sense of consciousness in regards to the power of language and labels in sex therapy. Students will be provided with a comprehensive list of resources and learn how to obtain sex research and literature.

## **SPECIAL NOTICE**

The course utilizes Sexually Explicit Materials (SEM), adult language and content. Students must be 18 years old or older to enroll. Visitors are not allowed without the advance approval of the instructor. The context of our work is critically important and therefore consistent attendance is required. Attendance during the first week of class is mandatory for admission. In order to ensure the emotional safety of our students, classes will not be filmed, recorded or Skyped.

## **COURSE RATIONALE**

Human sexuality is at the core of virtually all intimate relationships. One of our values at DFI is that our students graduate with a professional commitment to be open and affirming regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, sexual identity or sexual expression. Students will gain basic knowledge of human sexuality that will empower them to engage in therapeutic dialog with clients about sexual topics from a place of knowledge, confidence and compassion.

## **COMPETANCIES**

It is anticipated that the student will display the following competencies:

- 1. Students will have a heightened sense of awareness about how their own sexuality and beliefs that impact their work as a therapist.*
- 2. Students will feel empowered to initiate and engage in frank discussions with clients about sexuality.*
- 3. Students will expand their core knowledge of human sexuality.*
- 4. Students will gain a better understanding of how to work with sexual minorities, alternative forms of sexual expression, the Paraphilias, and sexually compulsive behavior.*
- 5. Students will learn how to locate resources related to human sexuality.*
- 6. Students will gain a better understanding of sexuality from a relational and systemic perspective.*
- 7. Students will gain a sexological perspective that will assist them in understanding the role that our culture plays in sexuality.*

## **POTENTIAL METHODS OF TEACHING**

Lecture, Case Studies, Guest Speakers, Discussion, Multi-Media, Didactic Instruction; Role Plays

The student is expected to assume roles of learner, teacher, critical commentator, and analyst. These roles will be used in assessing strengths and areas for improvement in student's own and classroom colleagues' mastery of content and application to diverse practice situations.

## **CONTENT ON SPECIAL POPULATIONS**

Throughout this entire course, students will be expected to integrate the material presented with an understanding of the implications in work with sexually diverse populations. Students will show higher-level critical thinking by exploring how techniques might be influenced by cultural and historical factors. Students will challenge themselves to look at the current biases in their worldview and their own sexual attitudes that may affect their work with clients. Students will be open to the worldview of other students so they can learn and practice being present with ideas they may not agree with (as when working with a family whose values or beliefs differ in a fundamental way from the therapist). We will look at how couples and family therapy techniques may be influenced or shaped by similarities and/or differences between therapist and client with regards to sexual orientation, religion/spiritual beliefs and sexual behavior. These topics are crucial to those working with clients. Each student should be prepared to examine her or his own feelings regarding the above material. Each student is expected to support other students as they self-disclose, share their own ideas, histories and biases. The focus is on creating a safe place to share new insights, develop ideas, and recognize limitations, as well as areas of discomfort that could impact your work as a therapist. Some uneasiness might be experienced in any class addressing issues of sexuality, social stigmatization, discrimination, oppression, bias and/or the therapist's use of self. I ask that you enter these discussions prepared to listen to your classmates without a rush to judgment and without the assumption that we all see the world the same way. We all share a desire to learn more about couples and family therapy. This does not mean that we all share the same world view of sexual normalcy, or that "normal" is better than alternative forms of sexuality, orientation or identity.

## **LOCATION**

The course will be taught at Denver Family Institute, South Office.

**7200 East Hamden Ave #301  
Denver CO 80224**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Class #	Date	Topics Covered	Assignments
1	3/21/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Sexology (The scientific study of sexual attitudes and behavior).</li> <li>2) Sexual anthropology: A cross-cultural exploration of sexual diversity, attitudes and behavior.</li> <li>3) The power of language and labels in sex therapy</li> <li>4) Introduction to the PLISSIT Therapy Model</li> </ol>	As a courtesy to your fellow students and instructor, please choose to be on time so we will all start from the same place.
2	3/28/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Initiating conversations about sex with clients</li> <li>2) Sexual orientations and identity</li> <li>3) Understanding and treating the most frequent presenting concerns by sexual minorities and special populations</li> </ol>	Reading prior to class two: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Two journal articles to be provided by the instructor.</li> </ol>
3	4/4/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Understanding and treating sexual disorders, the Paraphilias, and alternative forms of sexual expression</li> <li>2) How to take a sex history</li> </ol>	Reading prior to class three: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) One journal articles to be provided by the instructor</li> <li>2) "How to Take a Sex History"</li> </ol>
4	4/11/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Reactions to the sex history assignment</li> <li>2) Understanding and treating problematic sexual behavior and "Sex Addiction"</li> <li>3) Medical factors &amp; sexual pharmacology</li> </ol>	Reading & Assignment prior to class four: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) One journal article to be provided by the instructor.</li> <li>2) Take a comprehensive sex history on yourself (The assignment is for your own self-awareness and will not be turned in)</li> </ol>
5	4/18/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Sex research and resources</li> <li>2) Knowing your scope of competence and understanding when to refer out to specialists</li> <li>3) Oral reports</li> </ol>	Reading & Assignment prior to class five: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Turn in final paper</li> <li>2) Prepare brief oral report summarizing final paper</li> </ol>

## EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Student Responsibilities: Each of you has chosen, by being part of this program, to go above and beyond in your pursuit of excellence. Our assumption is that you want to be in class. Life can be busy and circumstances conspire to make being fully present difficult at times. As an instructor, I endeavor to keep the material educational, entertaining, insightful, interactive and deeply meaningful. As a student, it is your responsibility to be fully engaged, to approach the material in a way that is salient for you and to seek out assistance as necessary. I outline the following responsibilities to establish a clear contract and identify shared expectations:

1. Attend! The context of our classroom activity is critical and therefore arriving to class on time and consistent attendance is mandatory. If you do not attend the first class you will be dropped from the class. There will be no exceptions. In the rare case that a student cannot attend class 2 - 5, the student must advise the instructor in advance and must then make a proposal on how they will acquire the class material. This will be difficult for you to do because in order to help students feel emotionally safe while addressing sensitive topics about sexuality, classes will not be filmed or recorded. Absences and tardiness will be reflected in the final grade. If you choose to miss two classes no credit will be given.
2. Learning Journal. Maintain for possible discussion and reflections.
3. Read assigned material as scheduled. Demonstrate through class participation that you have read the material.
4. Hand in assignments when due for full credit. Assignments turned in late will lower your grade.
5. Participate in class, offer your questions, your insights, and your experiences and join in experiential activities.
6. Think Critically: Do work that demonstrates your understanding of the material and your ability to integrate, apply, evaluate and critique ideas. Demonstrate first an understanding of what's put forth, then a critique of how your own experiences support or challenge the material.
7. Communicate Clearly: Written work must demonstrate the ability to transmit ideas in an intentional form, using correct grammar, references, etc. Organized papers follow a systematic and clear progression of thought.
8. Utilize Course Material: Work will demonstrate the student's integration and application of required readings, class discussions, role plays, guest speakers, and research skills. APA references should be used in final projects.

9. Live the Material: This program is based on a systemic, relational point of view. As you take the course, be open to experiences, information and insights in your daily life that increase your awareness. Share with instructor and classmates how you are processing material from the course in your real life.
10. Conceptualize Meaningfully: When using theoretical concepts, clear definitions of each concept are given, and they are used within a context that is appropriate. The student's work demonstrates the ability to use theories accurately, to think in logical sequence, and to organize ideas into a conceptual whole.
11. Analyze with Depth & Creativity: Work demonstrates the ability to apply, evaluate and critique ideas and practice via relevant literatures. Information from literature or class is not simply regurgitated but is also used for reflection and is explored with an eye to how the ideas influence one's work and one's life. There is evidence of analytic depth that captures underlying profession of origin (social work, psychology, family therapy, education, theology, and counseling) ethics, values, beliefs, and/or related issues.

**GRADING:**

The class is a "pass/fail" class. However, for students who require a grade please discuss this with the instructor on the first day of class.

1. Attendance	5 points (x5=25 points)
2. Class participation	15 points
3. Taking your own sex history (not to be turned in)	15 points
4. Reading journal articles as assigned	15 points
5. Final paper (written - verbal TBD)	30 points

Total Possible Points: 100

Assessment Classification	Range	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent Work (above course expectations)	94-100	A	4.0
	91-93	A -	3.7
Good Work (meets course expectations)	88-90	B+	3.3
	84-87	B	3.0
	81-83	B-	2.7
Poor Work (meets minimal course expectations)	78-80	C +	2.3
	74-77	C	2.0
	71-73	C -	1.7
Failing Work	70-0	F	0.0
Incomplete* ( I ) <i>*will only be given in accordance with the policies in the Student Manual</i>			

## ***ASSIGNMENTS:***

### **Attend Every Class**

This is a highly experiential class such that relies on punctual, engaged students who attend regularly and are keeping up. Because we are dealing with sensitive topics of sexuality and intimacy, the context of our work is extremely critical.

### **Participate**

Much of what we learn in class, we learn from our fellow students. Everyone has something to contribute. I want to know that you understand the material, and I want you to share your thoughts and feelings with the class. This class is intended to be an emotionally safe place for you to expand your worldview of the complexities of sexuality.

### **Taking Your Own Sex History**

The ability to take a meaningful sex history on a client is an important part of our work. Students will be provided with guidelines and a process to help them take a thorough sex history. Students will gain insight by practicing on themselves. In order to protect your privacy, your sex history will \*not\* be turned in however each student will be expected to share your insight, thoughts and feelings about the exercise in class.

### **Final Paper**

You will write the following paper: How my attitudes have changed about sexuality over the past 5 weeks and how I will integrate what I have learned into my practice.

- Please be introspective. The following is an example of topic ideas you will want to consider and more instruction will be provided in class:
  - The impact of your own sex history
  - What areas remain uncomfortable for you
  - The sexual messages you received from your family from a multi-generational perspective
  - Our culture from a sexological perspective
  - The impact of your religious upbringing on your own sexuality
  - Partner messages about sex
- How will you integrate what you have learned into your work as a therapist?
- What sexuality biases will you bring into the therapy room and what will you do with them? (Positive and negative biases)
- How do you feel about working with clients who present with sexual concerns, before this course and now? How comfortable do you feel initiating and having in depth conversations with clients about sex?

The paper is to be typed, double spaced, and in 12 point font. The paper is to be between 600 and 1000 words (three to five double spaced pages). APA format is not required or desired. I do not want a paper with references. I do want a paper that expresses how this class has helped you grow professionally and how it will impact your work as a therapist.

### **POLICY CONCERNING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

A student who has a disability protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974 and wants to request accommodations must contact the Disability Services Program (DSP) located in Driscoll Center South, Suite 30 (below the Bookstore) or through 303.871.2455, 303.871.2278, or the DSP website, [www.du.edu/disability/dsp](http://www.du.edu/disability/dsp). The *Handbook for Students with Disabilities*, available on the DSP website under “News & Publications,” outlines the policies and procedures for requesting and using accommodations. The student must contact the instructor as soon as possible after DSP has determined the accommodations to be offered and confirmed this in writing in order to discuss how the accommodations will be implemented.

### **POLICY CONCERNING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ETHICAL CONDUCT**

Students taking this course are expected to adhere to the AAMFT Code of Ethics, the AASECT Code of Ethics, the NASW Code of Ethics (for DU Students), and the GSSW Ethical Behavior and Conduct statement in the student handbook, and the rules regarding Academic Dishonesty, also found in the student handbook. Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior at all times, showing respect to peers, instructors, and diverse points of view. The University of Denver Honor Code defines *plagiarism* as representation of another's work or ideas as one's own and *fabrication* as falsification or creation of data, research or resources to support academic submission. Both are academically dishonest and grounds for disciplinary action.