

St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo
Department of Religious Studies
Fall 2018
RS 254 Christian Sexual Ethics
SJ2 2001 Tuesday & Thursday 1:00 – 2:20 p.m.

Course Outline

Instructor: Professor David Perrin
Office: SJ2 2026
Office Phone: 519-884-8111 x28307
Email: dperrin@uwaterloo.ca

Office Hours: By appointment any time mutually agreeable; Tuesday and Thursday 12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.; 2:30-3:30. Email messages sent Monday to Thursday will be responded to within 48 hours. Emails sent on Fridays before 12 noon will be responded to by 4 p.m. the same day. Emails sent after 12 noon on Fridays will be responded to by the end of the workday the following Monday.

Course Description:

This course exams human sexuality as a reality which incorporates all aspects of the person, for example, the affective, cognitional, psychological, sensual, relational, and spiritual. From this anthropological perspective we see how human sexuality, viewed as an integral component of all areas of human life and action, impacts Christian living. Understanding how human beings construct (e.g. through language) and regulate sexual identities and modes of sexual relating is fundamental in this course. Political bodies, religious institutions, accepted (and disputed) social norms, as well as normative interpretations of gender and sexual relationship, all contribute toward these constructions and regulations. A brief examination of the history of Christian thought on human sexuality will lead us to explore the principle perspectives in sexual ethics which form the components of the various current debates in this particular field of study. Several expressions of human sexuality will be critically examined from within the framework of Christian sexual ethics developed in this course.

Learning Objectives:

- A. To understand the fundamental terms, concepts, and reasoning used in Christian sexual ethics.
- B. To understand human sexuality as a “language.”
- C. To develop a framework that will facilitate systematic reflection on moral actions.
- D. To assess critically key themes and sources in sexual ethics.
- E. To articulate informed positions regarding contemporary issues in sexual ethics.

Note: The Professor reserves the right to adjust and assign student seating in the course in order to maximize the pedagogical strategies and learning outcomes for which this course is designed.

• **REQUIRED TEXT:**

RS 254 Christian Sexual Ethics COURSEWARE – Available at UW Bookstore

- **RECOMMENDED optional additional resources through SJU Library:**

Cahill, Lisa S., *Between the Sexes: Foundations for a Christian Ethics of Sexuality*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press; New York: Paulist Press, 1985.

Countryman, L. William, *Dirt greed & sex: Sexual ethics in the New Testament and their implications for today*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.

Farley, Margaret A., *Just love: A framework for Christian sexual ethics*. New York: Continuum, 2006.

Gudorf, Christine Erhart, *Body, Sex, and Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Sexual Ethics*, Cleveland, Pilgrim Press, 1994.

Hanigan, James P., *What are they saying about sexual morality?*, New York: Paulist Press, 1982.

Salzman, T.A and M.G. Lawler, *Sexual Ethics: A Theological Introduction*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 2012.

Class Schedule (Note: Some changes may need to be made to this schedule as the course progresses. Updates will be announced in class.)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
1	September 6	Course Outline	No readings
	September 11	Understanding Christian Sexual Ethics in Today's World	Hendershot , "Virgins for Jesus"; Grenz , "Star Trek and the Postmodern Generation"
2	September 13	Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics	Farley , "Framework for a Sexual Ethic ..."
	September 18	Sources of Christian Ethics	Countryman , "New Testament Sexual Ethics"
3	September 20	Sources of Christian Ethics (cont.)	No readings; Work on Media Analysis One
	September 25	Spirituality and Sexuality	No readings; Work on Media Analysis One
4	September 27	Sexual Anthropology	Kant , "Duties Toward the Body ..."; Kant , "An Answer to the Question ..."
	October 2	Sexual Anthropology (cont.)	No readings; work on Media Analysis One
5	October 4	Media Analysis Due; "Open Mike:" In-Class Presentations	No readings; work on In-Class Test One
	October 9	No Class; Study Day	

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
	October 11	In-Class Test One	
6	October 16	Sexual Fecundity; The Role of Pleasure; Celibacy	Abbott , “Later Christianity ...”
	October 18	Sexual Violence Against Women; Patriarchy	Kaufman , “Pain Flows from the Source of Power ...”; Schussler , “Ties That Bind ...”
7	October 23	Issues of Sexual Expression: Reproductive Sexual Ethics; Abortion	Nelson , “Embryos and Ethics”; Kissling , “Is There Life After Roe ...”;
	October 25	Issues of Sexual Expression: Reproductive Sexual Ethics (cont.)	Traina , “Papal Ideal, Marital Realities”
8	October 30	Issues of Sexual Expression: Sexual Fantasies; Pornography	Guindon , “Sexual Fantasies”; Nelson , “The Morality of Sexual Variations,” 160-168.
	November 1	Issues of Sexual Expression (cont.)	No readings; Prepare for In-Class Test Two
9	November 6	In-Class Test Two	
	November 8	Issues of Sexual Expression: Masturbation; Oral-Genital Expression; Anal Intercourse	Nelson , “The Morality of Sexual Variations,” 152-160; 168-179
10	November 13	Issues of Sexual Expression: Homosexuality and Same-Sex Relationships	Hendershot , “Holiness Codes...” Haldeman , “A Queer Fidelity...”
	November 15	Issues of Sexual Expression Last date for LEARN postings.	OPTIONAL READINGS: Nelson , “Sources for Body Theology ...”; Salzman/Lawler , “Homosexuality”
11	November 20	Issues of Sexual Expression: Co-habitation	No readings
	November 22	“Open Mike:” In-Class Presentations	No readings; work on In-Class Test Three
12	November 27	Term Review: Prepare Your Questions	No readings this week; prepare questions to ask; work on In-Class Test Three
	November 29	<i>Last Class: In-Class Test Three</i>	

Marking Scheme:

Participation/Attendance: 10%

LEARN Postings: 10%

Media Analysis: 10%

In-Class Presentation (Oral and Written): 10%

In-Class Test One: 20%

In-Class Test Two: 20%

In-Class Test Three: 20%

Instructions for Assignments/Essays/Tests etc.:

Media Analysis:

1. **Choose an ad or a short article** out of a newspaper, or popular review, or a magazine, in which the notion or expression of human sexuality and/or sexuality activity is apparent (either explicitly or implicitly). Submit the original or photocopy the page(s) of the ad or article and indicate (highlight) the main passages of interest on the page. This must be handed in with your paper. Alternatively, you may choose a short YouTube Video not longer than 4 minutes in length. The same analysis applies as indicated below. **Submit the hyper-link of the YouTube video via email** to the Professor. *Length:* Your written analysis is 900-1000 words.
2. **Elements to include in your written analysis:**
 - i. Describe the general position (model) the author has taken on sexuality and/or the sexual activity?
 - ii. What is the author's perspective on the specific issue being treated?
 - iii. What norms and values are being reflected?
 - iv. What are the characteristics of the sexual anthropology – either implied or explicit -- in the piece?
 - v. Evaluate the position of the author according to what we have studied in class and according to what you have read. The evaluation is a values-based evaluation according to the framework for Christian sexual ethics being developed in this course.

(Question from a student inquiry last time: “Don’t some of the elements overlap?” Response: You are correct that some of the elements overlap. This allows flexibility with application to the various modalities students may choose, e.g. YouTube video; cartoon; newspaper article and so on. But each element also has its own specificity: for example, i. get's out the portrayal of sexuality generally speaking; ii. asks what the author specifically is trying to get at; iii. takes the analysis further into either a criticism of norms and values or perhaps upholding certain norms and values; iv. deals with "what it means to be human"; and then v. is your analysis of all of this. So, yes, overlap but also distinction. Remember, to assist in this piece of work are also the concepts which we have studied in the course to date as well as the example of analysis in the "Virgins For Jesus" article.)

Practical advice for doing this assignment: This work is essentially one of reflection and critique using the material discussed in the course and your personal reading. I do not expect to find a bibliography and references. Avoid critiquing the article in general. Provide specific critique and analysis of the specific points you have highlighted in the article. Discuss the article from the perspective of Christian sexual ethics.

LEARN Postings: Up until November 15 your brief summaries of an assigned text, relevant principal points from an assigned text, your questions, or other reflections that engage your own experience based on the required readings which you post on the LEARN site, will be factored into your LEARN mark. Your original LEARN postings must be a minimum of 5 sentences per posting, based on the above description, in order to be awarded the 1% per posting. Although students may read and comment on the postings of all students such comments/postings based on the work of other students do not count toward your mark awarded for LEARN postings. They will, however, be factored into your general Participation mark for this course. Please note that the LEARN site closes at 10 p.m. the day before each class; your material needs to be posted prior to that time. Students can read and comment on your postings. The last opportunity for posting is November 15.

In-Class Presentation:

Note: Although not mandatory you may post your presentation and/or personal written text by going to the LEARN site for this course. Click on “Connect.” Click on “Discussions.” Click on “Submissions posted HERE.” Other students may appreciate having your notes to assist with studying for in-class tests.

Option One: Choose one of the readings from the Courseware for this course (excluding the two readings by Kant). Prepare a 15-20 minute in-class presentation of the highlights from this reading. The in-class presentation takes place on the day the reading is scheduled at the beginning of the class. Write up your highlights of the reading in 600 – 800 words and submit to the Professor via the LEARN Drop-box by 4 p.m. the day following your in-class presentation. Include a few sentences that describe your personal perspective on the main issue in the article. A sign-up sheet on a “first come – first served” basis will be circulated for this assignment on September 11.

Option Two: Choose another reading (*academic article* or chapter in an *academic book*) of your choice on a topic in Christian sexual ethics. Choose a topic that is of particular interest to you. Prepare a 15-20 minute presentation of the highlights from this reading. The in-class

presentation will take place on the “Open Mike” days: one of October 4 or November 22. A maximum of 3 “Open Mike” presentations will be allowed per day. Write up your highlights of the reading in 600 – 800 words and submit to the Professor via the LEARN Drop-box by 4 p.m. the day following your in-class presentation . You must also **submit a hard copy photocopy of the reading** the day of your in-class presentation. Include a few sentences that describe your personal perspective on the main issue in the article. Be sure to give the full reference indicating where you obtained the reading. A sign-up sheet on a “first come – first served” basis will be circulated for this assignment on September 11.

In-Class Attendance/Participation: This course is designed to promote engaged critical thinking with the course readings, your personal experience, and the material presented in the classroom. In order to foster the skill of engaged critical thinking and to dialogue with other members of the class from an informed perspective, I expect you to have done the readings prior to each class, come to the class with prepared questions and/or commentary on the readings, and interact with your colleagues during class discussion times.

Brief summaries of the text, relevant principal points of special interest to you, your questions, or other reflections that engage your own experience based on the required readings or other material you have come across will be factored into your participation mark.

On each day when readings are due you will have the opportunity to bring forward specific points you found of interest for classroom discussion. Questions for discussion from the readings are also greatly welcomed. Both regular attendance and preparation are necessary for successful class meetings and success in this course.

Attendance/Participation includes all the ways you contribute to the life of the class: bringing up and responding to questions, listening actively to others, following up on others’ comments, maintaining eye contact with those speaking and those to whom you’re speaking (not just the instructor), on-task participation in small groups, treating others with respect, coming to class on time, being prepared. Here’s a basic outline of how contributions are graded:

A (8-10) = solid attendance, active attention, frequent (almost every class) substantive spoken contributions

B (7-8) = solid attendance, active attention, occasional (most classes) substantive spoken contributions

C (6-7) = solid attendance, fairly active attention, rare spoken contributions

D (5-6) = irregular attendance and attention, rare or no substantive spoken contributions

E (0-4) = substantial number of classes missed (>5)

Attendance will be taken and factored into your Participation/Attendance mark. Missing more than one (1) class meeting will result in the loss of one (1) mark out of the ten (10)

Participation/Attendance marks for each class missed. Arriving late or leaving early will also factor into your Participation/Attendance mark. Health reasons, with submission of appropriate documentation from UW, the “[University of Waterloo Verification of Illness](#)”, may exempt you from this policy. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

Policy on Food in the Classroom: No snacks or food of any kind is permitted in the classroom before class starts, during class breaks, or during class meeting times. Only hot and cold drinks may be brought into the classroom and consumed during class meeting times.

Asking Questions: You are encouraged to ask questions during lectures being given by the Professor. Raising your hand will signal you have a question. I'll stop to respond to the question at an opportune time shortly thereafter. However, depending on your question, the question will be entertained immediately or held for a response later in the lecture.

What to call professors: "Professor" or "Doctor" works well for both men and women.

In-Class Tests: The In-Class Tests are written. They will contain questions based on the compulsory readings and the lecture material presented by the Professor **or other students** to date.

Important Dates to Remember:

- Be sure to record the date of your In-Class reading presentation: _____

October 4 Media Analysis (Submit in class at beginning of lecture.)

October 11 In-Class Test One: content: *all* material to date

November 6 In-Class Test Two: content: since last test only (October 16–November 1)

November 15 Last chance to post on LEARN

November 29 In-Class Test Three: content: September 6-October 4; November 8-27

Course Website Information: LEARN

Using your WatIAM username and password, you can access the course website at:
<http://learn.uwaterloo.ca>

LEARN is a web-based course management system that enables instructors to manage course materials (e.g. posting of resource materials), interact with their students (e.g. drop boxes for student submissions, on-line quizzes, discussion boards, and e-mail students), and provide feedback (e.g. grades and assignment comments). The degree to which LEARN is utilized in a particular course is left to the discretion of the instructor; therefore, you may find a large variance in how LEARN is being used from one course to another.

On the RS 254 course website, you will be able to:

- . Engage other students
- . Download select lecture slides
- . Submit your written assignments
- . Access some reading material
- . Read announcements
- . View important dates
- . View some of your grades

Important Note on PowerPoint Presentations by the Professor: The Professor's select lecture slides posted on LEARN do not substitute for your own notetaking during class lectures. Not all slide presentations are posted on LEARN. Some lectures given by the Professor may be without the use of slide presentations. You are responsible for all material presented or discussed in class (by either students or the Professor) whether posted on LEARN or not.

For further help on LEARN you may visit the help website at:
<https://uwaterloo.ca/learn-help/students>

You may also contact support staff via e-mail at: learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca

Correspondence and Appointments:

Students using email to contact me must include their first and last names, student number, and course in which they are enrolled *in the email subject line*. Your "@uwaterloo.ca" email account is the preferred account for email communications with the Professor in this course. Commercial email accounts (such as "Hotmail") are sometimes blocked by spam filters. Email is not conducive to discussion and not an alternative way to receive class material and thus will not be used for such.

Professors welcome hearing from students, and emails are a great opportunity to practice your skills in professional communication. Good professional format includes a standard greeting ("Dear Professor [name],"); unless it's well into the semester, identifying yourself ("I'm a student in your 9:00 section"); using your best grammar; proofreading; and signing off formally ("Sincerely, [your name]"). When you get a response, it's a good habit to send a note of acknowledgment and, if appropriate, thanks.

Discussion of assignments, class material, or other issues that may arise is welcome at class or during office hours. In order to be sure I am available during office hours (for example, I am not with another student) it is helpful to make an appointment at least 24 hours ahead of the desired appointment time. However, if you want to take a chance, please feel free to drop by any time during office hours to see if I am available (for example, again, I may be with another student). If I am not available please wait or send me an email to make an appointment.

Late Work

Part of a university education is learning to organize your time given the multiple demands on your time and talent. Planning and organizing ahead to ensure readings and assignments are completed within the deadlines is necessary. Unless an extension is requested in writing (at least 48 hours ahead of a due date/time) – and granted in writing – a penalty of 10% is applied if assignments are not turned in at the time they are due. Thereafter, for each day the assignment is late – calculated as of 4 p.m. – a further 5% penalty is applied. Out of fairness to other students, however, extensions generally aren't possible because of assignments in other classes. None of us can do our absolute best work all the time; we do the best we can within the limits of a school calendar.

Absences

As a courtesy, please inform me ahead via email if you are going to be absent from class. If you miss an in-class test because of an absence for illness, I will require the "[University of Waterloo Verification of Illness](#)" form in order to entertain the possibility of a make-up test. Please see further information below.

Essay Writing, Formatting, References, etc.: For instructions on how to write and cite correctly please refer to <https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre>
Also access the following tutorial for excellent information on plagiarism from Indiana University: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd>

Electronic Device Policy

- i. **Turn off and put away** your cellphone, tablet of any kind, smart-phone of any kind, and any other electronic devices *before entering the classroom*. They are to remain put away and out of sight -- even during breaks -- while you are *inside the classroom*.
- ii. Use of cellular telephones, smart phones, and similar devices is ***prohibited*** in the classroom as these are disruptive to the work environment of the instructor and disruptive to other students. These are to be powered off and put away at all times while in the classroom. Students who ignore this ban and make available or use these types of devices in the classroom, during lectures and breaks while in the classroom will receive a 5% loss of their final grade for *each* transgression.
- iii. If you are wondering if the Professor has noticed your infraction of this "Electronic Device Policy" check: LEARN "Class Preparation and Participation" in the grades/comments section where infractions are recorded rather than disrupt class.
- iv. Audio and video recording of lectures is strictly prohibited.
- v. If students wish to use computers (laptops only) to take notes during the lectures, they must obtain permission to do so from the instructor. This involves the student **meeting with the Professor to sign a contract** agreeing that s/he will use the computing device exclusively to take notes and for visiting "Learn." No other surfing activity is permitted. Non-lecture-related use of computers is banned as it is disruptive to the instructor and disruptive to other students. ***Students who are "surfing" (e.g., visiting other websites, checking email, facebook, and the like) will receive a 5% reduction of their final mark for each transgression.***
- vi. ***Those who use cellphones or other electronic devices in the classroom (other than a laptop with a duly signed agreement form) will receive a 5% reduction of their final mark for each transgression.***
- vii. Feedback, infractions and penalties will be recorded on LEARN in the comment section for "Class Preparation and Participation." Check this site when you are wondering whether a penalty has been applied to your activity in the classroom.

Policies Regarding Illness and Missed Tests; Other Information

[The University of Waterloo Examination Regulations](#) state that:

- A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal

academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “[University of Waterloo Verification of Illness](#)” form or it will not be accepted. This form can be obtained from Health Services or on the link provided above. If a student has a test/examination deferred due to acceptable medical evidence, he/she normally will write the test/examination at a mutually convenient time, to be determined by the course instructor.

- The University acknowledges that, due to the pluralistic nature of the University community, some students may on religious grounds require alternative times to write tests and examinations.
- Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an alternative examination time.

Academic Integrity: To maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity](#) webpage [for more information](#).

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. [Read the St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Appeals](#).

Note for Students with Disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.