Reformed Theological Seminary

**Sexuality and Sex Therapy**
February 6 – May 15, 2013
Wednesday 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Sharon A. Hersh, M.A., LPC
sharon@sharonhersh.com

"We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-love. But always meeting ourselves."

- James Joyce
  *Ulysses*

**Course Instructor**

Sharon A. Hersh M.A., LPC has been a therapist for over fifteen years and continues with an active practice that has an emphasis in addiction, relationships, adolescents, and personal transformation. She is an author, speaker, teacher, and certified life coach. She earned her a Master’s of Arts in Counseling from Colorado Christian University. She is the author of several books, including *The Last Addiction*, the award-selling *Bravehearts, and her most recent book - Begin Again, Believe Again*. She has written five parenting books including the award-winning Bible Study, *Mothering Without Guilt*. She is a frequent speaker and teacher at universities, seminaries, conferences, and retreats.

**Office hours:** Tuesday 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday 11:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

**Course Description**

This course will investigate spiritual, psychological, and social-cultural variables associated with sexual identity, sexual behavior, and sexual disorders, including diagnosis and treatment for the individual and couples seeking therapy. We will address both healthy and unhealthy practices from a Christian worldview. Classes will be in seminar format and will include lectures, readings, film, and discussion.

**Course Objectives**

Through class assignments, students will demonstrate the following:

1. Understanding of the terms, language, and concepts of human sexuality.
2. Knowledge of sexual development, as well as experiences, family dynamics, and cultural roles in impacting sexual development.
3. An in-depth understanding of their individual sexual history integrated with their Christian faith and practice, for the purpose of preparation for working in a therapeutic setting.
4. An awareness of the responsibilities and ethics of the counselor.
5. An ability to identify common sexual questions, myths, and problems and provide therapeutic answers and interventions to both individual and couples seeking counseling.

“The question for our lives is not whether we will surrender, but rather, to what or whom? Surrender to Jesus does not mean putting on rose-colored glasses, but rather, daring to face head-on the world’s brokenness – even in yourself.”

Gordon Dalbey, Healing the Masculine Soul

Course Textbooks & Articles

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


Smedes, Lewis B., *Sex for Christians* (1994), ISBN-13: 9780802807434 (General and yet provocative Christian perspective of sex. We will discuss the chapter on Homosexuality in this class.)
Course Content, Topics and Schedule

2/06/13  Course overview & syllabus review
Sexuality
- Sex as Sign
- John 4:1-38
- Class discussion

2/13/13  - Sex Appeal
- Sex & Community
- Class Discussion

2/13/13  Come to class having read:
Wendell Berry chapter: “Sex, Economy & Freedom”

2/20/13  - Sex & Adolescents
- Sex & Single
- Sex & Holy Discernment
- 1 Corinthians 7:1-35
- Class Discussion

2/20/13  Come to class having read:
Smedes, Sex For Christians
Chapters 5-7
Freitas, Sex and the Soul

2/27/13  - The Subject of Abuse
- Romans 1:18-27
- Class Discussion

2/27/13  Come to class having read:
McMinn, Sexuality & Holy Longing

3/06/13  - Abuse and Damage of Sexual Development
- Class discussion

3/06/13  Bring 1-2 page paper on: “Two Faces of Trauma”
Paper #1 due. (See assignment below.)

3/13/13  - Homosexuality
- Class discussion
- Genesis 1-3

3/13/13  Come to class having read:
Smedes: Chapter 3

3/20/13  - Rites of Passage
- Sexuality & The Modern Family
- Masculinity & Femininity
- Psalms 62:11-12
- Class Discussion

3/20/13  Come to class with a journal article to share on Environmental Influences on Sexual Development. Journal summary due. (See assignment below.)

3/26/13 SPRING BREAK

4/03/13  Sex & Marriage
- The Crucible
- Passion Happens
- Genesis 2:24-26
- Class Discussion

4/03/13  Come to class having read:
Longman: Song of Songs
Schnarch: Desire & Intimacy
4/10/13  -  Passion Fades
-  Sex & Jesus?
-  Romans 2:5
-  Class Discussion  
Come to class with 1-2 page paper on “What is Sex For? Paper #2 due.
(See assignment below.)

4/17/13  -  Passion Sizzles
-  The Normal Sexual Cycle
-  Genesis 19:6; Psalm 139; 1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31-33  
Come to class having read: Rosenau, “Sexuality & Sex

4/24/13  Free for All Discussion
-  Holy Experiment: Opening our
-  Hearts to God: Praying our Life Experience, our Feelings, The Psalms, The Lord’s Prayer  
Come to class with one Psalm that best expresses your feelings about Sex.

5/01/13  -  Affairs & Addiction
-  The Last Addiction
-  Titus 3:3; Romans 6:19; Romans 7:24; Proverbs 22:5; Proverbs 7:1-26  
-  Class Discussion

5/08/13  -  Sexuality, Sex & the Counselor
-  The Passion of the Spiderman
-  The Passion of Christ
-  John 2:1-11  
-  Class Discussion

5/15/13  -  Class Discussion  
Bring something to share in response to your Sexual History Paper (see Assignment below.) Sexual History paper due.

Course Requirements

Attendance is mandatory for all class days. Your final grade will be an average of the class participation, the two 1-2 Page Reflection papers, and summary of Journal article of Environmental Influences on Sexual development, sexual self-study term paper, and sharing in class discussion time. Missing class hours may result in the loss of a letter grade in the class.

Reading: Students are asked to read all required texts by the dates shown on the course schedule. Texts not listed specifically in the course content and schedule will be referred to throughout the course.
Class Discussions:

- Students will have an opportunity to discuss class material at the end of most classes.
- Specifically, they are asked to share something from their reflection papers on “The Two Faces of Trauma” (3/06/13) and from their “What is Sex For” (4/10/13) for a 3-5 minutes presentation that reflects on their personal response to the assignment. Students may share information from class texts, current literature, novels, films, Scripture, and personal experience. These presentations should take into consideration “real issues and problems, as they are experienced and suffered in people’s lives”. The presentation is for the sake of the class community’s “mutuality of interests” to “live and act by the common virtues of trust, goodwill, forbearance, self-restraint, compassion, and forgiveness” (Berry). There will be further discussion about this in class.
- Students will share a summary (either written or oral) from a Journal article in this field on Environmental Influences on Sexual Development – 3/20/12. Students can share their summary orally during class discussion for 1-3 minutes or in a 1-page summary of the article. All students will make available to the class the name and reference information for the article.
- Students are asked to bring a Psalm that best reflects their feelings about sex on 4/24/13 to participate in the Holy Experiment to Open our Hearts to God.
- Students are expected to share a brief response to their work on the Term Paper on 5/15/13. Students will share for 3-5 minutes reflecting on their personal response to the assignment. Students may share information from class texts, current literature, novels, films, Scripture, and personal experience. This presentation should take into consideration “real issues and problems, as they are experienced and suffered in people’s lives”. The presentation is not to necessarily share details of the student’s sexual development, but what they have learned by looking at their own story and how it will contribute to their work in helping others.

"Fairy tales are more than true; not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten."

- G.K. Chesterton

Tremendous Trifles

Papers

1. Students will write a 1-2 page reflection paper on “The Two Faces of Trauma.” The subject matter for this paper will be explained in class. **Due: 3/06/13.**
2. Students will write a 1-2 page reflection paper on “What Sex is For.” Further specifics for this paper will be explained in class. **Due 4/10/13.**
3. Students will write a 12-14-page paper on the development of their individual sexuality addressing both psychological research and Christian ethical standards surrounding that development. Issues to be addressed include **(but are not limited to):**
* How sexuality was presented in your family.
• Issues that led up to specific behaviors.
• Your emotional response to specific behaviors.
• How specific behaviors/emotions impacted your spiritual life and growth.
• How gender identity and gender roles were presented and integrated.
• How you overcame or will overcome any destructive patterns, beliefs, or consequences.
• How your own sexual development will contribute to your counseling.

2. Since this is a research paper, students will need to demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter by citing a minimum of six sources.

3. **This paper is due the final day of class 5/15/13.**
   Papers should be sealed in a manila envelope with your name written on the envelope. I will mail the graded papers to Earlene to distribute in your mailboxes. If you want your paper mailed to an address other than the school, please include a self-addressed, **stamped** envelope. Otherwise, I will mail the paper to Earlene. Due to the confidential nature of this paper, I will not accept an electronic paper. Please note that under no circumstances will I show anyone the papers.

4. All late papers may receive one letter grade lower for each calendar day that it is late.

**Course Policies**

1. **Grading Policy:**
   - Class Discussion 25%
   - Reflection Papers/Journal Summary 25%
   - Term Paper 50%

2. **Grading Scale:**
   - A 94-100
   - B 85-93
   - C 76-84
   - F 75 or below
# Course Objectives Related to MAC Student Learning Outcomes

**Course**: Sexuality & Sex Therapy - 02PSY573/01  
**Professor**: Sharon A. Hersh, M.A., LPC  
**Campus**: Orlando, FL  
**Date**: February 6 – May 16, 2013

## MAC Student Learning Outcomes

In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.

*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Student will understand and articulate through written papers and class discussions the Biblical, theological, historical, and cultural details, concepts and framework with regard to their own personal sexual development and to sexuality in general.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Scripture</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Student will know the original meaning of Scripture when it comes to many of the categories that have to do with Sex in the Scriptures as applied to real life.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Reformed Theology</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sanctification</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Student will understand how sex, uniquely is God’s premier reference point to call us to sanctification that as male and female, joined together, we might most fully represent His image.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Desire for Worldview</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Especially the area of sexuality and, thus, sex therapy.</td>
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<th>Winsomely Reformed</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<td>Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Students will learn through film and current day stories, including their own, about using this category of sex to represent Christ to an unbelievers.</td>
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<th>Preach</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Whether to the individual in</td>
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<td>Role</td>
<td>Knowledge Area</td>
<td>Proficiency</td>
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<td>Worship</td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td>Shepherd</td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td>Church/World</td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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