

**SYLLABUS**

**LS 650/Th640 OL**

**Sexuality and Marriage**

**Fall**

**2018**

**Theology Department  
Valparaiso University**

**Instructor: James F. Moore**

**LS 650/Th640 OL: Sexuality and Marriage**  
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**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:** THIS COURSE IS AN OPEN DISCUSSION OF THE MANY ISSUES STEMMING FROM CONTEMPORARY VIEWS OF SEXUALITY, GENDER AND MARRIAGE. THERE IS, PERHAPS, NO AREA OF HUMAN LIVING THAT HAS UNDERGONE MORE SIGNIFICANT CHANGE OR CREATES MORE CONTROVERSY THAN DOES HUMAN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR. SURELY RELIGION HAS PLAYED A CENTRAL ROLE IN SHAPING ATTITUDES ABOUT SEXUALITY IN OUR CULTURE AND IN SO DOING HAS SET PATTERNS OF LIVING AND STANDARDS FOR JUDGMENT THAT EVEN THOSE WHO ARE NOT RELIGIOUS MUST PAY ATTENTION TO. THIS COURSE AIMS TO TAKE A HARD LOOK AT BOTH THE RELIGIOUS STANDARDS, PARTICULARLY THOSE SHAPED BY CHRISTIANITY, AND THE CURRENT STATE OF FLUX IN SEXUAL ATTITUDES, BEHAVIOR AND GENDER ROLES AND PATTERNS. THIS STUDY WILL THEN HELP US UNDERSTAND AS WELL THE CHANGING SHAPE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY IN OUR CULTURE. Readings and discussion will be aimed to assist the student in this task. This course is designed as an online course and all readings for the course are found in the documents file on blackboard for this course. The schedule for the course is outlined below and the readings for the course are identified in the schedule of this syllabus to match the files available on blackboard. All assignments are also to be submitted online and, thus, there will be no actual in class meetings or discussions. Please note also that this course is cross-listed with Theology 640 online and all the documents for reading as well as the lectures for all numberings of the course can be found for the course in the documents folder under Theology 640 OLX). There are no differences in the course expectations.

**II. REQUIRED TEXTS:** (Copies are available in the documents file for the course on blackboard)

**III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- 1. Response Papers** – The course is designed as an independent study program to be done entirely online. There will be three response papers due on Mondays of the course that will be about 6-8 pages in length and are to be responses to the questions listed in assignments in this syllabus. Each answer should make use of the appropriate texts to create a response and the finished essay will be submitted by email on each due day of the course as designated in the schedule. (65% of grade)
- 2. Class Discussion** - Each student is expected to do the reading for the course and since the course is online there will be no class discussion as such. Each student is listed in the class list, and interactions between students on various texts or topics are encouraged though not required. There will be no in class or online meetings of the class as such.
- 3. Final Paper** - Each student will be asked to focus their attention on one of the many topics of the course as a specialized area for a final reflection paper. The guidelines for this paper are to be found in the assignments section of the syllabus. This paper is to be 12-15 pages in length and should be submitted no later than the final

Wednesday of the course schedule as noted in the schedule. Papers will not be accepted after this date. (35% of grade)

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**5. Objectives** - The objectives of this course are:

1. To introduce students to a variety of approaches to forming a Christian
2. To engage students in an exploration of the issues.
3. To enable students to ask questions and take up personal interests.
4. To help students form their own personal view.

**IV. CLASS SCHEDULE: (All documents for the course can be found in course documents)**

**Week I-II (8/21-8/31) - Foundations for Thinking**

Reading: Farley 2; Gudorf1; Rigali 1; Nelson1

**Week III-IV (9/3-9/14) - Foundations for Thinking**

Reading: Rigali 1; Nelson1

**Week V-VI (9/17-9/28) – Religion and Sexuality**

Reading: Adamczyk1; Burdette1; Gudorf2; Olsen1

**Week VII-VIII (10/1-10/12) – Religion and Sexuality**

Reading: Gudorf2; Olsen1

**Response Paper 1 due on Monday October 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Week IX-X (10/15-10/26) – Sexual Identity and Gender**

Reading: Farley1; Francis1; Gilbert1

**Week XI-XII (10/29-11/9) – Sexual Identity and Gender**

Reading: Farley1; Francis1; Gilbert1

**Response Paper 2 due on Monday October 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Week XIII-XIV (11/12-11/30) – Marriage and Family 1**

Reading: Harris1; Instone1; Nussbaum1

**Response Paper 3 due on Monday November 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Week XV (12/3-12/7) – Marriage and Family 2**

Reading: Skolnick1; Skolnick2; Winter1

## **Final Reflection PAPER DUE on Thursday December 6<sup>th</sup>**

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### **Response Papers**

**Three response papers will be written and turned in to the professor through the course drop box. These are due on Mondays and must be submitted on time. The papers are 6-8 pages in length, typed, double-spaced. Each paper will use some of the course readings to respond to the question(s) of the week listed below:**

**Week 1:** Write a paper which reflects your understanding of the relation between religion and cultural values of sexuality, love and/or gender by drawing on the readings for the week.

**Week 2 –** Write a paper that focuses on the relation between religious views of sexuality and the issues of life that require us to deal with our sexuality.

**Week 3 –** Write a paper that focuses on the relation between religious views of being human and the way this impacts our understanding of family and/or marriage.

### **Final Reflection Paper**

There will be one final reflection paper in which the student reflects on the course readings and writes on how religion and culture both contribute to how we can think about an important issue facing us regarding sexuality, gender and/or marriage. You may choose from any issue that has been addressed in the readings or another issue that is fitting for our course materials. This paper is **12-15 pages typed-double-spaced.**