



Facilitator Notes

Introduction

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This module was developed as part of '**Introduction to Advancing Sexuality Studies: a short course on sexuality theory and research methodologies**'. The short course was developed by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, *and* the International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society.

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This introductory module was created by Professor Gary W. Dowsett and adapted by the Advancing Sexuality Studies short course team at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

Contents

Background	4
Module approach.....	4
Overview.....	5
Required pre-reading.....	5
Required preparation.....	5
Introduction structure, materials and timing	6
Key to symbols and formatting	8
Introduction.....	10
Course credits.....	10
Schedule.....	11
What is 'sexuality'?	11
Introducing (y)ourselves	11
Session 1. Short course background	12
Sexuality studies audit.....	13
Brainstorm	16
The project.....	17
Session 2. So, what <i>is</i> sexuality?	19
Definitions.....	19
Conclusion	23
Online resources	24

Background

This module is intended to provide participants with an overview of Advancing Sexuality Studies: A short course on sexuality theory and research methodologies. A brief background will be provided, along with a summary of an audit of sexuality studies undertaken as part of the short course development process. The short course team recommends that this Introduction module be used where two or more modules are being delivered together, as a way of establishing the framework in which the modules sit.

The aims of this module are:

- To provide a background to the short course as a whole
- To summarise the findings from the short course audit of sexuality studies
- To kick-start thinking on what *is* sexuality

Participants will:

- Develop their understanding of what sexuality is
- Reflect on any work experiences they have had to date in relation to researching or theorising sexuality

Module approach

While the module does contain lecture material, the overall aim is that participants should be involved in active learning. Group work will be undertaken in all sessions and, where information is provided in lecture form, we have striven to ensure that this is linked to group work and debate. The short course team advises that any review or amendment of the module maintains a focus on active learning wherever possible.

Overview

Introduction

This module begins by asking participants to think about their own working definitions of sexuality. An icebreaker activity exercise will also be undertaken.

Session 1. Short course background

Participants will be given a briefing on development of the short course, including an overview of the audit of sexuality studies undertaken as part of course development.

A group work activity will be undertaken to allow participants to share their own experiences to date of types of sexuality work encountered.

Session 2. So, what is sexuality?

Participants will be asked to review the working definitions of sexuality that they developed in the introductory session. Group work will be undertaken, followed by a brief lecture on sexuality that sets the scene for the rest of the short course.

Required pre-reading

Weeks, J. (2003) *Sexuality* (2nd edn). Routledge. London & NY. Chapter 2, The Invention of Sexuality.

Required preparation

Prior to delivering this Introduction, the facilitator should decide which of the short course modules she or he will be presenting. This Introduction ends with instructions to the facilitator to present participants with a schedule that shows the order of the modules which will be covered, the estimated timing, and the aims of each module.

The facilitator is also asked to provide participants with an activity that introduces them to key terms and concepts from the modules that will be covered. This activity should offer the opportunity for participants to check their own understandings of these terms and concepts.

Introduction structure, materials and timing

Session & approach		PowerPoint	Other materials (provided or required)	Est. timing
Introduction				
Introduction				25 mins
Introduction, short course credits, schedules and aims	Facilitator delivery	1-3		10 mins
What is 'sexuality'?	Individual work	4		5 mins
Introducing (y)ourselves	Small group work	5	Participant contact list (if possible)	10 mins
Session 1. Short course background				
Session 1. Short course background		6		40 mins
Sexuality studies audit: mini lecture	Facilitator delivery	7-14	Mini lecture provided in Facilitator Notes	15 mins
Reflecting on experience	Group work	15		10 mins
The project: mini lecture	Facilitator delivery	16-20	Mini lecture provided in Facilitator Notes	15 mins
Session 2. So, what <i>is</i> sexuality?				
Session 2. So, what <i>is</i> sexuality?		21		45 mins
Defining sexuality: review	Group work	22	Flipchart paper or whiteboard; marker pens	30 mins

Definitions: mini lecture	Facilitator delivery and Q&A	23-24	Mini lecture provided in Facilitator Notes	15 mins
Conclusion			To be created in advance by facilitator	
Total				110 mins

Key to symbols and formatting

Throughout these notes, the following symbols and formatting ‘clues’ have been used:

⇒ This symbol marks an instruction to the facilitator.

- Use of a bullet point indicates steps to be followed in completing an instruction.

|| This symbol, plus a different font which is larger and more widely spaced, indicates text to be read aloud. The end of the text to be read aloud will be indicated with the following symbol. ||

We have also indicated the points where a slide transition occurs on the PowerPoint presentation by inserting:

SLIDE

Module instructions

SLIDE 1

Introduction

(5 mins)

- ⇒ Welcome participants to Advancing Sexuality Studies: A short course on sexuality theory and research methodologies.
- Tell everyone that this session will begin to unwrap what 'sexuality' is.
 - Mention that the session will also provide them with background on development of the short course, and of the results of an audit of sexuality studies.

SLIDE 2

Course credits

(5 mins)

- ⇒ Read (on slide):

|| This course was developed by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS), La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, and the International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society (IASSCS). It was funded by The Ford Foundation. ||

- ⇒ Explain that the course in its entirety, and each of the course modules, are available for other people to use under what is called an Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike licence from Creative Commons.
- This means that the course and individual modules can be used as is, amended or built upon, on provision that:
 - Any use or amendments are undertaken for a non-commercial purpose
 - Credit must be given to the module creator(s), the short course developers (ARCSHS and IASSCS) and the short course funder (the Ford Foundation).
 - Any new creations based on original modules or the original short course must be licensed under identical terms. This ensures that any

derivatives of the module or the short course will also be non-commercial.

SLIDE 3

Schedule

⇒ NB: Currently, the schedule does not include any concluding activities. The facilitator should add these as s/he sees fit.

SLIDE 4

What is 'sexuality'? (5 mins)

- ⇒ Ask each participant to spend five minutes writing their own, short definition of sexuality.
- Tell them you will return to this definition later.
 - Remind everyone that you want their own ideas; this is not an exam.

SLIDE 5

Introducing (y)ourselves (10 mins total)

- ⇒ Break everyone up into small groups, and ask them to share together (on slide):
- Their name, and what they like to be called.
 - Where they are from (institution & position, geographical location).
 - Their major discipline or interest area.
 - Something about themselves that only their friends might know. (5 mins)
- ⇒ Bring everyone back together, and ask for each person to introduce one other person from their small group to the whole group.
- The facilitator(s) should also introduce themselves, answering the same focus questions. (5 mins)

SLIDE 6

Session 1. Short course background

(40 mins total)

- ⇒ Tell participants that this first session of the module will provide a brief background, and participants will be asked to contribute their own personal experiences of involvement in work related to sexuality.

SLIDE 7

- ⇒ Read or amend as desired (bullet points on slide):

|| As stated earlier, the course was funded by the Ford Foundation and developed in partnership between the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, part of La Trobe University, Melbourne, and the International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society.

It was developed in response to a growing recognition of the need for advanced training in Critical Sexuality Studies in developing countries.

Development of the course began with an international audit of sexuality training; this was intended as a context-setting exercise for the development of course materials. ||

- ⇒ Tell participants that the results of the audit are available from www.sexualitystudies.net

SLIDE 8

⇒ Read:

|| The audit provided an overview of the existing courses, curricula, resources, and pedagogical approaches for advanced training in sexuality research and theory. It also enabled the course developers to identify current key theories and research methodologies in the field of Critical Sexuality Studies.

Through the audit, five broad strands of sexuality research were identified. These were the strands of HIV/AIDS; sexology; sexual and reproductive health; gender studies; and Critical Sexuality Studies.

These five strands overlap—for instance, there are drives to integrate HIV and sexual and reproductive health—but there are core differences between the broad strands in terms of ways of thinking about and researching sexuality. We will now look at the characteristics of each of these strands in turn.

SLIDE 9

Sexuality research within the HIV/AIDS strand has typically used approaches based on public health frameworks. The research has largely been undertaken in developing countries, or has been aimed at audiences in developing countries. Sexual behaviour is largely presented as synonymous with sexual risk. And finally, there is an

absence of diverse sexualities that are not deemed to be at high risk of HIV/AIDS, for example lesbians.

SLIDE 10

Another strand identified in the audit was that of sexology research, perhaps best typified by the Kinsey Institute, the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex and the World Association for Sexual Health, but also appearing in certain university programs.

While the Kinsey Institute website claims a broad multi-disciplinary basis for sexology, it also acknowledges that sexology has become highly medicalised in recent decades. The effect of this has been to concentrate the field on sexual pathologies and dysfunctions, which are then treated by medical doctors and therapists trained in psychology. The shift to the term 'sexual health' is a relatively recent one for sexologists and captures well the kinds of concerns they now have. Sexual risk is a central concept in the study of HIV/AIDS, but is not a significant concept in sexology, where 'health' seems to be more positively projected as a sort of fulfilment, rather than only as absence of disease or risk.

SLIDE 11

Within sexology research, two sub-strands can be teased apart. These are the sub-strand of the search for origins or explanations for sexual behaviour—for example, when hormones or genes are investigated as

influences in sexual orientation—and the behavioural and descriptive sub-strand. This sub-strand attempts to capture the diversity of human sexual behaviour, and is often referred to as sex research.

SLIDE 12

The third strand of sexuality research identified was that of sexuality as understood through sexual and reproductive health. In wealthy industrialised countries, the emphasis of this strand is more on issues of reproduction and less on sexually transmissible infections. Sexual and reproductive health is highly individualised. Despite attempts to incorporate the two, sexual and reproductive health work often remains distinct from work related to HIV/AIDS.

In the developing world, sexual and reproductive health is overtaking a previous focus on sexually transmissible diseases and questions of fertility. Sexuality research through sexual and reproductive health also extends to social and political questions, including male and female circumcision, and sexual violence.

SLIDE 13

Sexuality research in gender studies is often limited to the study of women and sexuality. Gender as a system of power and relationships is often neglected. Consequently men are often absent from gender studies approaches to sexuality, except as perpetrators, mostly, of sexual violence or abuse. Similarly, the relationship between gender,

sexuality and biological sex is sometimes poorly theorised, and the interdisciplinary nature of gender studies is often not foregrounded when gender is used in the arena of health.

SLIDE 14

The final strand identified in sexuality research was that of Critical Sexuality Studies, which is where this course sits. When feminism and the sexual liberation movements in the 1960s led to a growing critique of sexology, new theories of sexuality emerged. These theories were loosely grouped under the name of Critical Sexuality Studies. The field of Critical Sexuality Studies is multifaceted, crossing several social science and humanities disciplines. The commonality, however, is that Critical Sexuality Studies work focuses on the shifting relationships of power, knowledge, context, and culture. ||

SLIDE 15

Brainstorm

(10 mins)

⇒ Ask participants to think about their own personal experiences of involvement in work related to sexuality, then brainstorm the following focus questions (on slide):

- Did this work fit under any of the five strands identified?
- Do the descriptions of the five strands sound familiar?
- In your experience, what were the restrictions or benefits of working under any one particular strand?

(10 mins)

SLIDE 16

The project

(15 mins)

- ⇒ Tell participants you will now give them an overview of the whole short course, covering: the project aims; overall learning objectives; the modes of use of modules; and examples of module titles.
- ⇒ Read or amend / re-write (bullet points on slides):

|| The aims of the short course are to:

- Increase the quality and diversity of research and training activity into human sexuality in the developing world;
- Develop and enhance existing skills levels in undertaking complex research into, and the development and application of theory in, the field of Critical Sexuality Studies;
- Connect with other multi-disciplinary investigations and initiatives in international sexuality research and advanced training;

SLIDE 17

- Create a wider network of researchers and practitioners using Critical Sexuality Studies to investigate and contribute to cultural analysis and production, global sexual and reproductive health, HIV & AIDS, and justice in gender and sexuality; *and*
- Contribute to the development of an increased global dialogue on human sexuality.

SLIDE 18

Short course participants will:

- Increase their skills, knowledge and networking capacity in sexuality research and theoretical development;
- Initiate and stimulate dialogue between locally based knowledge frameworks, Critical Sexuality Studies and global discussions of sexuality;
- Work critically with advanced sexuality theory and research methodologies;
- Employ innovative methods for researching human sexuality in specific settings; *and*
- Gain enhanced capacities to encourage sexuality research in their own countries and regions.

SLIDE 19

Each module is designed for use:

- As a stand-alone module or grouped with other modules
- To be incorporated into other courses, *or*
- As part of the complete short course

Examples of module titles are:

- Kinship and Sexuality
- Sexuality, The Body and Personhood
- Thinking About Men and Masculinities
- Sex, Sexuality and Gender: Basic Concepts
- Critical Sexuality Studies and Research Methodologies ||

SLIDE 20

Session 2. So, what *is* sexuality?

(55 mins total)

⇒ Tell participants they will now be returning to the work they did at the start of the introduction on defining sexuality.

SLIDE 21

⇒ Ask everyone to form small groups and to appoint a rapporteur, whose job it will be to summarise group discussions.

- Each group member should spend a minute or so reviewing their personal notes from the start of the introduction.
- Group members should share their definitions together, and discuss similarities and differences in their definitions. **(10 mins)**

⇒ Ask for each rapporteur to give feedback on the differences and similarities in definitions. **(15 mins)**

⇒ The facilitator should wrap-up by identifying the broad themes across definitions, and showing how these themes link to Critical Sexuality Studies and its field of inquiry. **(5 mins)**

SLIDE 22

Definitions

(15 mins)

⇒ Tell participants that they will develop their understanding of what sexuality means throughout the course / modules; however, you will provide them with some food for thought. Then read (or amend / re-write):

|| In terms of dictionary definitions, the Oxford English Dictionary is as good a place to start as any. There are four main definitions offered,

and as you will see there is a really interesting timeline attached to the usage of each of these terms.

First, there is sexuality as the quality of being sexual or having sex, i.e. of being engaged in the activities of sex or something like what we term sexual behaviour today—and the OED records usage of this meaning as long ago as 1836. Then, in 1879, there was usage recorded of sexuality as meaning ‘possession of sexual powers, or capability of sexual feelings’. This builds on the previous meaning of sexual behaviour and adds sexual ‘powers’ (meaning talents, appeal or capabilities) and the emotions or feelings related to sexuality.

The third meaning listed is ‘recognition or preoccupation with what is sexual; allusion to sexual matters’. Usage of that meaning was recorded in 1848. This is the early stage of our more modern understanding of sexuality as a separate entity that can be thought about as such—in a sense, this meaning represents the beginning of sexuality as a field or domain of thought or study. However, use of the word preoccupation carries suggestion of something unhealthy or untoward, or ‘...a subject or matter that engrosses a person and dominates his or her thoughts’.

Jump 150 years and the OED reports that in 2004 an addition to the definition of sexuality was proposed:

A person's sexual identity in relation to the gender [sic] to which he or she is typically attracted; the fact of being heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual.

By gender, this definition actually means 'sex' in the sense of biological sex and shifts what we might now call 'sexual orientation' (homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual) of one's partner(s) to the forefront of the definition. More importantly, this definition also introduces the very recent (circa 1970s) notion of 'sexual identity' as part of sexuality, indicating a psychosocial dimension that suggest one's sexual interests are now understood as a central part of one's sense of self and a central part of how we understand who we are in the world.

These shifts in definition and meaning over time are important to understand as part of the history of sexuality, a history that is still changing.

SLIDE 23

Jeffrey Weeks is recognised as one of the leading writers on the history of sexuality. Weeks summarises the current definition of sexuality as:

... an historical construction which brings together a host of different biological and mental possibilities, and cultural forms—gender identity, bodily differences, reproductive capacities, needs, desires, fantasies, erotic practices, institutions and values—

which need not be linked together, and in other societies have not been. (Weeks, 2003: 7)

Critical Sexuality Studies is the field that studies this evolving collection of acts, meanings, possibilities, needs, values and so on. The job of a sexuality studies scholar is to continue this investigation of sexuality as an ever-changing field. || (10 mins)

⇒ Spend five minutes checking participants' understandings thus far. (5 mins)

SLIDE 24

Conclusion

- ⇒ Tell students that the modules you will be presenting from the short course are:
(insert as appropriate).
- Provide a schedule that shows the order of the modules you will be presenting, estimated timings, and the aims of each module.
- ⇒ Provide an overview of key terms and concepts that will be used in the modules you will be presenting.
- This activity should offer the opportunity for participants to check their own understandings of these terms and concepts.
- ⇒ Remember to add slides to the PowerPoint presentation, as appropriate.

Online resources (for a fuller list, see <http://www.sexualitystudies.net>)

Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre

<http://www.arsrc.org/>

AHRC Research Centre for Law, Gender and Sexuality (Universities of Kent, Keele and Westminster, UK)

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/clgs/>

Archive for Sexology (Humboldt University in Berlin)

<http://www2.hu-berlin.de/sexology/>

Asia Pacific Network of HIV Social Researchers

<http://www.hivsocialresearchers.net/>

Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (La Trobe University, Australia)

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/arcs/shs/>

Brazilian Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transvestite and Transsexual Association

<http://www.abglt.org.br/eng/index.php>

Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (City University of New York, USA)

<http://web.gc.cuny.edu/clags/>

Consultation of Investment in Health Promotion (Viet Nam)

<http://www.cihp.org/Desktop.aspx/English/>

Ford Foundation

<http://www.fordfound.org/>

Institute of Studies in Health, Sexuality and Human Development (Peru)

<http://www.iessdeh.org/mision-en.aspx>

International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society (IASSCS)

<http://www.iasscs.org/>

International Working Group on Sexuality and Social Policy (IWGSSP)

<http://www.globalhealth.columbia.edu/projects/RES1175028.html>

The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction

<http://www.kinseyinstitute.org/>

Latin-American Center on Sexuality and Human Rights

<http://www.clam.org.br>

National Sexuality Resource Center (USA)

<http://nsrc.sfsu.edu/>

Pink Space Sexuality Research Centre (China)

<http://www.pinkspace.com.cn/>

Sexuality Policy Watch

<http://www.sxpolitics.org>

South and Southeast Asia Resource Centre on Sexuality

http://tarshi.net/asiasrc/programmes_rcentre.asp

Southeast Asian Consortium on Gender, Sexuality and Health

<http://www.seaconsortium.net/>