

## MPSD105 Sexuality, Gender and Relationship Education

ECTS Value: 3 ECTS

### Module Description

Among the many stories that our lives hold, one that is of utmost significance and importance is each unique person's psychosexual story that contains all the moments of growth, excitement, discovery, pain, struggle, and questioning in our relational lives. This story is about growing up and experiencing the different stages of human development on a journey of sexual exploration that is mainly motivated by the fundamental human needs for friendship and intimate connection and communion with other people, encounters that come in different forms and on different levels.

The course will also aim to give the skills and competences to teachers to help students explore such an important story, an endeavour that has the potential of changing one's attitudes toward sexuality, increasing appreciation for it, and nurturing it to achieve sexual integrity that positively affects life choices in different social contexts.

The course will first look at and analyze the different perspectives and perceptions of **SEXUALITY**, and then give a broad and holistic definition that encompasses all its facets and aspects, as well as the factors that shape it throughout the different life stages.

The **RELATIONALITY OF HUMAN SEXUALITY** will be explored and reflected upon as it unfolds throughout the progressive stages of sexual development, as understood by different theories. The pedagogical implications of these different perspectives will be emphasized and offered to participants for critical reflection, analysis and discussion.

The course will seek to understand **SEX, GENDER and SEXUAL ORIENTATION** in human development through the lens of several theories, and discuss the implications for PSCD Pedagogy and the Professional Development of PSCD Teachers. The knowledge and insights provided, and the discussions in class, will aim at understanding the challenges and opportunities for education and for PSCD as a curricular subject in today's Maltese culture, as well as to address new questions and ambiguities for an **INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY**.

It will specifically focus on **AUTHENTIC INTIMACY** as one of the most fundamental human needs, what it is and how it could be achieved and lived. Thus, this section will seek to educate the PSCD educator how through a **PEDAGOGY OF EXPLORATION** of the different aspects of the **SELF and ONE'S INNER WORLD**, students can learn to **EXPRESS INTIMACY**, and reflect on how this affects different types and levels of relationships. Finally, the barriers to this authentic intimacy will be reflected upon and a pedagogy that **CREATES AWARENESS and PROVIDES EMPOWERMENT** will be taught and rehearsed through practical exercises and activities. These will mostly aim at conveying the skills needed to deal with **STEREOTYPES and PREJUDICES**, as well as to mature through the richness of **MUTUAL ENCOUNTER** with different **FORMS of OTHERNESS**.

In the following section, the course participants will be made aware of the potential of PSCD to **EDUCATE for HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS** through a **STUDENT-CENTRED, CREATIVE and CONSTRUCTIVE PEDAGOGY**. This will be done by showing how the PSCD pedagogy could be nurtured in and through respect and trust for each student, that will form the basis of educating for the skills and attitudes needed for healthy relationships. In this way it will become easier for the PSCD educator to help students distinguish between healthy and abusive relationships, and acquire the skills to nurture the former, and avoid the latter in all circumstances.

In the last section of the course, various SRE related issues and topics are covered, namely **pornography, masturbation, unexpected pregnancies, teenage Pregnancies, sexual promiscuity, sexually transmitted infections/diseases, contraception and online sexual activities and abuse**. The course participants will be first updated with the latest research literature on these topics, and then, through practical activities and discussions, exposed to the benefits of a pedagogy of exploration based upon all the above mentioned principles and fundamental tenets of SRE.

## Overall Objectives and Outcomes

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

### Competences

- a) Advise SMT and persons responsible for students' well-being on how SRE Education should be delivered in PSCD as a curricular subject.
- b) Collaborate with SMT and persons responsible for students' well-being on how to successfully implement SRE through a cross-curricular school approach, aimed at all stakeholders involved in the system, namely students, parents and all educators employed by the school.
- c) Guide students in understanding and appreciating the true value, uniqueness and beauty of their own sexuality, understood holistically.
- d) Ensure that students would have had opportunities to discuss various SRE related issues that they feel and believe are important and relevant to their own personal psycho-sexual development.
- e) Create the appropriate learning climate that helps and motivates students to ask any questions they like regarding sexuality and SRE, and feel safe to think critically, even while expressing personal experiences.

### Knowledge

- a) Define sexuality in a holistic manner.
- b) Identify the various aspects of human sexuality.
- c) Identify various SRE-related issues that are relevant to students.
- d) List different different theories of 'human sexual development.
- e) Identify some of their implications for education in general and for PSCD as a curricular subject.
- f) Define 'sex and 'gender' in the light of present theories and literature derived from recent and relevant research.
- g) Tell what true and authentic intimacy is.
- h) List the different forms of intimacy and describe the relationship between them and its importance to holistic human development.
- i) List various stereotypes and prejudices that are act as obstacles to authentic intimacy.
- j) Define 'abstinence-only', 'comprehensive' and SRE models of education and describe the differences between them.
- k) Describe the crucial importance of the relationship between the PSCD teacher and every student in the PSCD classroom.
- l) Define and distinguish between 'healthy' and 'abusive' relationships.
- m) Define 'masturbation', "pornography", 'sexual promiscuity', 'STIs', 'contraception' and '(online) sexual abuse'.

## Skills

- a) Demonstrate an understanding of how one's sexuality in all its aspects and facets is influenced and shaped to a significant extent by different environmental factors.
- b) Demonstrate how various aspects of everyday human living and sexual issues are related, and how this relationship shapes human personality.
- c) Apply their critical appreciation of different theories of sexuality to the pedagogy/ies of PSCD.
- d) Apply their understanding of the complexity and fluidity of the various sexual orientations to the pedagogy/ies of PSCD
- e) Create different educational activities and initiatives through which students could reflect upon the beauty of healthy relationships that enrich human lives, and the negative consequences of abusive relationships.
- f) Demonstrate through practical examples how true authentic intimacy could be learnt, developed/matured and expressed.
- g) Use their understanding of several SRE-related issues to become more empathic with the students' real struggles and concerns in their different psycho-sexual developmental stages.

## Mode of Delivery

This module adopts a blended approach to teaching and learning. Information related to the structure and delivery of the module may be accessed through the IfE Portal. For further details, kindly refer to the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and Procedures found on the Institute for Education's website.

## Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Assignment, Presentation and Online Contributions

## Suggested Readings

### Core Reading List

1. Lehmiller, J.J. (2017). *The Psychology of Human Sexuality*. John Wiley & Sons. (Chicester).
2. BZga/WHO Regional Office for Europe (2010). *Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe A framework for policy makers, educational and health authorities and specialists*
3. Forrest, S. Grant, B. & Clift. S. (1997). *Talking about homosexuality in the secondary school*. Avert: UK
4. Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family (2012). *A National Curriculum Framework for all*. Salesian Press: Malta
5. Ministry of Education (1999). *National Minimum Curriculum – Creating the Future Together*. Klabb Kotba Maltin: Malta
6. Public Health Agency of Canada (2008) *Canada Guidelines for Sexual Health Education*
7. UNESCO (2009) *International guidelines on sexuality education: An evidence informed approach to effective sex, relationships and HIV/STI education*.

## Supplementary Reading List

1. American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
2. Bailey, J. M., Vasey, P. L., Diamond, L. M., Breedlove, S. M., Vilain, E., & Epprecht, M. (2016). Sexual orientation, controversy, and science. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 17, 45-101
3. Barnett, M. D., Fleck, L. K., Marsden, A. D., & Martin, K. J. (2017). Sexual semantics: The meanings of sex, virginity, and abstinence for university students. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 106, 203–208.
4. Chandra, A., Mosher, W. D., & Copen, C. (2011). Sexual behavior, sexual attraction, and sexual identity in the United States: Data From the 2006–2008 National Survey of Family Growth. *National Health Statistics Report*, 36, 1-35.
5. Conron, J., Scott, G., Stowell, G. S., & Landers, S. (2012). Transgender health in Massachusetts: Results from a household probability sample of adults. *American Journal of Public Health*, 102, 118–122.
6. Copen, C., Chandra, A., & Febo-Vazquez, I. (2016). Sexual behavior, sexual attraction, and sexual orientation among adults aged 18–44 in the United States: Data from the 2011–2013 National Survey of Family Growth. *National Health Statistics Reports*, 88, 1-13.
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8. De Gascun, C., Kelly, J., Salter, N., Lucey, J., & O'Shea, D. (2006). Gender identity disorder. *Irish Medical Journal*, 99, 146–148.
9. Dimitropoulou, P., Lophatananon, A., Easton, D., Pocock, R., Dearnaley, D. P., Guy, M., Edwards, S., O'Brien, L., Hall, A., Wilkinson, R., Eeles, R., & Muir, K. R. (2009). Sexual activity and prostate cancer risk in men diagnosed at a younger age. *British Journal of Urology International*, 103, 178-85.
10. Frankowski, B. L. (2004). Sexual orientation and adolescents. *Pediatrics*, 113, 1827–1832.
11. Freud, S. (1905/2000). *Three essays on the theory of sexuality*. New York: Basic Books.
12. Gates, G. (2011). *How Many People are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender?* [Williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu](http://Williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu).
13. Hicks, T. V., & Leitenberg, H. (2001). Sexual fantasies about one's partner versus someone else: Gender differences in incidence and frequency. *Journal of Sex Research*, 38, 43-51.
14. Jarne, P., & Auld, J. R. (2006). Animals mix it up too: The distribution of self-fertilization among hermaphroditic animals. *Evolution*, 60, 1816–1824.
15. Jozkowski, K., N., & Peterson, Z. D. (2013). College students and sexual consent: Unique insights. *Journal of Sex Research*, 50, 517-523.
16. Kellogg, J. H. (1888). *Treatment for Self-Abuse and Its Effects. Plain Facts for Old and Young*. Burlington, Iowa: F. Segner & Co. Press.
17. Kinsey, A. C., Pomeroy, W. B., & Martin, C. E. (1948). *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. Philadelphia: Saunders.
18. Lee, P. A., Houk, C. P., Ahmed, S. F., & Hughes, L. A. (2006). Consensus statement on management of intersex disorders, *Pediatrics*, 118, 148-162.
19. Lehrer, J. (2006). The effeminate sheep and other problems with Darwinian sexual selection. *Seed Magazine*, June/July.
20. Levin, R. J. (2007). Sexual activity, health and well-being—The beneficial roles of coitus and masturbation. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 22, 135-148.

21. Lucas, D. R., Hanich, Z., Gurian, A., Lee, S., & Sanchez, A. (2017). *Measuring Sex, Gender, and Orientation on a True Continuum*. Presented at the annual meeting of the Southwestern Psychological Association in San Antonio, Texas.
22. Malacane, M., & Beckmeyer, J. J. (2016). A review of parent-based barriers to parent–adolescent communication about sex and sexuality: Implications for sex and family educators. *American Journal of Sexuality Education, 11*, 27-40.
23. Meier, S. C., & Labuski, C. M. (2013). *The Demographics of the Transgender Population*, in A.K. Baumle (ed.), *International Handbook on the Demography of Sexuality*, International Handbooks of Population, Volume 5. Netherlands: Springer.
24. Money, J., Hampson, J. G., & Hampson, J. (1955). An examination of some basic sexual concepts: The evidence of human hermaphroditism. *Bulletin of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, 97*, 301–319.
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28. Smith, A. M., Patrick, K., Heywood, W., Pitts, M. K., Richters, J., Shelly, J.M., Simpson, J. K., & Ryall, R. (2012). Sexual practices and the duration of last heterosexual encounter: Findings from the Australian longitudinal study of health and relationships. *Journal of Sex Research, 49*, 487-494.
29. Smith, A. M., Rosenthal, D. A., & Reichler, H. (1996). High schoolers masturbatory practices: Their relationship to sexual intercourse and personal characteristics. *Psychological Reports, 79*, 499-509.
30. Tan, Y. (2016). Miss Fa'afafine: Behind Samoa's 'third gender' beauty pageant. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37227803>. Retrieved on February 28, 2017.
31. Wylie, K. (2009). A global survey of sexual behaviours, *Journal of Family and Reproductive Health, 3*, 39-49.