

## COMS 5390.02 Sexual and Affectionate Communication

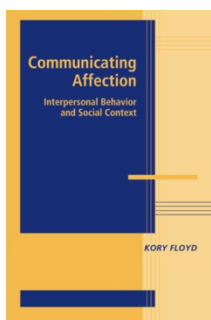
Fall 2017  
Online  
Aug 23 – Dec 7

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This graduate seminar *Sexual and Affectionate Communication* will focus on popular theories and scholarship on sexual and affectionate communication. The role of sexual interaction, sexual communication, and affectionate communication in a variety of relationships (e.g., marital and premarital; long-term and short-term; familial relationships) will be investigated. The course is structured to expand your knowledge of important theories of interpersonal communication and familiarize you with research that describes the evolution of sexual and affectionate communication. By the end of the course, you should be better able to critique interpersonal theory and research, and should have a better understanding of how sexual and affectionate communication programs of research have developed and evolved. The course is organized into two core sections: sexual communication and affectionate communication with some overlapping material.

### REQUIRED READINGS

Students are required to purchase the following two books. In addition, several academic journal articles (2-4 a week) will be posted on Blackboard.



Floyd, K. (2006). *Communicating affection: Interpersonal behavior and social context*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Bailey, B. (1989). *From the front porch to the back seat: Courtship in twentieth-century America*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify several interpersonal theories that are useful in researching sexual and affectionate communication.
2. Effectively critique peer-reviewed sexual and affectionate communication research.
3. Describe the evolution of sexual norms, attitudes, and practices in the U.S.
4. Compare and contrast the seven types of friends with benefits relationships to hookups, booty calls, and one-night-stands.
5. Describe the evolution of affectionate communication research.
6. Be able to describe the limitations of research investigating the health benefits of massage.
7. Produce a comprehensive literature review in the realms of sexual or affectionate communication.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

**Computers.** If you have computer/internet or course site-related problems or questions, please contact the SHSU Support Desk, since I am unable to assist in these matters. Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through phone, online chat, or email. See the support desk contact information here: <http://online.shsu.edu/campus/support-desk/>

**Virtual Office Hours:** Use the Blackboard's Virtual Office Discussion Forum to post questions relating to the course. If you have a personal question or request (e.g., asking for an extension on a deadline), please email me directly. Responses to participant questions will be posted within 24 hours of receipt on business days (Mon-Fri). If you do not hear back from me within 48 hours, please email me directly.

**Written Assignments Format:** All written assignments are to follow the APA guidelines including a cover page. The following formats are to be included:

Typed in a Microsoft Word document  
 Times New Roman font  
 Size 12-point font  
 Double-spaced (be sure there is no extra space after paragraphs)  
 One-inch margins all around  
 Page numbers top right hand corner in the header  
 Running head and headers in APA format

**24/7 Grade Policy:** I encourage conversations about your grades or progress in the class at any point in the semester. When you receive a grade back, wait 24 hours, then you will have 7 days to discuss the grade with me.

**Submission Policy:** Apart from the discussion boards, all written work in this class will be submitted to SafeAssign on Blackboard. Deadline for all SafeAssign submissions is 11:59pm on the due date (unless stated otherwise on the course schedule). Late work is not accepted unless you can provide documentation of an extenuating circumstance.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty could take on several forms. Knowing what constitutes academic dishonesty is important and necessary so you may avoid it. Repercussions of academic dishonesty are immediate and severe. The three most common forms of academic dishonesty include cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. See the code of student conduct in the student guidelines: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/documents/2016-2018%20Student%20Guidelines.pdf>

## ASSIGNMENTS/EVALUATIONS

**Weekly Discussion Boards (13x at 20pts each)** – Each week you will be responsible for responding to discussion questions. The discussion boards are used to evaluate your understanding of the material and to encourage you to critique and evaluate peer-reviewed research articles. Responses should be written carefully and should be about 2-4 paragraphs in length - or as long as your need to completely answer the question(s). You will be evaluated on the clarity of writing, the relevance of your examples, and your ability to answer the discussion question(s). Please proofread for any grammatical errors or typos before you post your responses. You're not limited to answering the discussion question (though this is the minimum); you may also post your thoughts and responses to the readings outside of the discussion questions. Strive to make your responses thoughtful and thought-provoking. You are also required to respond to two threads (4-5 sentences).

*Weekly discussion board posts are due on Sunday at 11:59pm each week. Responses to discussion boards are due 48 hours afterwards (Tuesday at 11:59pm).*

**Leadership Discussion Board (50 pts)** – At one time during the semester, you are to research and find a peer-reviewed journal article related to that week's topic and post two thought-provoking questions on the Blackboard Discussion Board. *You must upload your journal article to that week's folder and post your discussion questions by Monday so the class has the week to read and respond to your article.* Remember to respond to your own discussion questions.

A first come first serve sign-up sheet for available weeks will be posted on Blackboard. You must have your journal article approved by me before posting it so plan on finding your article in advance.

**2x Article Critiques (100 pts each)** – Throughout the semester you will submit two article critiques. The goal of the article critiques is for you to critically analyze a peer-reviewed research article (4-5 pages). You should select any one article from our weekly readings.

You should first briefly summarize the major findings of the article. Do not copy and paste from the abstract of the article. After reading the article, use your own words to summarize the findings. Be sure to describe what methods the article used: surveys, interviews, experiments or any other methods. Next, consider the following issues:

1. How does the study test a theory (if at all)?
2. Do the author(s) of the study make sound arguments for their hypotheses and/or research questions?

3. Are the variables conceptualized and operationalized in line with the theory?
4. Are the methods appropriate given the goals of the study, and how might they be improved?
5. Does any of the findings or methods used surprise you?
6. If you were a researcher on the same topic, what would you do differently? In other words, are there any questions you want to know, but were not asked in the articles?
7. What are the study's strengths and limitations?
8. How does the study support, extend, or challenge the ideas in the theory?
9. What future research does the study suggest?

These questions should be used as a guide for critiquing the article that you selected, but you do not have to answer all of these questions. Choose the questions that are the most relevant for critiquing your article. If other issues seem relevant, you can address those questions instead or in addition to the questions above. Additional research is NOT required. But it may help to read a few additional articles to understand the topics more completely. You may choose to include any outside sources in your paper. Include a reference page. You may select the article that you used for your leadership discussion week as one of your critiques.

**Literature Review (200 pts)** - You are going to submit a 12-15-page double-spaced literature review at the end of the semester on a current topic in sexual or affectionate communication. You are encouraged to start early to work on the project. To make sure you complete your paper by the end of the semester, your topic for the paper is due by Week 8, a reference list is due by Week 12, and a detailed outline is due by Week 14. The final paper is due during finals week.

### GRADING SCALE

90% - 100%	A	80% - 89%	B	70% - 79%	C	60% - 69%	D	59% or lower	E
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### COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings for each week are posted below the course schedule. Weekly discussion board posts are due Sunday by 11:59pm that week. Responses to classmate discussion boards are due Tuesday the following week.

<i>Week</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Due</i>
<b>Week 1</b>	8/23	Introduction to the Course	Introduce Self to Class on Discussion Board
<b>Week 2</b>	8/28	Hookups	Discussion Response Due

<b>Week 3</b>	9/4	Friends with Benefits Relationships	Discussion Response Due
<b>Week 4</b>	9/11	Friends with Benefits Relationships, Hookups, Booty calls, One Night Stands	Discussion Response Due
<b>Week 5</b>	9/18	Courtship Evolution & Sexual Revolution	Discussion Response Due <b>Article Critique 1 DUE Sunday 9/24</b>
<b>Week 6</b>	9/25	Sexual Attitudes & Norms Evolution	Discussion Response Due
<b>Week 7</b>	10/2	Sexual Communication	Discussion Response Due
<b>Week 8</b>	10/9	Affection in Romantic Relationships	Discussion Response Due <b>Topic for Literature Review DUE Sunday 10/15</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	10/16	Affection in Family Relationships	Discussion Response Due
<b>Week 10</b>	10/23	Affection – Is it Always Beneficial?	Discussion Response Due <b>Article Critique 2 DUE Sunday 10/29</b>
<b>Week 11</b>	10/30	Affection Exchange Theory	Discussion Response Due
<b>Week 12</b>	11/6	Touch and Massage	Discussion Response Due <b>Reference List for Literature Review DUE Sunday 11/12</b>
<b>Week 13</b>	11/13	Cuddling (NCA Conference)	Discussion Response Due

<b>Week 14</b>	11/20	Thanksgiving Break	<b>Detailed Outline for Literature Review DUE Wednesday 11/22</b>
<b>Week 15</b>	11/27	Physical Benefits of Affection	Discussion Response Due
<b>Week 16</b>	12/4	Finals Week	<b>Complete Literature Review DUE Tuesday 12/5</b>

## READING LIST

### Week 1 – Introductions and Sign-Up List

No readings. Introduce yourself on Blackboard. Sign up for a discussion leadership spot.

### Week 2 – Hookup

Epstein, M., Calzo, J. P., Smiler, A. P., & Ward, L. M. (2009). “Anything from making out to having sex”: Men's negotiations of hooking up and friends with benefits scripts. *Journal of sex research*, 46, 414-424.

Fielder, R. L., Carey, K. B., & Carey, M. P. (2012). Are hookups replacing romantic relationships? A longitudinal study of first-year female college students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 657-659.

Garcia, J. R., Reiber, C., Massey, S. G., & Merriwether, A. M. (2012). Sexual hookup culture: A review. *Review of General Psychology*, 16, 161-176.

### Week 3 – Friends with Benefits Relationships

Hughes, M., Morrison, K., & Asada, K. J. (2005). What’s love got to do with it? Exploring the impact of maintenance rules, love attitudes, and network support on friends with benefits relationships. *Western Journal of Communication*, 69, 49-66.

VanderDrift, L. E., Lehmillier, J. J., & Kelly, J. R. (2012). Commitment in friends with benefits relationships: Implications for relational and safe-sex outcomes. *Personal Relationships*, 19, 1-13.

Wentland, J., & Reissing, E. (2014). Casual sexual relationships: Identifying definitions for one night stands, booty calls, fuck buddies, and friends with benefits. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* 23, 167–177; doi:10.3138/cjhs.2744

### Week 4 – Friends with Benefits Relationships, Hookups, Booty calls, One Night Stands

Braithwaite, S. R., Aaron, S. C., Dowdle, K. K., Spjut, K., & Fincham, F. D. (2015). Does pornography consumption increase participation in friends with benefits relationships? *Sexuality and Culture*, 19, 513–532. doi:10.1007/s12119-015-9275-4

Mongeau, P. A., Knight, K., Williams, J., Eden, J., & Shaw, C. (2013). Identifying and explicating variation among friends with benefits relationships. *Journal of Sex Research*, 50, 37-47.

Owen, J., & Fincham, F. D. (2012). Friends with benefits relationships as a start to exclusive romantic relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 29, 982- 996.

#### Week 5 – Courtship Evolution & Sexual Revolution

Bailey, B. (1989). *From the front porch to the back seat: Courtship in twentieth-century America*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press

#### Week 6 – Sexual Attitudes & Norms Evolution

Perlman, D., & Sprecher, S. (2012). Sex, Intimacy, and Dating in College. In R. D. McNulty (Ed.), *Sex in College*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Press.

Wells, B. E., & Twenge, J. M. (2005). Changes in young people's sexual behavior and attitudes, 1943-1999: A cross-temporal meta-analysis. *Review of General Psychology*, 9, 249-261. doi:10.1037/1089-2680.9.3.249

#### Week 7 – Sexual Communication

Babin, E. A. (2012). An examination of predictors of nonverbal and verbal communication of pleasure during sex and sexual satisfaction. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 30, 270-292.

Busse, P., Fishbein, M., Bleakley, A., & Hennessy, M. (2010). The role of communication with friends in sexual initiation. *Communication Research*, 37, 239-255.

Montesi, J. L., Fauber, R. L., Gordon, E. A., & Heimberg, R. G. (2011). The specific importance of communicating about sex to couples' sexual and overall relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 28, 591-609.

#### Week 8 – Affection in Romantic Relationships

Debrot, A., Meuwly, N., Muise, A., Impett, M. A., & Schoebi, D. (2017). More than just sex: Affection mediates the association between sexual activity and well-being. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 1-13. doi:10.1177/0146167216684124

Denes, A. (2012). Pillow talk: Exploring disclosures after sexual activity. *Western Journal of Communication*, 76(2), 91-108.

- Floyd, K., Boren, J. P., Hannawa, A. F., Hesse, C., McEwan, B., & Veksler, A. E. (2009). Kissing in marital and cohabiting relationships: Effects on blood lipids, stress, and relationship satisfaction. *Western Journal of Communication*, 73, 113-133.

#### Week 9 – Affection in Family Relationships

- Curran, T. M., & Yoshimura, S. M. (2016). Mother-child reports of affectionate communication with fathers: Associations with family satisfaction and life satisfaction. *Communication Reports*, 29(3), 163-174. doi:10.1080/08934215.2016.1170171
- Floyd, K., & Morman, M. T., (2000). Affection received from fathers as a predictor of men's affection with their own sons: Tests of the modeling and compensation hypotheses. *Communication Monographs*, 67(4), 347-361. doi:10.1080/03637750009376516
- Mansson, D. S. (2014). Trust as a Mediator Between Affection and Relational Maintenance in the Grandparent-Grandchild Relationship. *Southern Communication Journal*, 79(3), 180-200.

#### Week 10 – Affection – Is it Always Beneficial?

- Floyd, K., & Morman, M. T. (1997). Affectionate communication in nonromantic relationships: Influences of communicator, relational, and contextual factors. *Western Journal of Communication*, 61(3), 279-298. doi:10.1080/10570319709374578
- Floyd, K., Hess, J. A., Miczo, L. A., Halone, K. K., Mikkelsen, A. C., & Tusing, K. J. (2005). Human affection exchange: VIII. Further evidence of the benefits of expressed affection. *Communication Quarterly*, 53, 285-303.
- Horan, S. M., & Booth-Butterfield, M. (2013). Understanding the routine expression of deceptive affection in romantic relationships. *Communication Quarterly*, 61, 195-216.

#### Week 11 – Affection Exchange Theory

- Floyd, K. (2006). *Communicating affection: Interpersonal behavior and social context*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

#### Week 12 – Touch and Massage

- Field, T., Cullen, C., Diego, M., Hernandez-Reif, M., Sprinz, P., Beebe, K., Kissell, B., Bango-Sanchez, V. (2001). Leukemia immune changes following massage therapy. *Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies*, 5(4), 271-274.
- Field, T., M.A. Diego, M. Hernandez-Reif, S. Schanberg and C. Kuhn. (2004). Massage therapy effects on depressed pregnant women. *Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 25, 115–122.



Field, T., Diego, M., Delgado, J., Garcia D., & Funk, C. G. (2013). Rheumatoid arthritis in upper limbs benefits from moderate pressure massage therapy. *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice*, 19, 101-103.

Hernandez-Reif, M., Diego, M., & Field, T. (2007). Preterm infants show reduced stress behaviors and activity after 5 days of massage therapy. *Infant Behavior Development*, 30(4), 557-561.

#### Week 13 – Cuddling

Muise, A., Giang, E., & Impett, E. A. (2014). Post sex affectionate exchanges promote sexual and relationship satisfaction. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 43, 1291-1402.  
doi:10.1007/s10508-014-0305-3

van Anders, S. M., Edelstein, R. S., Wade, R. M., & Samples-Steele, C. R. (2013). Descriptive experiences and sexual vs. nurturant aspects of cuddling between adult romantic partners. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 42, 553-560. doi:10.1007/s10508-012-0014-8

van Raalte, L. J., Floyd, K., Mongeau, P., & Burleson, M. (2017, November). *The influence of cuddling on relational health for cohabitating romantic couples*. Paper to be presented to the Interpersonal Division, National Communication Association conference, Dallas, TX.

#### Week 14 – Thanksgiving Break

No readings. Work on detailed literature review outline.

#### Week 15 – Physical Benefits of Affection

Floyd, K., & Riforgiate, S. (2008). Affectionate communication received from spouses predicts stress hormone levels in healthy adults. *Communication Monographs*, 75, 351-368.

Floyd, K., Mikkelsen, A. C., Hesse, C., & Pauley, P. M. (2007). Affectionate writing reduces total cholesterol: Two randomized, controlled trials. *Human Communication Research*, 33, 119-142.

Grewen, K. M., Girdler, S. S., Amico, J., & Light, K. C. (2005). Effects of partner support on resting oxytocin, cortisol, norepinephrine, and blood pressure before and after warm partner contact. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 67, 531-538.  
doi:10.1097/01.psy.0000170341.88395.47

#### Week 16 – Finals Week

No readings. Literature review due this week.