BEING EDUCATED IS SEXY.
The Development of a Canvas Course for Cal Poly Students
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Senior Project | Fall 2022-Spring 2023
No federal laws mandate sex education, so the sex ed students receive across the US is widely variable.
- More state regulations require sex ed focuses on abstinence than ensure the education students receive is medically accurate.
- Only ten US states have legislation in place that requires the discussion of LGBTQ+ relationships in sex ed.
- California requires sex ed to be taught once in middle school and once in high school.
- Cal Poly’s required first year training only focuses on alcohol/drugs and sexual violence prevention.
Background - Preliminary Research

2020-2021: General assessment of student’s beliefs and sexual practices

- Consisted of a survey and focus groups
- Revealed a general lack of sexual health knowledge

2021-2022: Exploration of student perceptions surrounding STI status

- Consisted of 1:1 interviews
- Further revealed gaps in sexual health knowledge and a lack of adherence to sexual health best practices
Background - Preliminary Research

- **22.9%** of cisgender female students reported using the **pull-out method** as their only form of contraception the last time they had vaginal intercourse (ACHA-NCHAIII, 2021).

- Only **5.1%** of students reported regularly using a **barrier method** during oral sex (ACHA-NCHAIII, 2021).

- **42.4%** of students reported using a barrier method during **anal sex** (ACHA-NCHAIII, 2021).

- **STI rates** have nearly **doubled** in SLO County in the past 8 years. Studies show Cal Poly plays the largest role in the increase (Mustang News, 2019).

- Health education resources do exist on campus, but they are not reaching all students.
Background - Purpose

**Goal:** design a set of comprehensive sexual health educational learning modules specifically for Cal Poly students utilizing Canvas, the course management platform students already use for their academic course work.

**Perspective:** a queer approach to sex ed allows all individuals to benefit from the information regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

**Outcome:** a reliable sex ed resource that all students can access anonymously whenever they need.

- Fill in apparent sex ed knowledge gaps
- Reduce risky sexual behaviors on campus
- Promote normalized conversation about sexual health among students
Methods - Fall 2022

Literature Review
- 9 primary sources pertaining to sex education for college students
- Increased risky sexual behaviors among college students
- Incorrect and inconsistent condom usage
- Lack of conversations with partners about STI status
- Misconceptions and lack of knowledge on STI transmission and testing
- Lack of reliable resources pertaining to sex education

Reference Sex Ed Courses
- CSU incoming students are required to complete trainings in sexual violence and assault, but no mention of sexual health or safer sex practices
- Many universities were found to offer informational websites pertaining to sexual health
- Multiple universities offered optional workshops/presentations
- Few offered class courses, none were required

Social Media Polls
- Anonymous survey posted to SRH Lab Instagram
- Respondents’ topics of interest:
  - Queer Sex Ed
  - Pleasure
  - Difficult Conversations
  - Porn Literacy
  - Birth Control
  - Consent
  - Types of sexual relationships
  - Types of sex
## Collaboration with Campus Organizations

- Contacted 13 applicable campus organizations, met with 7 organizations:
  - Campus Health Center
  - Peer Health Education Program
  - Sexual Violence and Assault Survivor Support & Prevention Education Program
  - Pride Center
  - Gender Equity Center
  - Multicultural Center
  - Men & Masculinities Club

- Sexual health topics students were asking about most:
  - Queer sex ed
  - Inclusive Language
  - Pleasure and different types of sex
  - Condoms & Lube
  - STI testing
  - Consent
  - Medicated Abortion (SB24)
  - Taboos around sex and why
  - Porn literacy
Methods - Winter & Spring 2023

- Writing module content
- Review content with campus collaborators and make edits
  - Safer
  - Pulse
  - Pride Center
  - CHW
- Weekly meetings with a graphic designer to create accompanying graphics
- Continually revising formatting with a focus on ease of use

**Types of Sexual Relationships**

**MONOGAMY**
Having one sexual partner at a time. You and your partner have agreed to only have sex with each other and have set additional boundaries for what defines cheating in your relationship. This should also include the discussion of protection against STIs and being transparent about all parties involved.

**HOOKING UP/CASUAL SEX**
People who are not in a romantic relationship, casually implies infrequent or one-time only, can be kissing, fingering, oral and/or penetration.

**FRIEND WITH BENEFITS**
Considered a type of casual sex and refers to people who regularly engage in sexual activities with each other but are not in a romantic relationship with one another. Ongoing communication is key in these sexual relationships to mitigate emotions and keep everyone on the same page. It is essential to discuss the use of protection and STI testing in these types of sexual relationships.

**OPEN RELATIONSHIP**
When two people in a relationship mutually agree to have sex or intimate contact with others outside of the relationship. Open relationships can come in many different forms. Two partners may decide to let each other when they hooked up with someone else, or they may want to keep it private. What is important is that specific boundaries are set as to what is allowed outside of the relationship are discussed. This should also include the discussion of protection against STIs and STI testing to keep all parties safe.

**POLYAMORY**
When you are engaging in (or are open to) romantic/sexual relationships with more than one person at the same time. In a polyamorous relationship, there may be one main couple (often called mating partners), and then each person in that relationship has one or more additional partners who they are also in a committed relationship with. This is not the same as polygamy (when a person has more than one legally married spouse).

**REMEMBER**, it is crucial to discuss the use of protection and STI testing in any type of sexual relationship!
Methods - Social Media

- Advertise the course through a brief introduction video
- Consistent branding with use of slogan, color scheme, & graphics
- Create social media posts for the SRH lab Instagram based on content from the Sex Ed modules
  - Masturbation
  - Why Sex Ed
  - Consent
Results - Topics

10 Modules:

1. Intro Module
2. What is Sex?
3. Consent and Violence Prevention
4. Sexual Behaviors
5. Seeking Care
6. Barrier Methods
7. Contraception
8. Pregnancy Options
9. Conversations
10. Resources
Results - Module Format

Sexual Pleasure and Orgasms

Sexual Pleasure

So far, we have been talking about the contexts and motivations that can help one experience sexual pleasure. But what exactly is pleasure? Pleasure involves both physical and psychological components. Safety, autonomy, and the ability to communicate freely with partners all contribute to experiencing pleasure during a sexual act. It is also important to remember that what is pleasurable for one person may not be pleasurable for another or even pleasurable all the time. Pleasure varies by mood, day, and current emotions so be sure to pay close attention and always communicate. Don’t assume someone’s pleasure radar; give yourself grace. If you aren’t experiencing the same level of pleasure from an activity you once did.

Pleasure can be achieved in many different ways. Different kinds of touching and sensations work for different people, so it is important to try them out for yourself! Some people may enjoy massage, tickling, light touching with objects like feathers, or playing with temperature like ice cubes or warm baths.

feel free to experiment with different flavors, temperatures & textures!

Consent and Violence Prevention

Since consent is so important, let’s talk about what it looks like in more detail. An easy way to remember the 5 key points of consent is the acronym FRIES. Each letter in FRIES represents a central tenet:

Freely given
Reversible
Informed
Engaged
Specific

An easy way to remember the 5 key points of consent is the acronym FRIES. Each letter in FRIES represents a central tenet:

P: First, consent should be freely given by all participants. This means that if it is shown through coercion or excessive seduction, boundaries are being crossed and one is not truly giving consent. If you should be something uncomfortable for a partner, you should not have to convince your partner to engage in something they are not feeling up to or are uncomfortable with. That is coercion

R: Second, consent is reversible. This means it can be taken back at any time before or during sex. This could apply to a single act or even the whole act. Just because consent was given to something, one person does not mean there are committed to it in the future. You and your partner must continue to obtain consent each time you engage in any sexual activity

E: Third, consent is informed. All details should be discussed beforehand so that everyone knows what can be expected and makes it be in line with what would be a contract, but it should be enough of a conversation for everyone to feel like they’re being heard and respected. Nothing specific, which will be discussed in a lot.

S: Fourth, consent should be specific. You may have heard the F in FRIES referred to enthusiastic so that you understood that it’s not just a sweet

What is Sex?

- Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
- Reproductive Anatomy
- Keeping Your Genitals Clean
- Types of Sex
- Masturbation
- Sexual Pleasure and Orgasms
Results - Course Navigation

- Easy to sort through content
- Specific
- Hyperlinks on each page
- Tabbed approach on content heavy pages
- Fun graphics made to break up text
- Visually appealing
Results - STI Testing

- Explaining terms
  - Window period
  - Asymptomatic
- Showing that STI testing is an easy process
- Emphasizing there is often an easy cure
- Simplifying how often to test depending on your relationship status

**WHAT'S IMPORTANT WHEN IT COMES TO STIS**

- Testing regularly
- Receiving treatment if needed
- Notifying your sexual partners about any positive results
Results - Not Your Typical Sex Ed

- Inclusivity allows content to apply to all individuals
  - Content and graphics are gender inclusive
  - Gender inclusive language is used AND explained
- Topics commonly left out of a typical sex ed
  - Porn literacy
  - Masturbation & benefits
  - Non heterosexual relationships
  - Sex toy use & safety
  - How to have conversations with a partner
Results - Resources Module

- **On-Campus Resources**
  - Cal Poly Health Center
  - SRH Lab
  - PULSE
  - Safer
  - Pride Center

- **Off-Campus Resources**
  - Planned Parenthood
  - The Center for Health and Prevention
  - Lumina Alliance
  - GALA Center

- **Anonymous Questions Board**
Future Directions - Answer Questions & Feedback

Anonymous Questions Discussion Board:
- Monitor and answer anonymous questions asked by participants
- Find gaps in student’s knowledge and improve the Canvas course modules based on questions
- Students can learn from other’s questions

Anonymous Feedback Survey:
- Examine feedback from participants and make adjustments of content based on responses where it’s needed
- Topics such as gender, sexuality, and inclusivity are changing frequently so it’s crucial to acknowledge mistakes made in the design process or what improvements that can be made.
Future Directions - Maintenance & Additional Work

Maintenance:
- Update hours of operation for resources
- Keep up to date with local and federal laws for birth control, abortion, etc.
- Continuously check prices for the services and mediations at the Cal Poly Health Center

Additional Work:
- Create additional content pages
  - Fetishes/Kinks page added to Sexual Behaviors Module
  - Menstruation page
  - FAQs from discussion board
- Continue to add fun, engaging, and realistic graphics and videos to modules
  - Reproductive anatomy
  - Video of taking an STI test at the health center
- Write pre- and post-tests
  - Assess the efficacy of the course
  - For use by professors who want to assign the course in their classes
Future Directions - Promotion & Advertising

- Physical posters across campus
  - Rec Center, Campus Health and Wellbeing, Food Pantry, UU, PULSE, Safer, dorms, etc.
- Utilize Canvas announcement features to disseminate information about Sex Ed events and resources to enrolled students
- Mustang news article
- Promote on the Sexual and Reproductive Health Lab Instagram and website
Future Directions - Campus Organizations & Partners

- Continue collaboration and promotion with our collaborators
  - Campus Health and Wellbeing, PULSE, Safer, Pride Center, Black Academic Excellence Center, Gender Equity Center, Multicultural Center, & CAED Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Club.

- Promote modules as part of first year training
  - WOW and SLO days orientations
  - First year dorm RAs

- Work with Greek life to promote the use the Canvas course and possibly require it

- Work with professors to encourage students to use the Canvas course and possibly require it or have it as an extra credit assignment
Future Directions - Future Research

- Analyze engagement with the Canvas page yearly
  - # of students who added page to their dashboard
  - Amount of time each student has interacted with the course
- Analyze efficacy of the material yearly
  - Compare pre- and post-test grades
  - Examine rates of students STI testing, overall STI rates on campus, and other healthy sexual behaviors for improvement
- Conduct a follow up study to examine student’s attitudes surrounding sex ed and uncover if the modules helped to promote more open dialogue.
- Consider making the page available on Canvas Commons and further promoting it beyond Cal Poly.
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Accomplishments

Oral Presentations
- Cal Poly 7th Annual Social Justice Teach In: Sex Education @ Cal Poly
  - Dr. Joni Roberts
  - Alexa Asson
  - Gabriella Snow
- Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA: The Development of Sexual Health Educational Learning Modules for Cal Poly Students
  - Dr. Joni Roberts
  - Alexa Asson
  - Dillan Chiewpanich

Poster Presentation
- Cal Poly 2023 CSM Student Research Conference: Learn by Doing: A Senior Project on Sexual Health Education
  - Dr. Joni Roberts
  - Alexa Asson
  - Dillan Chiewpanich
  - Amanda Hodges
  - Tanya Patil

Other
- New Times San Luis Obispo Article: Starkly similar: A Cal Poly professor from Mississippi reveals that young people's sexual health awareness isn't so different in California
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References

