



american association of sexuality educators, counselors and therapists
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Welcome to the AASECT 2026 Annual Conference Abstract Submission Guidebook

We are thrilled to invite you to submit an abstract for the AASECT 2026 Annual Conference! This guide will provide information about the conference itself, the types of sessions we are seeking, tips for writing a strong abstract, helpful resources, and general information for abstract proposals.

We look forward to reading your submission and curating an inspiring and comprehensive learning experience for all attendees.

What We're Looking For

We invite submissions across all AASECT disciplines that ignite bold, pleasure-centered, and embodied approaches across education, counseling, and therapy. We value the wide range of skills, perspectives, and experience levels that our community brings. We are especially encouraging submissions from **educators** and **counselors**, as these voices are vital to advancing our profession and enriching our conference program. All abstracts are welcome, and we especially hope you'll consider submitting your own or inviting colleagues in these areas to take part.

Language & Accessibility

In honoring the rich culture of our host location, we encourage and welcome presentations in English, Spanish, or Spanglish. When submitting your proposal, please indicate your preferred language(s).

2026 Conference Theme

Aquí y Ahora (*Here & Now*): AASECT Annual Conference 2026
You're Invited: AASECT Annual Conference 2026 | Puerto Rico

Join us *Aquí y Ahora—Here and Now* for AASECT's Annual Conference in Puerto Rico, a gathering dedicated to honoring the island's resilience through healing dialogue, intentional listening,



cultural celebration, and the promotion of erotic empowerment in the face of ongoing social, economic, and environmental challenges.

We acknowledge the circumstances of being a sexuality professional in a time when people are in a global fight for liberation and sovereignty. We also stand with Puerto Rico's ongoing struggle for self-determination in the face of U.S. colonial control.

By centering on AASECT's mission and embracing pleasure as a form of resistance, we find grounding in the body, reconnect with the purpose of our work, and honor the wisdom of place and cultural knowledge. Above all, we affirm that pleasure is our birthright and a pathway to sovereignty, inviting us to reclaim freedom, embodiment, and self-determination.

Through bilingual (English and Spanish) and multicultural connections, we aim to create intentional spaces for BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, immigrant, diasporic, and, in particular, Puerto Rican voices, honoring the intersections that shape how we heal, resist, and reclaim in our own contexts.

Come to celebrate, to reflect, to learn—and to feel.
¡Nos vemos en Puerto Rico!

For Abstract Submitters:

We invite submissions across all AASECT disciplines that ignite bold, pleasure-centered, and embodied approaches across education, counseling, and therapy. Share strategies that reclaim erotic power, disrupt shame, honor diverse sexual and gender expressions, and foster self-knowing, liberation, and relational integrity. Join us in creating transformative dialogues that celebrate pleasure, authenticity, and humanity—Aquí y Ahora.

Below are some objectives for consideration:

- Showcase innovative pedagogical strategies that center embodiment, pleasure, and cultural context in sexuality education, particularly within diverse, multilingual, or decolonial frameworks.
- Share educational practices that cultivate personal and collective erotic power, encouraging learners to define their own sexual narratives, identities, and values.
- Teaching methods that disrupt shame-based norms and uplift intersectional sexual expression across generations, communities, and settings.
- Counseling and therapeutic interventions that support clients and communities reclaim pleasure, erotic power, and voice within their cultural and sociopolitical contexts.
- Integrate multicultural perspectives in education, counseling, and therapy approaches that honor clients' lived experiences of sexual and gender expression, especially in marginalized populations.



- Present educational, counseling, and therapeutic models at the intersection of pleasure, trauma healing, and cultural identity, grounded in current clinical practice.
- Demonstrate how embodiment-based practices foster self-knowing, erotic power, and relational integrity in both educational and therapeutic settings.
- Illustrate decolonizing approaches to sexual health and wellness that resist pathologization of sexual and gender diversity, centering liberation and authenticity in our collective work as sexual health professionals.

We warmly invite presentations that celebrate embodied knowledge, lived experience, and the transformative power of pleasure. By embracing diverse voices and approaches, we create a space where all identities, stories, and ways of knowing are valued and respected. Join us for bold dialogue, authentic connection, and the healing power of pleasure—**Aquí y Ahora**.

Session Type Descriptions

Pre-conference Workshops

Duration: 4 hours

Pre-conference workshops offer highly interactive, focused sessions for conference attendees. These highly individualized sessions are not included in the conference package and must be registered for and paid for separately. We welcome submissions that reflect new and innovative ideas in the profession and will significantly advance the knowledge and skills of attendees.

Presenters are encouraged to utilize a comprehensive educational approach that incorporates a blend of lectures for foundational knowledge, discussion-based learning for critical thinking, experiential learning through interactive activities, problem-based learning for real-world application, and collaborative learning to enhance teamwork and communication skills.

SAR (Sexuality Attitude Reassessment)

Duration: Total of 14 hours of content, over two 8-hour-long training days

A SAR is a process-oriented seminar that uses lecture, media, experiential methods, activities, and small group discussions to guide an introspective process for participants. The objective of a SAR is to allow attendees to explore their attitudes, values, feelings, and beliefs about sexual behaviors and identities and how these impact their professional interactions. The SAR is not a traditional academic experience for disseminating cognitive information, nor is it psychotherapy directed toward resolving personal problems. It is a psycho-educational experience, and as such is a highly personal, internal exploration that will be different for each participant. Small group discussions have demonstrated efficacy in achieving this self-exploration and awareness, and are essential to the SAR process. For the annual conference, the SAR is not geared solely toward therapists, educators, or counselors - but is a general foundational SAR for all.



Intensive Training Session

Duration: 3 hours

This session type offers a deep dive into advanced educational practices, clinical skills and techniques, or specific knowledge-based learning that is tailored for professionals seeking to enhance their expertise in specialized areas of practice. Participants will engage in a rigorous learning experience, where they may work through complex case studies, practice advanced interventions, and receive direct feedback from expert clinicians/educators. The training is designed to build proficiency in critical clinical competencies, with an emphasis on applying evidence-based practices in real-world settings. Ideal for practitioners and educators committed to refining their craft, this session type provides an immersive environment that promotes skill development, critical thinking, and professional growth.

Poster Presentation

Duration: 1-hour presentation window with audience circulation

Additional encouraged 10 minute asynchronous video presentation with weblink (QR)

Poster Presentations are interactive events where researchers and practitioners share their work through large posters displayed on boards or stands. These short research or application presentations provide summary information on a specific study, model, concept, or intervention. During the one-hour-long poster session, many authors will simultaneously present their posters while the audience circulates and stops to discuss posters of particular interest with the authors. Poster presenters are kindly asked to bring handouts of their poster or provide a digital handout to be downloaded by interested conference attendees.

The conference committee recommends including a 10-minute virtual presentation alongside poster presentations. This addition will enable attendees to engage with the posters throughout the conference and hear directly from the presenters, even in their absence. It also provides an opportunity for participants to interact with the poster sessions remotely. Our technical team can assist in generating a QR code to be included on your poster, which will link directly to your video presentation.

“101” “201” “301” Workshops

Duration: 1-1.5 hours

A workshop is a 60-90-minute session designed to present techniques, strategies, models, methodologies, and/or research pertinent to the profession of sexuality, with particular attention to the overarching conference theme. Workshops should actively engage participants and aim to introduce new insights or deepen existing knowledge. Audience interaction and engagement are highly encouraged. One-hour presentations will be the standard format, but in special circumstances, a 90-minute workshop may be offered.



“101” Workshop

A foundational session designed for beginners (or those who need/want refreshers on foundational knowledge), focusing on introducing basic techniques, strategies, models, methodologies, and/or research relevant to the profession of sexuality, with an emphasis on the conference theme. These workshops aim to build fundamental knowledge and are focused on transmitting knowledge and training.

“201” Workshop

An intermediate session that delves deeper into specific techniques, strategies, models, methodologies, and/or research in the profession of sexuality, aligned with the conference theme. These workshops are tailored for participants with some prior knowledge and experience, aiming to expand on existing concepts and foster a more nuanced understanding through active engagement. Workshops in this area may incorporate more audience participation, particularly through experiential learning, including potential role-plays and exercises that focus on synthesizing learned knowledge, as well as other opportunities to strengthen the topical area. Additionally, workshops at the 201 level will assume pre-learned knowledge, and will not spend as much time covering or reminding participants of foundational concepts.

“301” Workshop

An advanced session intended for experienced professionals, offering in-depth exploration of specialized techniques, strategies, models, methodologies, and/or research in the profession of sexuality, with a strong focus on the conference theme. These workshops are designed to challenge participants, encouraging deep discussion and critical analysis, with extensive audience interaction and engagement. No foundational or fundamental concepts are to be presented in these workshops, as it is assumed that participants will already be knowledgeable and well-versed in the profession.

In addition to the 301-level workshops, we are seeking one or two presenters to offer extended sessions—two 3-hour presentations delivered across two days—creating space for deeper exploration, hands-on practice, and meaningful dialogue with participants.

The goal of these extended sessions is to expand upon learning objectives in greater depth. While these sessions may or may not be included in the final conference structure, we are planning ahead for the possibility.

If you would like to be considered for this opportunity, please select the corresponding option when submitting your abstract.

Expert Panel/Dialogue

Duration: 1-1.5 hours

The Expert Panel/Dialogue is a dedicated session block for curated panel presentations focused on shared themes. Each dialogue panel will consist of at least two, maximum of three, panelists who will present 10-15 minute briefs on their respective ideas or concepts related to the theme, along with a panel facilitator. Following these presentations, a facilitated dialogue will be held between



the panelists and the audience to explore further the connections and contrasts between the ideas discussed. The aim of these panels is to foster a respectful, engaging environment that allows for the exploration of both complementary and divergent perspectives. We recommend submitting for a one-hour session, unless a 90-minute format is essential to the topic. Please designate one individual from your curated panel to submit your proposal, with the option to add co-authors (fellow panelists) during the submission process.

If you are interested in having a film screened, please select this session type and include "FILM" in your abstract title.

Innovation and Development Session

Duration: 1 hour

This session is designed to showcase groundbreaking ideas, emerging methodologies, and innovative practices that broaden the perspective of human sexuality and the clinical/educational experience. Presenters will share novel concepts, tools, or approaches that have the potential to significantly impact research, education, or practice. Each presentation will highlight the development process, challenges encountered, and the anticipated or demonstrated outcomes. The session will foster a dynamic exchange of ideas, encouraging feedback and discussion from attendees to further refine and advance these innovations. This is an ideal platform for those pioneering new directions and seeking to inspire and engage the community with their forward-thinking contributions.

Session Focus Descriptions

This year, the conference will allow proposals to select a primary and secondary focus. This will clearly align and guide the proposal, ensuring a balanced distribution of session focuses throughout the conference plan. While the primary focus areas align with many of the certification areas of AASECT, they are not solely designed for those seeking or holding certification in that area. While many - if not most - sessions may cover more than one primary or secondary focus, we ask each presenter to select only one primary and secondary focus.

Primary Focus:

Education

Sessions with a focus in education will be centered on enhancing pedagogical methodologies, increasing skill sets in foundational or advanced knowledge areas of sexual health and wellbeing, community-based intervention, workshop development, or applications of program evaluation, curriculum development, administrative techniques or strategies, or the process of providing sex education to individual persons, couples, dyads+, groups, or communities. One possible goal of an education-focused session is to foster professional development, exchange ideas, and discuss improvements in educational outcomes.



Counseling

Sessions focused on counseling are designed to provide information on how to realistically resolve concerns through the introduction of problem-solving communication techniques, as well as offering accurate information and relevant suggestions on specific exercises and techniques related to sexual expression and pleasure. Sexuality counseling is generally short-term and client-centered, focusing on the immediate concern or problem, often focused on the biopsychosocial model. Sexuality counseling is not sex therapy, and is not intensive in nature.

Therapy

A therapy-focused conference presentation is a professional talk aimed at discussing innovations, techniques, case studies, or research in therapeutic practices. Sessions focused on therapy will highlight clinical and psychotherapeutic interventions for the purpose of alleviating psychosexual concerns or difficulties. Therapy-focused sessions often have in-depth and intensive applications for longer-term sexual health or psychosexual difficulties. A session focused on therapy may include foundational through advanced training in theory, approaches, applications, and/or interventions.

Research

A research-focused conference presentation is a formal, structured talk where researchers share their findings with an audience. These sessions highlight emerging, synthesized, or new empirical evidence and explore how it can inform and advance psychosexual clinical or educational practices. Presentations may include opportunities for discussion, Q&A, and practical application, helping attendees integrate research insights into their work.

Supervision

A supervision-focused conference presentation is designed for clinical supervisors, educators, and mentors overseeing pre-licensed or pre-certified professionals or students. These sessions explore best practices, common challenges, and practical strategies for effective supervision, often including case studies, interactive discussions, and tools participants can apply in their own supervisory work.

Ethics

An ethics-focused conference presentation addresses ethical issues, dilemmas, and frameworks relevant to sexual health and well-being across the various disciplines. Intended for practitioners, supervisors, and students, these sessions explore ethical principles, real-world challenges, and practical strategies to guide professional decision-making. Presentations may include case studies, interactive discussions, and scenario-based exercises to help participants apply an ethical perspective to their work.

Secondary Focus:

General Knowledge

General knowledge in psychosexual health and well-being encompasses a broad understanding of the psychological, emotional, spiritual, and physical factors that



influence sexual health, relationships, and overall well-being. These sessions emphasize promoting healthy attitudes and behaviors related to sexuality, addressing mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of sexual experiences, and providing education on topics such as consent, communication, and sexual diversity for practitioners, educators, and counselors. Participants gain insights and practical strategies to support positive sexual health outcomes and apply this knowledge effectively in clinical, educational, or community settings.

Clinical Applications

Clinical applications focus on the use of therapeutic strategies, interventions, and evidence-informed approaches to address challenges related to sexual health, intimacy, and relationships. These sessions provide practical tools, case examples, and skill-building exercises to support clients effectively. Topics may include addressing sexual trauma, desire and arousal concerns, relational dynamics, and communication challenges, with an emphasis on applying interventions in real-world clinical settings.

Methodological or Theoretical Development

Methodological or theoretical development focuses on advancing frameworks, models, and research techniques to better understand and address sexual health issues. These sessions refine existing theories or create new ones to explain human sexuality, sexual behavior, and psychological aspects of sexual well-being. **Presentations may include examples of innovative study designs, qualitative and quantitative methods, and integrative approaches, providing participants with tools and insights to enhance research quality and apply findings to practice, education, or policy.

Research-Based or Focused

Research-based or research-focused sessions involve the application of empirical evidence to deepen our understanding of sexual health and well-being and to synthesize knowledge across studies. These sessions highlight findings that can inform practice, guide interventions, and support evidence-based decision-making. **Presentations may include study results, data synthesis, and discussions on applying research insights to clinical, educational, or community settings.

Bio/Medical Integration

Biomedical integration in psychosexual health and well-being refers to incorporating biological and medical perspectives into the understanding and treatment of sexual health concerns. These sessions explore how biomedical factors intersect with psychological, emotional, and educational approaches to support a comprehensive, integrative model of care.

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) as a session focus involves exploring principles and practices that promote fairness, representation, and equal opportunities for all—particularly those who have been silenced, oppressed, underrepresented, or marginalized. Sessions may include strategies for creating inclusive environments, addressing systemic barriers, and integrating



diverse perspectives into practice, research, and organizational culture, as well as practical tools, actionable insights, and frameworks to foster equity, respect, and a sense of belonging, with a focus on supporting and uplifting marginalized communities in both professional and community settings.

Business Practices

A business practice-focused session is designed to address key operational, strategic, and managerial aspects of running a successful business across disciplines. Sessions serve as a platform for discussing aspects of running a successful business, such as proven strategies, marketing, finance, client management, team building, and adapting to emerging trends. Participants will gain practical tools, actionable strategies, and frameworks to enhance their performance, navigate market changes, and effectively achieve their organizational objectives.

Thank you for sharing your expertise and helping to shape this year's conference. Your work supports our mission to create a diverse, inclusive, and transformative learning environment for all participants.