

Psychology 2850
Human Sexuality



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Office Hours: after class or by appointment

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Lectures: Wednesday 18:00-20:50

Classrooms: PE 250

Course Description:

In this course, we will examine human sexuality from a comparative, biosocial perspective. As such, both biological and social processes will be discussed. In addition, cross-species and cross-cultural examples will be emphasized in class. Students will learn that sex can be studied scientifically and systematically using an evidence-based approach (as opposed to one that is based on their personal value systems). We will examine processes that are common to almost all humans such as universal patterns of sexual attraction and sexual arousal. However, *diversity* is a common theme that runs throughout this course. As such, some of the more unusual topics that we will examine in this course include: intersexuality, asexuality, polyamory, masturbation, transsexuality, homosexuality, and sexual paraphilias.

The lectures, readings, and films will deal frankly with controversial issues pertaining to biological sex, gender diversity and sexuality. Much of the course content is sexually explicit. This content may make some people uncomfortable and, as such, unable to follow lectures, complete assignments or attend even classes. Such individuals should seriously consider this possibility before they commit to taking this optional course.

Required Readings:

Assigned Chapters from:

LeVay, S., Baldwin, J., & Baldwin, J. (2009). *Discovering Human Sexuality*. Sunderland, Mass.: Sinauer Associates, Inc., Publishers.

Additional readings that have been assigned can be found in pdf form online in the Psychology 2850 Courseware library.

Course Assessment:

Tests: Two WebCT tests and one WebCT final exam will consist of multiple-choice questions based on the lecture material, the reading material, the films and any classroom discussion. The two tests are not factually cumulative, but they are conceptually cumulative. The final exam will be both factually and conceptually cumulative dealing with all the material we have covered in the course. The final exam will take place during the scheduled exam period.

Test 1 (Week 6; opens February 8, closes February 11): 30%

Test 2 (Week 12; opens March 22, closes March 25): 30%

Final (Exam week): 40%

Course Policies:

(1) The following ranges will be employed in assigning grades in this course:

A+	≥ 89.5	B-	69.5-73.4	D	50-56.4
A	84.5-89.4	C+	66.5-69.4	F	≤ 49.9
A-	79.5-84.4	C	63.5-66.4		
B+	76.5-79.4	C-	59.5-63.4		
B	73.5-76.4	D+	56.5-59.4		

In accordance with the University of Lethbridge Calendar,

A = Excellent

B = Good

C = Satisfactory

D = Poor

F = Fail

- (1) If you miss any of the films shown in class, they cannot be borrowed from the instructor and there will not be a second screening.
- (2) My course notes will not be provided to students.
- (3) I will not provide study guides for tests.
- (4) Additional work will not be assigned for those who wish to improve their grades.
- (5) The lectures compliment the material presented in the textbook. Some lectures will follow the material in the textbook closely; other lectures will focus on material not present in the textbook. In some instances, material presented in the textbook will not be dealt with in the lectures to any great extent. Regardless, students are responsible for all the assigned reading material and all the material presented in lectures whether or not one overlaps with the other.
- (6) Students can write missed tests if they provide documentation from a doctor stating that they were ill and that their test performance would have been seriously affected on the day of their illness. The documentation must have the doctor's name,

address and phone number. Non-medical reasons for missed exams (i.e., a death in the family) must also be supported with appropriate documentation.

- (7) Given the controversial nature of the course material, a diversity of viewpoints will inevitably exist in the classroom. Voicing well-reasoned disagreement with others viewpoints is perfectly fine (even encouraged!); being disrespectful towards others is not.
- (8) If students need to talk about some sexual or gender related issues that are troubling them I strongly recommend they make an appointment with the councilors at the student-counseling center. The Student Counseling Office can be found in TH 218. The number at the counseling center is 317-2845. The website is:
<<http://www.uleth.ca/ross/counselling/index.html>>.
- (9) Please turn your cell phones off prior to the beginning of the lecture.
- (10) Please do not use the internet during lectures.
- (11) As per the University Calendar, Section 7b: “When a student disrupts instructional activities, the instructor may exclude the student immediately or from future scheduled instructional meetings of that course.” When students talk amongst themselves during lectures it disrupt instructional activities and, consequently, I will respond accordingly.

Reading Schedule

(minor changes to this reading schedule may occur)

- Jan. 6 – Introduction to the course
Sexual attitudes (Chapter 7, pp. 194-201)
Sex education (Chapter 1, pp. 20-21; Chapter 10, Box 10.4)
Kinsey (Chapter 1, p. 15)
- Jan. 13 – Sex & Evolution (Reading: Sex & Evolution book chapter which can be found online in Psyc 2850 Blackboard library)
- Jan. 20 - Women’s Bodies (Chapter 2 [the sections of Chapter 2 for which you are not responsible will be posted on the Psyc 2850 Blackboard Announcement Board]; Chapter 11, pp. 358-363)
- Jan. 27 - Men’s Bodies (Chapter 3; Chapter 1, Box 1.1)
- Feb. 3 - Sex and Gender Differences (Chapter 4, excluding pp. 117-124; Chapter 1, p. 11, paragraph 3 on Malamuth et al., 2000 study; Chapter 7, pp. 201-204; Chapter 10, pp. 322-326, p. 329-330).

- Feb. 10 - Intersexuality (Chapter 4)
***Test 1 (covers all course material in Weeks 1-5; opens Feb 8, closes Feb. 11)**
- Feb. 17 - READING WEEK
- Feb. 24 - Sexual Arousal (Chapter 5; Chapter 1, p. 7 for discussion of Masters & Johnson)
 Sexual Attraction (Chapter 5; Chapter 1, Box 1.2)
- March 3 - Sexual Attraction continued
 Heterosexual Mating Strategies (Chapter 7, pp. 223-227)
- March 10 - Sexual Orientation (Chapter 12; Chapter 7, pp. 204-205; Chapter 12, pp. 391-392)
- March 17 - Sexual Orientation continued
 Sexual Behavior (Chapter 6)
- March 24 - Aging and Sexuality (Chapter 11, pp. 363-369)
 Sexuality in childhood (Chapter 10, pp. 312-319, Box 10.2)
 Atypical and Paraphilic Sexuality (Chapter 13)
***Test 2 (covers all course material in Weeks 6-11; opens March 22, closes March 25)**
- March 31 - Transsexuality (Chapter 4, pp. 117-124)
- April 7 - Sexual Relationships & Love (Chapter 7, pp. 206-223; Chapter 11, pp. 342-358)
- *Final Exam during University scheduled exam period**