

**Psychology 3845**  
**Sex & Gender Diversity**



**Instructor:** Dr. Paul L. Vasey

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**Office Hours:** after class or by appointment

**Teaching Assistant:** Deanna Forrester ([deanna.forrester@uleth.ca](mailto:deanna.forrester@uleth.ca))

**Lectures:** Tuesday & Thursday 3:05-4:20

**Classrooms:** AH117

**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 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 Psyc 3854 Courseware library.

### **Course Assessment:**

**Tests (90%):** Two tests and one final exam will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions based on the lecture material, the reading material, the films and any classroom discussion. The tests and the final exam are not factually cumulative, but they are conceptually cumulative.

Test 1 (February 11): 35%

Test 2 (March 25): 35%

Final (April 15th): 20%

### **Short Written Assignments (10%):**

There will be two short written assignments worth 5% each. In each case, the students will be required to respond to some critical thinking question that related to an assigned film we watch in class, an assigned article that will be read outside of class or some aspect of classroom discussion. Students will be required to write a response to the critical thinking question provided. Responses must be typed, double-spaced, and must not exceed two pages. At the top of each page list your name and the name of the film or the assigned reading. Responses are due in class, one week after they are assigned.

### **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)

- Week 1 – Introduction to the course  
Sexual attitudes (Chapter 7, p. 194-201)  
Sex education (Chapter 1, p. 20-21; Chapter 10, Box 10.4)  
Kinsey (Chapter 1, p. 15)
- Week 2 – Sex & Evolution (Reading: Sex & Evolution book chapter which can be found online in Psyc 2850 Blackboard library)
- Week 3 - 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, p. 358-363)
- Week 4 - Men's Bodies (Chapter 3; Chapter 1, Box 1.1)
- Week 5 - Sex and Gender Differences (Chapter 4, excluding p. 117-124; Chapter 1, p. 11, paragraph 3 on Malamuth et al., 2000 study; Chapter 7, p. 201-204; Chapter 10, p. 322-326, p. 329-330).

- Week 6 - Intersexuality (Chapter 4)  
Reading: Dreger, A.D. (1998). 'Ambiguous sex' – or ambivalent medicine? Ethical problems in the treatment of intersexuality,” *The Hastings Center Report*, 28 (3): 24-35.  
**Test 1, February 11**
- Week 7 - READING WEEK
- Week 8- Sexual Arousal (Chapter 5; Chapter 1, p. 7 for discussion of Masters & Johnson)  
 Sexual Attraction (Chapter 5; Chapter 1, Box 1.2)  
 Heterosexual Mating Strategies (Chapter 7, p. 223-227)
- Week 9- Sexual Orientation (Chapter 12; Chapter 7, p. 204-205; Chapter 12, p. 391-392)
- Week 10 - Sexual Orientation continued  
Reading: Harryman, D.D. (1991). With all thy getting, get understanding. In: *Peculiar People: Mormons and Same-sex Orientation*, R. Schow, W. Schow & M. Raynes (eds.) pp. 23-35. Salt Lake City: Signature Books.
- Week 11 - **Test 2, March 25**
- Week 12 - Sexual Behavior (Chapter 6; Chapter 7, pp. 204-205)  
 Sexuality in childhood (Chapter 10, pp. 312-319, Box 10.2)  
 Atypical and Paraphilic Sexuality (Chapter 13)
- Week 13 - Transsexuality (Chapter 4, p. 117-124)  
Reading: Bailey, J.M. (2003). Terese and Cher. In: *The Man Who Would Be Queen*, pp. 145-156. Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press.  
Reading: Dreger, A.D. (2009). Gender Identity Disorder in childhood: Inconclusive Advice to Parents. *Hastings Center Report*, 39(1): 26-29.
- Week 14 - Sexual Relationships & Love (Chapter 7, pp. 206-223; Chapter 11, p. 342-358)
- Week 15 - **Test 3, April 15**