

Psychology 3850A – Sexual Health and Human Sexuality

Summer 2011

L1050; Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00 – 11:50am

Instructor

Kelly Suschinsky, C480, kelly.suschinsky@gmail.com

Prerequisites

Any two (2) Psychology courses at the 2000 level

Course Description and Learning Objectives

Sexuality is something that impacts virtually everyone, in one way or another. Because of its ubiquitous nature, sexuality is an issue that requires understanding. This course is an introduction to topics related to sexual health, defined by the World Health Organization as “a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality.” In this course, we will explore basic information about sex and sexuality, including sexual anatomy, sexual development, and the nature of the sexual response. We will also discuss potentially controversial issues, such as fertility, contraception and abortion, sexually transmitted infections, sexuality across the lifespan (including sexuality in children and elderly people), sexual dysfunctions, and the use of sexuality in negative ways, such as sexual assault. The objective of the class is to encourage students to better understand human sexuality.

Because of the nature of the material, and the importance of understanding sexuality, we will discuss sexuality and sexuality research frankly and openly. It is important to keep in mind that lectures and any additional materials (e.g., readings, videos shown in class) may be sexually explicit, but these materials are intended to educate. Please be aware of the nature of the course material and think about this before deciding to continue in this course.

Instructional Methodology

This course will be based on a series of lectures given by the instructor. At times, guest speakers may be brought in to the class to elaborate on certain topics. The instructor may choose to make Power Point slides available to students online before class for some lectures (e.g., lectures on anatomy). Videos will also be shown in class, and some will not be available outside of class. These videos may be used for the short written assignments (see below), and may only be shown during class time. Some (but not all) videos may be available for students to access online.

Class Discussion

The topics that we will be discussing will likely result in class discussion. I encourage you to think about the topics that we are discussing and express any relevant opinions about the material in a respectful manner. I also expect students to be respectful of other students' opinions.

Readings

The required readings are available in the course package developed for this course (*Course Pack for Psychology 3850A – Sexual Health and Human Sexuality*). Additional readings may be assigned throughout the term: These will be provided to students by the instructor.

Evaluation

The evaluation is based on three exams and at least one of three short written assignments. The exams are mandatory, and all three must be written to complete the course. Students determine for themselves the weighting (%) of each evaluation component, within a designated range.

Exam 1:	15 – 20% (required)
Exam 2:	25 – 35% (required)
Exam 3:	30 – 40% (required)
Assignment 1:	5% (optional)
Assignment 2:	5% (optional)
Assignment 3:	5% (optional)

Study participation: 2% (optional and extra)**

For example, Student A may choose to weight her exams and assignments as follows: Exam 1 (20%), Exam 2 (35%), Exam 3 (40%), and Assignment 2 (5%). Student B may prefer to place less weight on his exams and do all of the writing assignments: Exam 1 (15%), Exam 2 (30%), Exam 3 (40%), Assignment 1 (5%), Assignment 2 (5%), and Assignment 3 (5%). Students must designate the weighting (%) of each evaluation component PRIOR to that component being marked (e.g., on the front page of each exam or assignment).

**Participation in research is a valuable learning experience to undergraduate students. Researchers in the Department of Psychology may be conducting studies over the course of the summer term. Some of these studies will offer course marks, others will not. You may participate in as many studies as you wish (based on your eligibility), but you will only be allowed to apply 2% bonus marks to this course. If you have questions about which studies are eligible for bonus marks, please ask the instructor.

Exams

There will be three exams throughout the course. The exams are not specifically cumulative, but concepts from earlier in the term may be relevant later in the term (e.g., sex hormones and fertility/contraception).

The exams will cover material from both the lectures and required readings. Each exam will consist of several multiple choice and short answer (e.g., definitions) questions. One or two essay questions may be included on the exams, as well. More information about the exact format of each exam will be given out prior to that exam.

NOTE: If you cannot write the exam in the designated time you must contact the instructor as soon as possible to arrange for an alternative time. If you cannot write the exam during the designated time because of a medical reason, you must provide proper documentation (i.e., a physician's note) to the instructor. If you cannot write the exam during the designated time for any other reason, you must also provide appropriate documentation. If you are writing the exam through the Disability Resource Centre you must inform the instructor as soon as possible to make arrangements for writing exams.

Written Assignments

There will be three short written assignments that students may complete. Students must complete a minimum of one assignment, but may complete up to three assignments. Each assignment will require students to answer a question that is related to an assigned video that we will watch in class, an assigned article that will be read outside of class, or some aspect of classroom discussion. Responses must be typed, double-spaced, and not exceed two pages. Responses must follow APA format if references are used, although you are not required to submit an APA-style title page. You will be required to include the following information on the front of your assignment: your name, ID #, and the name of the film or assigned reading. Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of the class that they are due. Late assignments will be docked 0.5% (out of 5%) for each day that they are late. See the schedule below for the due dates for the assignments.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and is well defined in the University Calendar. If you have questions about paraphrasing or quoting, please ask the instructor.

Grading

The following ranges will be used to assign a final grade:

A+ 90-100	A 85-89	A- 80-84
B+ 77-79	B 74-76	B- 71-73
C+ 68-70	C 65-67	C- 61-64
D+ 55-60	D 50-54	F (fail) 0-49

Contacting the Instructor

The best way to contact me is to see me during my office hours, which will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00pm – 1:00pm. My office is located in C480 of University Hall. If you are unable to meet with me during office hours, you may email me at kelly.suschinsky@gmail.com to set up an alternative meeting time. When you are sending me a personal email, please include "Psychology 3850 question" in the subject line.

Students will often have questions that may be relevant to the rest of the class. If you do have a question of this nature (e.g., clarification of a topic discussed in class, clarification of the material that will be covered on an exam), please email the class email address: 201102psyc3850a@uleth.ca. This will allow me to answer that question for all students. If you require further clarification, please feel free to stop by during office hours or email me to set up an alternative meeting time.

Class Schedule

The schedule of the topics below is tentative and may change slightly, depending on the availability of guest speakers. Keep in mind that the dates for writing exams will not change.

May 10	Introduction to sex and sexual health (Reading 1)
May 12	Male and female anatomy (Readings 2 & 3)
May 17	Sex hormones, the menstrual cycle, and sexual development (Reading 4)
May 19	Sexual development, intersex conditions
May 24	EXAM 1 (to be written during the first half of class) Sexual attraction and arousal (Reading 5)
May 26	ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE (Optional) Sexual behaviors, fertility, pregnancy, childbirth (Reading 6)
May 31	Contraception, abortion, sexually transmitted infections (Readings 7 & 8)
June 2	Sexuality in childhood and adolescence (Readings 9 & 10)
June 7	EXAM 2 (to be written during the first half of class) Sexuality in young adulthood (sexual relationships, sexual aggression; Reading 11)
June 9	ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE (Optional) Sexuality in young adulthood Sexual aggression and sexual dysfunctions (Reading 12)
June 14	Sexual dysfunctions (Reading 12)
June 16	Sexuality among sexual minorities and people with disabilities (Reading 13)
June 21	Sexuality among the elderly (Reading 14)
June 23	ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE (Optional) EXAM 3