



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

PSYCHOLOGY 350A: The Psychology of Human Sexuality

SUMMER SESSION 1: May 11 – June 18, 2015
LOCATION: Chemistry Room B250
MEETING TIMES: Tuesdays & Thursdays 14:00-17:00

“The only unnatural sex act is that which you cannot perform.” –Alfred Kinsey

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Watson
E-mail: ryan.watson@ubc.ca
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:00- 13:30
Office: Koerner Pavilion T-230 (3rd floor)

Teaching Assistant: Cara Dunkley
E-mail: cdunkley@psych.ubc.ca
Office Hours: By appointment

I. Course Aims and Outcomes:

This course is designed to provide an introduction to contemporary understandings of human sexuality and relations. The course is organized around major topics in the field of sexuality studies. We will focus on contemporary research and debates in human sexuality, and strive for applied learning, critical reflection and synthesis, and discussion. The course is not “taken” or given” but will be an experience that we create together.

The primary course reading and course discussion materials will be through a textbook. Through these readings we will explore contemporary research questions while:

- Developing the ability and tools in applying relevant theories for the study of human sexuality,
- Understanding and interpreting research methods for the study of human sexuality,
- Beginning to engage and apply public policy (and policy debates) to human sexuality, and
- Mastering the skills of analyzing public debates and controversies regarding human sexuality and related research.

II. My Assumptions

Sexuality is a contested subject characterized by tensions between the private and public, personal and social, thrilling and icky, moral and immoral. These tensions will be the content of the course. Thus, course discussions will include material that may be “R” rated, or that may challenge your assumptions or personal values. If such discourse is uncomfortable for you, **please drop the course**. Additionally, if a particular topic makes you uncomfortable, please notify the instructor to discuss potential alternatives.

I am committed to fostering an atmosphere in which we can engage in discussion while remaining professional, courteous, and respectful. I expect tactful exchanges in class; this means you should think about responses or comments carefully and non-defensively, and take a minute to examine your intentions and potential biases before engaging. If at any point you feel that the atmosphere of civility and respect is threatened please let me know immediately.

For reasons that we will discuss, in our culture sexuality has been a topic characterized by controversy, shame, sensation, and thus, misinformation and myth. The result has been that our culture has created divisions for what is “normal” sexuality, thus defining everything outside of that as “abnormal” (notably there have been shifts across history in what is deemed “normal”). Thus in this class we will examine the boundaries or edges of sexuality—in human development and in interpersonal relationships; these are the places where we might learn most about how sexuality is managed socially, and experienced personally.

III. Course Requirements: This course has four basic requirements: a) come to class and bring iClicker, b) participate in class, c) do all required readings, and d) complete both exams.

1. Class attendance and participation policy: Attendance will not be calculated into students’ grades; however, information presented in every lecture—most of which is not in the textbook—will be tested in both the midterm and final exam. In addition, the iClicker will be used each course. Students are expected to purchase and bring this learning instrument to each course.

2. Course readings: (Available at bookstore)

Rathus, S.A., Nevid, J.S., Fichner-Rathus, L., & McKay, A. (2015). *Human Sexuality in a World of Diversity, Fifth Canadian Edition*. Pearson Education Canada.

3. Exams: The midterm will be administered during a normal class session. Both the midterm and final exam will contain material from both lectures and required readings; the format of questions will be multiple choice, short / long answer, and matching/labeling. A major component of the exams will be written responses. The final exam will be cumulative, but the majority of the exam will test concepts from the second half of the course. **Make-up exams will be given only exceptional circumstances (i.e., a medical emergency). If the student is going to miss an exam, the student must contact Dr. Watson within 12 hours of the exam took and provide documentation by the time the make-up exam takes place. Students must take the midterm and final exam on scheduled dates.**

IV. Grading Procedures: Grades for the this course will be based on:

(a) Midterm (50%)

(b) Final (50%)

The Department of Psychology has a policy in place to insure that class averages and distribution of marks for all courses are within specified ranges. Instructors are required to scale grades if their class averages and/or distribution of marks do not fall within those ranges. The following guidelines are provided by the department:

Class Performance	Mean	SD	% A	% A+B	% Fail
Good	70	13	22	56	6
Average	68	13	18	50	8
Weak	66	13	14	44	11

V. Academic Integrity

The Psychology department follows a code of conduct: “Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them. In the first place, the Department has implemented software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple-choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students’ responses. In addition, the Department subscribes to TurnItIn – a

service designed to detect and deter plagiarism. All materials (term papers, lab reports, etc.) that students submit for grading will be scanned and compared to over 4.5 billion pages of content located on the Internet or in TurnItIn's own proprietary databases. The results of these comparisons are compiled into customized "Originality Reports" containing several sensitive measures of plagiarism; instructors receive copies of these reports for every student in their class.

In all cases of suspected academic misconduct the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript.

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently by individuals. If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is even a borderline case of academic misconduct, please consult your instructor. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>) and read the University's Policy 69 (available at <http://www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/policy69.html>).

VI. Other Course Policies

I will do everything in my power to accommodate students with disabilities. Please e-mail me before the beginning of the term if you require any special accommodations.

I will allow students to bring and use laptops, but please try your best to remain engaged and not participate in non-class related activities while in class.

We will have a number of guest speakers throughout the duration of this course. Please be respectful and ask tactful questions of the speakers; we are privileged to have experts in various fields of science join us to share their experiences and knowledge.

VII. Tentative Course Schedule:

(May change to accommodate guest presenters & student needs)

Topics	Readings to be discussed	Speaker/Activity
May 12 Perspectives and Methods of Human Sexuality	[Rathus] Chapters 1 & 2	
May 14 Sexuality Over the Lifespan; Sexual Health Education	[Rathus] Chapter 12 & 13	
May 19 Contraception, Childbirth, and Abortion	[Rathus] Chapters 10 & 11	
May 21 Anatomy and Sexual Response	[Rathus] Chapters 3 & 4	
May 26 Non-Heterosexuality	[Rathus] Chapter 9	
May 28 Non-Heterosexuality (con't) & Gender Roles	[Rathus] Chapter 5	<i>Speaker</i> Transgender Issues
June 2 <i>MIDTERM EXAM</i>	<i>No Readings</i>	<i>In-Class Exam</i>
June 4 Sexually Transmitted Infections & Sexual Dysfunctions	[Rathus] Chapters 14 & 15	<i>Speaker</i> Sexual Dysfunction
June 9 Variations in Sexual Behavior	[Rathus] Chapter 16	<i>Speaker</i> Asexuality Issues
June 11 Attraction and Love & Relationships/Intimacy	[Rathus] Chapters 6 & 7	
June 16 Sex Work / Coercion	[Rathus] Chapters 17 & 18	
June 18 Techniques and Behavior Patterns	[Rathus] Chapter 8	<i>Speaker</i> BDSM
June 22-26 (TBD) <i>FINAL EXAM</i>	<i>No Readings</i>	Room TBD