



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

PSYCHOLOGY 350A: The Psychology of Human Sexuality

SUMMER SESSION 1: May 9 – June 16, 2016

LOCATION: Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability 1250

MEETING TIMES: Tuesday/Thursday 14:00-17:00

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

Instructor: **Dr. Ryan Watson**

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Peer Mentor: Yousef Shahin

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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 participate on TopHat, b) participate in class, c) do all required readings, and d) complete both exams.

All students will receive an e-mail from TopHat if registered by the end of April prior to the term. If you join late, you need to signup at tophat.com and use join code: 737293. This will link you to this course.

1. Class attendance and participation policy: 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 TopHat will be used each course. Students are expected to sign up for TopHat.

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.

I do not recommend use of earlier versions of the textbook. The textbook is on reserve at the library and students can use a copy of the textbook during Dr. Watson's office hours.

3. Exams: The midterm will be administered during a normal class session. Both the midterm and final exam will contain material from lectures and required readings; the format of questions will be multiple choice, short / long answer, and matching/labeling. 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 due to a medical emergency, the student must contact Dr. Watson within 12 hours of the exam and provide documentation by the time the make-up exam takes place. Missing exams due to early flights home at term end (note final exam day is not scheduled until close the the final, and can be as late as June 24) or other scheduling conflicts are not allowed reasons for alternative exam dates. **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: 150 points (50%)

(b) Final: 150 points (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. Peer Mentor(s)

The peer mentors for this course may offer midterm and final exam preparation sessions throughout the term; student attendance at these sessions will be optional and sessions will be announced about a week in advance. During the review sessions, students may be presented with sample questions for practice, a review of important concepts, and logistics related to exams. The mentor(s) will also be available to address any questions or concerns either by e-mail or by appointment.

VI. 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. The Department has implemented software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple-choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students' responses.

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>).

VII. 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, and inform me ahead of time if you will take your exam at the A&D office.

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.

VIII. Tentative Course Schedule:*(May change to accommodate guest presenters & student needs)*

Topics	Readings to be discussed	Speaker/Activity
May 10 Perspectives and Methods of Human Sexuality	[Rathus] Chapters 1 & 2	
May 12 Sexuality Over the Lifespan Sexual Health Education	[Rathus] Chapter 12 & 15	<i>Speaker</i> Lifespan/Education
May 17 Anatomy and Sexual Response	[Rathus] Chapters 3 & 4	
May 19 Contraception, Childbirth, and Abortion	[Rathus] Chapters 10 & 11	
May 24 Non-Heterosexuality	[Rathus] Chapter 5 & 9	<i>Speaker</i> Transgender Issues
May 26 <i>MIDTERM EXAM</i>	<i>No Readings</i>	<i>In-Class Exam</i>
May 31 Sexually Transmitted Infections & Sexual Dysfunctions	[Rathus] Chapters 13 & 14	<i>Speaker</i> Sexual Dysfunction
June 2 Variations in Sexual Behavior	[Rathus] Chapter 16	<i>Speakers</i> Asexuality Issues
June 7 Attraction and Love & Relationships/Intimacy	[Rathus] Chapters 6 & 7	
June 9 Sex Work / Coercion	[Rathus] Chapters 17 & 18	<i>Speaker</i> Coercion
June 14 Techniques and Behavior Patterns	[Rathus] Chapter 8	<i>Speaker</i> BDSM
June 20-June 24 <i>FINAL EXAM</i>	<i>No Readings</i>	Room TBA