

Psychology 350A: The Psychology of Human Sexuality

Section 901

Winter Term 1, 2012



Instructor	Dr. Jason Winters
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Email	jwinters@psych.ubc.ca
Class Time	Tuesdays, 17:00-19:30
Classroom	West Mall Swing Space 122
Office hours	Tuesdays, 15:45-16:45
Class Website	http://ubcpsych350.wordpress.com/
Course Text	LeVay, S., Baldwin, J., & Baldwin, J. (2012). <i>Discovering Human Sexuality: Second Edition</i> . Sunderland, MA: Sinauer Associate, Inc.

Teaching Assistants	Morag Yule	Michelle Foisy	Thariq Badiudee
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Office Hours	By appointment – email the TAs to schedule.		

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a broad, interdisciplinary overview of the rich and complex field of the psychology of human sexuality, covering relevant theory, research, and cultural facets. Topics include:

- a brief history
- anatomy, physiology, and sexual response
- sexual behaviour and techniques
- love and relationships
- attractiveness and body image
- sexual identity and orientation
- atypical sexual preferences
- commercial sex

The course will dispel some of the many myths about human sexuality, and it's my hope that it will challenge any biases that you may have, and encourage introspection. The class will focus on the science

that forms the foundation of what is currently understood about human sexuality, and its application to daily life.

Classes will largely be in lecture format with occasional multimedia presentations and guest talks. Lectures will reflect the content of the course textbook; however, **information presented in class will often not be covered in the textbook and vice versa. This includes information that is discussed, but is not included, in the PowerPoint slides.** For this reason, it is essential that you attend class and read the assigned sections of your textbook if you want to receive a good grade. Material covered in lectures, in the PowerPoint slides, and in the textbook is all fair game for the exams. You are also responsible for any in-class announcements.

COURSE WEBSITE

The course blog will be used extensively for several purposes. I will be posting PowerPoint slides from class, announcements, and grades. It is your responsibility to regularly check the course blog for the most current class information. I will also be posting readings of interest, links to online resources, and links to other items related to human sexuality. **Unless stated otherwise**, these resources will not be required for the course. They are for your interest and amusement (I hope!). I encourage you to use the *Leave a Comment* feature to discuss the posted items, or to ask questions. I also encourage you to email me finds and contributions to post that you think the class would like.

Each Thursday, I will publish a *Thursday Mail* post. This is for you to ask any questions related to the class, or to the topic of human sexuality. Anonymous commenting will be available, as it will be for all posts on the blog, and I encourage you to use the *Thursday Mail* to ask questions that you may not feel comfortable asking in class. I will either answer the questions directly in the comments section, or will respond in the following class.

I will be checking the course blog frequently and will respond to comments in as timely a manner as possible. Comments will be moderated before being posted, so your comments may take some time before they appear on the blog. This is to protect against spam, and disrespectful or otherwise inappropriate comments.

EVALUATION

Midterm	32%
Final Exam	32%
Paper	33%
iClicker Participation	3%

Exams

The midterm exam will take place in class, and the final exam will be scheduled during the December exam period. Exams, which will **not** be cumulative, may be comprised of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, paragraph, and essay style questions.

The midterm will be scored a **0** unless you experience a medical emergency, in which case you must: **(1) inform me before the scheduled exam time and; (2) provide a doctor's note.** The note must detail the medical emergency and must provide the physician's telephone number so that a follow-up phone call can be made. I may request that you consult with Arts Advising and provide documentation. **There will be no make-up midterm exam.** If you miss the midterm due to a medical emergency, your other evaluations (i.e., final exam and term paper) will be weighted more.

If you miss the final exam due to a medical emergency, you will be required to consult with Arts Advising to be given Standing Deferred Status. You will then write the make-up final exam during the Standing Deferred exam period (July, 2013).

Exams will not be rescheduled because of work, academic workload, holidays, or for any other reason. Please do not ask. Do not schedule flights home during the final exam period before the final exam schedule has been released. I will not reschedule your final exam because you booked your flight for a date earlier than the officially scheduled final exam.

Please contact me prior to the exams if you will be writing your exams at the Disability Resource Centre.

Paper

You will be required to complete a paper based on a recent news or media item that addresses some aspect of the psychology of human sexuality. An example of an appropriate item is, "*Canada's polygamy laws upheld by B.C. Supreme Court*", published online on November 13, 2011 by the CBC.

Your paper should briefly summarize the news item, provide an overview of the topic discussed, and take sides with, or refute, the issue presented. In doing so, you must include information from 8 directly relevant empirical, peer-reviewed publications (properly cited). The body of your paper must be 8 pages long, double-spaced. It must be written in APA format with an appropriate title page and references. More details and specific instructions will be provided in class, along with some tips to get you started.

Papers (hardcopies) must be handed in at the beginning of class on **November 13**. You must also submit an electronic copy to turnitin.com – this will be explained to you later in the term. Late papers will be penalized **10% per day** (each 24 hour cycle after class on November 13). As you'll be given most of the

term to complete your paper, **there will be no exceptions to the late penalty**, medical or otherwise.

Attendance

I will not be taking attendance; I leave the responsibility of attendance up to you. As university students, you should be responsible for your own academic development. Keep in mind, though, that I will be entirely unsympathetic to those students who miss class and then do poorly on exams. The same is true for students missing announcements about important dates that have been re-scheduled, and changes in the topics covered.

iClicker Participation

Three marks will be offered for iClicker participation. Throughout each class, iClicker questions will be embedded in the PowerPoint slides. They are primarily intended to encourage you to reflect upon your understanding of the issue at hand, and your attitudes, opinions and biases. For sensitive questions, responses will be made anonymous; the software will record your participation but will not report how you respond. Marks will be awarded in the following manner:

Percentage of Questions Answered	Marks Awarded at End of Term
0%	0
1-33%	1
34-66%	2
67-100%	3

Psychology Department's Position on Academic Misconduct

"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>)."

Marks and Scaling

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

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

It's difficult to predict the pace at which we'll move through the course material, as the amount of class discussion will affect the schedule. For this reason, please consider the schedule for the term as very **tentative**. I will keep the class informed of scheduling changes and upcoming topics. Make sure to also check the class blog for updates.

September 4 –	History and Sexual Education	Chapter 1
	Anatomy and Physiology	Chapter 2
October 9	Sexual Motivation, Desire, Arousal, and Response	Chapter 3
	Sexual Behaviour	Chapter 6
		Chapter 5: 144-147
		Chapter 5: 147-162
		Chapter 7: 198-202
October 16	MIDTERM	

October 23 –	Love, Attraction and Relationships	Chapter 5: 131-144
	Sexual Orientation and Identity	Chapter 7: 202-230
November 27	Sexual Preferences and Variations	Chapter 12
	Commercial Sex	Chapter 13
		Chapter 17
November 13	PAPER DUE	

Other important dates:

September 18 – Last day to drop courses without a “W” on your academic record.

October 12 – Last day to withdraw from course with a “W”.