

PSYC 350A-002

Winter Term 1

2023



West Mall Swing
Space Room 122



T/TH 2:00-3:20



3 CREDITS

THE TEAM

Instructor:

Dr. Samantha Dawson
(she/her/hers)

Office Hours:

Tuesdays 3.30pm-4.30pm
in Kenny 3513

sdawson@psych.ubc.ca

Teaching Assistant:

Erin Fitzpatrick
(she/her/hers)

Office Hours:

Wednesdays 4.00pm-
5.00pm on Zoom

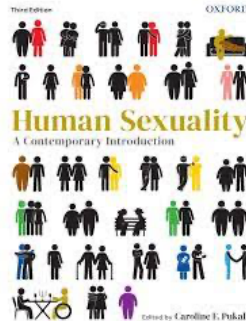
(link on Canvas)

erin.fitzpatrick@psych.ubc.ca

Psychological Aspects of Human Sexuality

ABOUT

The purpose of this class is to provide students with an overview of human sexuality through a biopsychosocial lens. Topics include the history of sex research, sexual anatomy, the sexual response cycle, relationships, gender/sex, sexual orientation, sexual dysfunction, and sex therapy. Particular attention will be paid to contemporary issues in sex research and theory, as well as capturing the diversity inherent to this topic.



REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Human Sexuality: A Contemporary Introduction, 3rd edition. Oxford University, 2020. Edited by Dr. Caroline Pukall.

(Note that you need to purchase the 3rd edition. The cover of the book is pictured left).

FORMAT

The course will be delivered in-person (see next page for accessibility and concessions). Accompanying lecture slides will be provided on Canvas each week. Lectures will be based on textbook content and other relevant content.

Relevant content could include: empirical papers, videos, and news or media articles. It is not possible for a single textbook to capture the evolving state of sexuality research. These additional sources of content are intentionally included to demonstrate the diversity with respect to both the scientists and the science being conducted in the field.

Students should attend the lectures, as well as read the textbook and relevant content in order to access all of the course content.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge that this course takes place on the traditional, ancestral, and stolen territory of the x^wməθk^wəyəm people. The x^wməθk^wəyəm people are the original caretakers of this land and have used these lands for generations. As settlers, we have benefited and continue to benefit from using these lands, including for learning at UBC.

CLASS STRUCTURE

The plan for our class is to be **fully in-person**: lectures will be held in the classroom on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The expectation is that you will attend class because this is where a lot of the active learning and discussion happens. Class time will be a mix of lecture, discussion, and activities. We aim to make class interactive—please ask questions, make comments, discuss amongst yourselves.

While there really is no substitute for in-person attendance, we will be recording the lectures and posting these after class (i.e., there will be no live stream). The decision to record lectures is to ensure that no-one feels pressure to attend class if they are unwell or unable to attend for another reason. Two important caveats regarding recorded lectures.

- First, a significant component of the classroom is active learning, meaning that it is discussion based. These discussions allow us to engage critically with the material. The current infrastructure to support class recording is not sufficient for recording these class-based discussions. As such, students who choose to not attend class regularly risk missing some of the important discussion-based aspects of the course.
- Second, recordings may suffer some technical difficulties and/or the automatic captions may have errors, thus, you should cross reference recordings and captions with the lecture slides and ask Dr. Dawson for clarification if needed.

Global pandemics (e.g., COVID-19), as well as other situations (e.g., illness, emergencies) impact the ways in which we can teach and learn. The course has been designed in such a way to have some contingencies in place to account for potential issues that may arise during the term. Of particular importance is that the course is designed so that students who are unwell or unable to attend in person, will not be at a disadvantage and will still be able to access class materials.

1. All lecture slides and lectures will be recorded and posted on Canvas.
2. There are no assessments related to class participation (e.g., through discussion or clickers), so not being present in class will not affect your grade in the course.
3. Office hours with the TA and course instructor can be held virtually via Zoom to ensure equitable access to the instructor and TA.
4. The assignment will be submitted electronically via the course Canvas page.
5. See below under “Assessment” for accommodations/concessions related to missed assessments.

Should we encounter a situation where the instructor is ill or we are unable to meet in-person, the instructor will provide a lecture recording and/or the class will be held on zoom during class time. Announcements regarding any changes related to our course schedule will be sent through Canvas. **Please ensure that you have activated the course announcements on your Canvas page so that you receive these messages.**

What do I do if I need support?

Your well-being is of utmost importance. I am aware that you may have other important priorities (e.g., your self-care, work, family life). If you find that you are struggling to balance these priorities with the demands of this class, **please reach out to Dr. Dawson directly**. I will try to provide resources and discuss options. If you are dealing with an emergency (e.g., medical, emotional, family), please take care of yourself first and then contact Dr. Dawson when you are able. Dr. Dawson will then work with you to figure out the best course of action—along with having you discuss with your faculty’s advising office.

COMMUNICATION

WEBSITE

Lectures, assignments, and grades are available on Canvas.

QUESTIONS

Steps to follow if you have questions about course content, assignments, quizzes, or policies:

1. Check the course syllabus
2. Check the discussion board on Canvas.
3. If you cannot find the answer to your question, post your question on the discussion board for that week. This will be the fastest way to get your question answered.

CANVAS MESSAGES/EMAILS

If you have a simple question that can be answered in one sentence, send a message to Erin **through Canvas**. (Be sure to read the discussion board carefully before you send an email.) Erin is a highly knowledgeable clinical psychology PhD student **who has research expertise in human sexuality**. She is eager to help you understand the course material and prepare for exams. If you send a question that is likely to be of interest to other students in the course, she will post the question (not your name) and response on the Discussion board. If you would like her to not post your question, simply let her know when you send your message.

For non-course content related emails (e.g., missed quiz), please send Dr. Dawson a message through Canvas.

OFFICE HOURS

Students can show up to Dr. Dawson's office hours without an appointment. To schedule an appointment with **Dr. Dawson** or Erin outside of these times, please send us a Canvas message.

OUR CLASSROOM

DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY

Sexuality is a human universal and this course covers material that is often of personal interest to students. As such, course content can elicit strong and varied opinions. At times you may find that the material challenges your belief systems and existing knowledge, which may create discomfort. It is also possible that the course will lead to new insights into your own and others' experiences and worldview. You are encouraged to engage with the material using critical self-reflection. If you feel distress related to the course content, please reach out to Dr. Dawson or access the resources listed in the syllabus.

Much of the research to date in human sexuality is through a colonial lens. In this course we are committed to decolonizing how sexuality research is taught through active discussions where we challenge assumptions born from this colonial lens, including conceptualizations of sexuality, gender, sex, family structures, and belief systems.

The field of sexuality research is young relative to other fields. Much of the early work was conducted by scholars of privilege (e.g., cisgender, heterosexual, White men). This course has been intentionally designed to feature research from diverse scholars, as well as diverse research topics to accurately center the work within its diverse context. To achieve this goal requires sometimes including additional readings/videos that are not part of the textbook.

Our classroom is one that is safe, equitable, diverse, inclusive, and supportive. In all communications we show respect for the ideas, values, and backgrounds of others. This includes your fellow classmates, the TA, guest lecturers, and the instructor. Behaviours inconsistent with these values will not be tolerated.

ASSESSMENT

Exams (75%; 20%, 20%, and 35% each)

This course will include 3 exams. The first two exams are non-cumulative and will be held in-person during class time (see schedule below) and the last exam is cumulative, but will have an emphasis on the chapters not covered by the previous exams. The final exam will be scheduled during the final exam period. The format of each exam will be discussed in advance, but you can expect a mix of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, labelling, and short answer questions. Expect to see questions based on material from the textbook, lectures, supplementary readings and videos, regardless of whether or not these are discussed in lecture. The purpose of the exams are to assess the learning outcomes for the course.

Missed Exams: Please contact Dr. Dawson as soon as possible if you miss an exam. If you miss an exam and are approved for an academic concession (see <https://www.arts.ubc.ca/degree-planning/academic-performance/academic-concession/>), **your other work will be reweighted**. If you miss an exam without a concession, you will receive a mark of zero for the missed exam.

Knowledge Translation Writing Assignment (25%)

Knowledge translation is an important skill that involves translating empirical research into lay language for non-experts. Sexuality is one of the most misunderstood areas of human behaviour and is rife with misinformation. The writing assignment is intended to provide you with an opportunity to identify myths or misconceptions you have encountered about sexuality and then using course content as well as peer-reviewed research articles find information that debunks these myths. The assignment offers an opportunity for you to reflect on the messages and information you may have received about sexuality during your life and then correct the misinformation through research. The assignment will also help you develop critical thinking, research, and effective communication skills. An optional part of the assignment includes the possibility of being a guest contributor to Dr. Dawson's social media knowledge sharing initiative—@misconSEXions—on Instagram. If you do well on the assignment and you provide consent for your content to be shared, Dr. Dawson may feature your assignment. *There is no obligation to do so and this does not impact your grade in any way.* Specific instructions for the writing assignment are available separately on **Canvas** under the assignments tab. You should upload your assignment on Canvas by 11.59pm (PST) on the due date (see schedule below).

Late & Missed Assignments: In the absence of a concession (see link below), you have the option of submitting your assignment late. There is a 5% late penalty per calendar day for lateness. The assignment will not be accepted for grading if it is submitted more than 7 days past the original due date. For example, if the due date is a Tuesday, the last day it will be accepted is the following Tuesday. If you are unable to submit an assignment, please contact Dr. Dawson as soon as possible. If you are approved for an academic concession, you can make arrangements with Dr. Dawson to submit the assignment late. If you do not submit an assignment and do not have a concession, you will receive a mark of zero for the missed assignment.

Extra Credit (3%)

One way to learn more about psychology is to be a participant in ongoing research projects. See <https://psych.ubc.ca/undergraduate/opportunities/human-subject-pool/> for information. You may earn up to 3 credits toward your course grade by participating in studies that are posted. Please register in this online system by end of the first month of class. As an alternative to participating in studies, you may choose to complete library writing projects, in which you read and summarize a research article; each article summary counts as one hour of research participation. More information about this option can be found <https://psych.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/12/Info-for-Participants-2021-Winter-1-9.4.20.pdf>. All your credits for study participation or the library option will be added to your final course grade, after any scaling that may have been applied.

How can you contribute to our supportive learning environment:

- 1) BE PREPARED:** Come to class prepared. This means reading the textbook and/or other materials before class so that you can follow the material and contribute to the discussions and class activities.
- 2) BE ACTIVE:** Be an active participant in the course. This means asking and answering questions in class and posting on the discussion forum when questions arise outside of class time. We have the privilege of learning from one another, which means expressing and hearing about research, as well as ideas and views that may be new to us or differ from our own.
- 3) BE RESPECTFUL:** Every individual's perspective is valued and considered legitimate for that person. Being open to other perspectives is important to academic and personal growth. All comments should be made with the desire to educate, not hurt. You can express disagreement with an issue or idea but be aware of HOW you express yourself. Also, express WHY you disagree - this continues the learning process for all of us.
- 4) MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY:** There may be times when class members share personal experiences and beliefs. Because we all benefit from hearing each other's perspectives, we must be respectful of those who feel comfortable in sharing this personal information. Therefore, we will have a policy that nothing shared in class can be divulged outside of the class. While you may discuss general issues with others, you cannot share any information that may identify another member of the class.

At the end of the course you will be able to:

Compare and contrast historical and contemporary perspectives on sexuality.

Learn about the variety of methodologies used to understand human sexuality.

Analyze the benefits and drawbacks of different models of sexual response, sexual communication strategies, and treatments for sexual dysfunctions.

Appreciate the complexity and diversity of sexuality, including genital anatomy, sexual response, sexual behaviour, relationship configurations, sexual attraction, gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation.

Distinguish whether sexual concerns are diagnosable or not and integrate knowledge about diagnosable sexual dysfunctions into case studies.

Critically evaluate scientific findings related to human sexuality and translate these findings for dissemination with the public in an accessible way.

SCHEDULE

Week	Topics	Readings	Assessments
1: Sept 5 & 7	"Imagine Day" September 5th (no class) Introduction to the course	No Class Syllabus	
2: Sept 12 & 14	Perspectives on Sexuality	Chapter 1	
3: Sept 19 & 21	Theoretical Approaches	Chapter 2	
4: Sept 26 & 28	Sex Research Methods	Chapter 3	
5: Oct 3 & 5	Genital Anatomy & Sexual Response	Chapter 4	
6: Oct 10 & 12	Exam #1 Chapters: 1-4 (inclusive) "Make up Monday" October 12th (no class) <i>Important: Thursday October 12, 2023 has been designated as a "Make-up Monday". Classes normally scheduled for Oct 12th are cancelled and will be replaced by classes normally scheduled on a Monday. This includes our course. Please note that our Thursday Oct 12th class is cancelled.</i>	None	Exam 1 Oct 10th, 2023 (in person during class time)
7: Oct 17 & 19	Gender	Chapter 10	
8: Oct 24 & 26	Sexual/Affectional Orientations & Diversity	Chapter 11	
9: Oct 31 & Nov 2	Sexual Behaviours and Relationships	Chapter 14	Assignment Due Nov 2nd, 2023 (11.59pm)
10: Nov 7 & 9	Variations in Sexual Behaviour	Chapter 15	
11: Nov 14 & 16	"Midterm Break" November 14th (no class) Exam #2 Chapters: 10, 11, 14, 15 (inclusive).	None	Midterm break Exam 2 Nov 16th, 2023 (in person during class time)
12: Nov 21 & 23	Sexual Communication	Chapter 13	
13: Nov 28 & 30	Sexual Dysfunctions Guest Lectures: Dr. Katrina Bouchard	Chapter 16	
14: Dec 5 & 7	Q & A, Course Wrap-up <i>How to get into grad school/gain research experience</i> Guest Lecture: Graduate students	None	
Dec 11-22 (Final Exam period)	Exam #3 during Final Exam Period; Cumulative (Chapters 1-5, 10, 11, 13-16) but with emphasis on chapters 13 & 16.		

POLICIES

Grading

To reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology classes are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions. According to these norms, the average grade in 300-level Psychology classes will be 75 for an exceptionally strong class, 73 for an average class, and 71 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 13. Scaling may be used in order to comply with these norms; grades may be scaled up or down as necessary by an instructor or the department. Grades are not official until they appear on a student's academic record. You will receive both a percent and a letter grade for this course. At UBC, they convert according to the key below:

A+	90-100%	C+	64-67%
A	85-89%	C	60-63%
A-	80-84%	C-	55-59%
B+	76-79%	D	50-54%
B	72-75%	F	F 0-49%
B-	68-71%		

Disputing a Grade

Any complaint about a graded item should be made in writing to Erin and should respectively detail the point of contention including referencing the text book or slides that support your claim. All claims should be made within 1 week of receiving your grade. After 1 week, we will not accept claims. If you received your mark on a Tuesday, you will have until the end of the day on the following Tuesday to file a claim.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Academic accommodations help students with a disability or ongoing medical condition overcome challenges that may affect their academic success. Students requiring academic accommodations must register with the [Centre for Accessibility](#). The Centre will determine that student's eligibility for accommodations in accordance with [Policy LR7: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Academic accommodations are not determined by your instructors, and instructors should not ask you about the nature of your disability or ongoing medical condition, or request copies of your disability documentation. However, your instructor may consult with the Centre for Accessibility should the accommodations affect the essential learning outcomes of a course.

Academic Concessions (Exams and Assignment)

If you miss graded coursework for the first time (assignment, exam) and the course is still in-progress, immediately submit a [Student Self-Declaration](#) (<https://students-2016.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2019/09/Student-Self-Declaration-Form-1.6-Arts.pdf>) to Dr. Dawson so that your in-term concession case can be evaluated.

If this is not the first time you have requested concession or classes are over, fill out Arts Academic Advising's [online academic concession form](#) (<https://students.air.arts.ubc.ca/academic-concession-form/>) immediately, so that an advisor can evaluate your concession case.

If you are a student in a different Faculty, please consult [your Faculty's webpage on academic concession](#), and then contact me where appropriate.

If you miss an exam or the assignment and are granted concession, your other work will be reweighted. There are no make-up exams or assignments. If you miss more than one exam without a legitimate excuse and are not granted concession, you will receive a mark of zero for the missed exam.

Missing an Assignment

You will have until midnight on the due date to upload your assignment to Canvas for grading. If you have a concession (see concession information above), your assignment grade will be reweighted to the remaining exam. If you miss the assignment without a legitimate excuse and are not granted concession, you will receive a mark of zero for the missed assignment.

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>).

University Policies

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (<https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>)

Copyright

All materials of this course (syllabus, course handouts, lecture slides, podcasts, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of Dr. Dawson or licensed to be used in this course by Dr. Dawson at the University of British Columbia. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline. For example, you are not permitted to redistribute any recordings of lectures, slides, or assignments without permission (including posting online to sites off the University of British Columbia servers).

Resources

The Equity and Inclusion Office has put together a list of resources to help you when you need it, available at <https://equity.ubc.ca/resources/students/>. Here are some:

The Centre for Accessibility

Provides support for students with a disability or ongoing medical condition (academic accommodations, exam accommodations, financial support and assistance).

Tel: 604.822.5844

Email: accessibility@ubc.ca

Counselling Services

Offers a variety of services to help you manage mental health concerns

Tel: 604.822.3811

The Wellness Centre

Includes a staff of trained student volunteers available to help you with mental and physical health

Tel: 604.822.8450

Email: wellness.centre@ubc.ca

Here2Talk

A mental health service which provides free, confidential counselling as well as community referral services 24/7

via app, phone and web.

Tel: 1-877-857-3397 (Canada-wide toll free)

Tel: 604-642-5212 (direct)

AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre

A service that is committed to the education, support, and empowerment of people of all genders who are survivors of sexualized violence, as well as their friends and family.

Tel: 604-827-5180