

# Psychology of Sexual Behavior (PSY 210)

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## Office Hours

This semester I'm in class from 9:00-10:50 am and 12:00-12:50 pm on M-W-F, and 9:30-10:45 on T-Th. I should be in my office from 11:00-11:45 and 1:00-3:00 on M-W-F and from 11:00-3:00 on T-Th. Otherwise, simply set an appointment to reserve a specific time to meet.

## Course Objectives

As a psychology course, we will be covering the primary theories and research methods used in psychology generally. However, these theories and methodologies will be focused on better understanding human sexuality. My hope is that, through participating in this course, you will 1) learn particular information related to sexuality, and 2) challenge your beliefs, attitudes, and reactions pertaining to various aspects of sexuality. By "challenge" I don't mean that I expect you to change your beliefs, attitudes, and reactions (although that may happen), but rather to become more aware of what they are, why you have them, and what alternatives exist.

## Preparing for Class

The purposes of assigning materials outside of class is to facilitate learning of new material and to provide an experience that all students have in common that we can use as a platform for classroom discussion. In this course, all such materials will be accessed on the Internet. For brief instructions and links to each assigned reading or viewing, go to [www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY210](http://www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY210)

## WARNING:

Some of the material you will encounter will be sexually explicit (for example, visual images of nudity, discussion of cultural "slang" terms or unusual sexual practices). The intent of such material is not to offend or to make anyone uncomfortable, but rather to accurately cover the range of human sexual experience. To meet the objectives of the course we need to be able to discuss sexuality in frank terms without feeling as though we are going to be embarrassed or criticized by others. Accordingly, I will do everything I know to do to foster an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for each person's feelings and contributions to the class. Each student needs to do her individual part to ensure that issues of sexuality can be discussed safely, respectfully, and intelligently in class. You will never be expected to disclose information regarding your own sexuality. Still, if you believe that this course might be a source of considerable discomfort or moral conflict for you, please seriously consider withdrawing.

## Special Arrangements

If you need accommodation due to disability, if you have emergency medical information to share, or if you need special arrangements in the event the building must be evacuated, please see me right away.

## In Case of an Emergency School Closing

If we have an unexpected evacuation or closing of the college, continue to follow the assigned reading schedule. If an exam falls on a cancelled day, the exam will be held the next time the class meets (so be prepared to take the exam). If the college closes for a substantial length of time, monitor your college e-mail account for information and contact the instructor via e-mail at Michael@mindingthemind.com

**Please Note:** If class is canceled, either due to weather or instructor illness or some other reason, please stay on schedule according to the syllabus. We will attempt to get back on schedule quickly.

## Graded Assessment of Learning

### **Brief Papers** (20 possible points each – 60 possible points total)

There will be 3 brief (1-2 typed pages each) papers designed to allow you to demonstrate your understanding of major controversies in our culture pertaining to sexuality. Although each paper will be graded on content, and not writing technique per se, these papers have to be well-written to be effective. Because the space allotted for each, a complete and accurate presentation of the ideas and issues requires excellent organization and precise writing. Use of the Writing Skills Center is encouraged. However, they can help you most when you take in your best draft up to that point.

Each paper should be typed, using Times New Roman, 12-point font, with one-inch margins on all sides. There is no need for a title page, title, or references. Simply dive into your essay.

**Paper 1:** Assume you are writing for a fellow college student who is not in this course. Discuss the potential reasons people in general are uncomfortable with intersex individuals and transgendered people and the ways such discomfort may result in prejudice and discrimination. Maximum = 1 page

**Paper 2:** Discuss the potential reasons/concerns that lead some people to disapproving views regarding same-sex marriage and adoption. What are the counter-arguments in support of same-sex marriage and adoption? Maximum = 2 pages

**Paper 3:** Discuss the potential intersections of commercial sex with 1) sexual harassment/violence, and 2) infidelity/jealousy. In other words, public concerns about negative effects of commercial sex often involve issues of #1 and #2. Describe these connections under the larger umbrella of why many Americans are concerned about effects of commercial sex. Maximum = 2 pages

### **Short-Answer Exams** (50 possible points each – 150 possible points total)

There will be a 3 short-answer exams designed to allow you to demonstrate your knowledge and mastery of the material covered since the previous exam (the exams are not cumulative, but instead cover the material since the previous exam). If you know prior to an exam that you will not be able to attend a scheduled exam period, please make alternative arrangements with the instructor prior to the scheduled exam time. If you unexpectedly miss an exam, contact the instructor as soon as possible.

## Overall Course Grade

There will *not* be opportunities for extra credit. Your course grade is based on 210 total points and the following cut-offs for each letter grade:

189-210 (90-100%) = A

185-188 (88-89%) = B+

168-184 (80-87%) = B

164-167 (78-79%) = C+

147-163 (70-77%) = C

126-146 (60-69%) = D

0-125 (0-59%) = F

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TOPIC</u></b>
Jan. 18	Introduction to the Course
Jan. 20	Setting the Stage for Getting the Most Out of This Course
	<b>Research, Theory, &amp; Critical Thinking</b>
Jan. 23	How do researchers study human sexuality?
Jan. 25	How do sexuality researchers collect data on human sexuality?
Jan. 27	Why was Alfred Kinsey so important in the history of sex research?
Jan. 30	How is human sexuality explained from primary theories?
Feb. 1	How do we explain our sexual attitudes?
	<b>Gender, Anatomy, &amp; Identity</b>
Feb. 3	Is there a cultural double standard based on gender?
Feb. 6	Playing with Gender: What motivates drag queens and drag kings?
Feb. 8	How do the bodily sexual systems develop and function?
Feb. 10	What does “intersex” include? Should Infants with Ambiguous Genitals Receive Surgery?
Feb. 13	Why do some adults change their sex and gender identity?
Feb. 15	What societal issues do transgendered individuals face?
Feb. 17	<b>Exam 1</b>
	<b>Sexual Response, Functioning, &amp; Dysfunction</b>
Feb. 20	What affects sexual interest and disinterest?
Feb. 22	What is “sexual addiction” or compulsive sexuality?
Feb. 24	What determines sexual arousal? <b>(Paper 1 due)</b>
Feb. 27	What is paraphilia? Do Deviant Desires Indicate a Disorder in Need of Treatment?
Feb. 29	What motivates sexual bondage and sado-masochism?
March 2	What influences orgasm and sexual satisfaction?
Mar. 5-9	<b>No Class – Spring Break</b>
March 12	How do body image and disability affect sexuality?

### **Pre-Adult Sexuality & Sex Education**

- March 14 What is childhood sexuality? What is “normal”?
- March 16 What is childhood sexual abuse? What are its effects?
- March 19 What role does sex and formal sex education programs play in teens’ lives?

### **Attraction & Sexual Orientation**

- March 21 What influences sexual attraction between two individuals?
- March 23 What do we mean by “Sexual Orientation”?
- March 26 What determines someone’s sexual orientation? Can/should homosexuality be changed?
- March 28 Why homophobia, homonegativity, and discrimination?
- March 30 What are the concerns and realities of same-sex marriage and parenting?

April 2 **Exam 2**

### **Sexual Relationships**

- April 4 How does sex change over the course of the relationship?
- April 6 **No Class – Easter Holiday**
- April 9 What is monogamy, polygamy, and extradyadic sex? (**Paper 2 due**)
- April 11 What are the causes and consequences of infidelity and jealousy?

### **Harassment & Rape**

- April 13 What constitutes sexual harassment?
- April 16 What constitutes rape?
- April 18 What motivates perpetrators? How are victims affected?

### **Commercial Sex & Risk**

- April 20 What forms of commercial sex exist? What are the effects of commercial sex?
- April 23 The effects of commercial sex continued. Should prostitution be legal?
- April 25 Who are sex workers? How does sex work affect these individuals?
- April 27 What are the actual risks of sex, and why don’t people protect themselves? (**Paper 3 due**)

April 30, May 2 **Exam 3** – Mon. 8:30-10:00 (Section 1) or Wed. 8:30-10:00 (Section 2)