

Human Sexuality (Psy 388)

Spring Term 2013, CRN: 25566; University of Oregon

The Meeting Time:

Monday and Wednesday (MW), 4:00-5:20pm

100 Wilamette (WIL; [Map](#))

The Instructor:

Dr. Peter Sparks (psparks@uoregon.edu)

Office Hours: MW, 2:30-3:45 (Rm. 341 in Straub)

The Teaching Assistant:

Laura Noll (lkn@uoregon.edu)

Office hours: By Appointment Only

The Textbook:

LeVay, Baldwin, and Baldwin, *Discovering Human Sexuality* (2nd Edition; Sinauer Pub.)

Welcome to Human Sexuality! This course is meant to be an introductory course designed to expose you to the topics within the field of Human Sexuality. It will provide an overview of the anatomy and physiology of the genitalia, arousal physiology, conception and diseases/illnesses related to the genitalia and sexuality. We will also examine attractions, love, relationships, gender and sexual orientation, and the effect of culture on these developments. Finally, we will cover the major theoretical perspectives that have been proposed to explain why we are this way. Importantly, this is a course on human sexuality. Thus we will be talking candidly about sexual anatomy, physiology and relationships, which may involve pictures or videos with an explicit sexual nature. Do not be shocked about this. The course will be taught openly and maturely, and I ask that you respect the class and your classmates by acting openly and maturely as well. The reason I emphasize openness is because being open with sexuality is important on two points. First, being open leads to better sex/relationships and second, leads to better health.

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Describe the purpose, comprehensive scope and areas of application in the discipline of Human Sexuality.
2. Understand basic scientific principles and research methods and how they affect conclusions we draw about sexuality.
3. Recognize, compare and contrast various theoretical perspectives on sexuality.
4. Be aware of your own values and how they differ by culture.
5. Discuss issues related to sexuality with knowledge and an increased degree of comfort.
6. Apply critical thinking to assumptions, claims, and common sense ideas about sexuality.
7. Make smart, safe and healthy choices about your own sexual practices.

To achieve these goals, there are a number of topics which I hope we will cover this term. I emphasize the word "hope" since no one can never predict the future. What we do cover depends entirely on the time it takes to cover certain topics, the pace of the lectures and the interest of the students. Also, I am very open to discussing something at the spur of the moment and with Sex, there is always an interesting conversation to have. Covering all of these topics would be great, but may not happen. Thus, the description of the course presented below could change. The best thing is to simply come to class, and pay attention to the announcements in the Blackboard component of class. **The exam dates will not change.** Therefore, the exams will only concern what material we have covered in class since the last exam. Detailed subject outlines will be handed out at the start of a new topic, which will help you follow along with the lecture and keep track of details such as definitions.

Course Website: (accessed via <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>) All handouts, homework announcements, grades, copies of lecture power points, lecture worksheets, and other materials, will be posted in Blackboard. Nothing will be handed out in class (on paper) except the exams.

Readings and Lecture Schedule: Presented below is the lecture and readings schedule. Please be aware that there could be additional readings as handed out by me via Blackboard or other assigned material. These additional readings will be announced in class and via Blackboard.

<u>Subject Matter</u>	<u>Book Chapter</u>
Week 1 (January 7-12) Introduction: What is "sex"? Research Methods and Theoretical Perspectives Sexuality in Perspective	Chapter 1
Week 2 (Jan. 13-19) Male and Female Anatomy Health Concerns of Men and Women Self Exam Hormone Cycles: For Women and Men!	Chapter 2 and 3 Chapter 2 and 3
Week 3 (Jan. 20-26) No Monday Class (MLK Day) Hormones and Genital Development Gender Roles: Male-Female Expectations Intersex Development	Chapter 4
Week 4 (Jan. 27- February 2) Exam 1 Monday Sexual Orientation	Chapter 12
Week 5 (Feb. 3-9) Attraction: From Bodies to Behavior and Attitudes Role of Hormones? Sexual Arousal: The physiology of the Big "O" Sexual Behaviors	Chapter 5/Lecture Chapter 5 Chapter 6
Week 6 (Feb. 10-16) Atypical Sexual Behavior Love and Intimacy Communication Lying, Deception and Cheating The Death of the Relationship	Chapter 13 Chapter 7
Week 7 (Feb. 17-23) Exam 2 Wednesday Love and Intimacy continued Friendship?	Assigned Reading
Week 8 (Feb. 24 – March 2): Power in Relationships: Movie: The Kids Are Alright Sexual Coercion: Rape	 Chapter 16
Week 9 (March 3-9): Contraception and Conception Abortion Sexually Transmitted Diseases	Chapter 9 Chapter 15

Week 10 (March 10-16)

Sex for sale

Chapter 17

Week 11 (March 17-22) Final Exam Week!!

Our exam is [scheduled](#) for **Wednesday, March 20th at 3:15pm**. Make note of the different time!!!!

During this time, we will take our 3rd exam. Despite having 2 hours to take the exam, this exam will be structured like the previous exams and so should only take a bit over an hour. You certainly can use all of the time allotted.

Evaluation

Homework: There will be about 3-4 homework assignments this term. The purpose of these is to get you to think a bit more about the material covered in class or to consider topics which are not covered in the text. For some assignments, you may be asked to answer a few short answer questions about the chapter assigned for that week. For some, I may give you an article to read, and will ask you to consider the topic and develop your own opinion. For most, I would expect a short 1-2 page reflection essay about a topic. These assignments will mostly be graded on effort: the more effort/thoughtfulness you put into your essay, the more likely you will earn full credit. These assignments will be posted on blackboard and announced in class at various times throughout the term, or may start as an in class activity which translates to an out of class assignment. These will be worth between **5 points each**.

All homework and papers needs to be typed and turned in during class (i.e. A Hardcopy). Submission via email is not acceptable, (but possible with a dire circumstance; Check with me!!!)

Any assignment that has excessive spelling errors or very poor grammar will automatically be deducted points. Use your spell and grammar check. I am not perfect myself in this respect, but frankly the work of some of my past students work has become that bad. Take pride in your work, even for the simple reflective essays.

Position Paper: There will be one position paper. For this paper, each person will need to choose a topic, develop a thesis (a position) and develop an argument for that position using academic research. The paper needs to be 2 pages; papers which are significantly short or long will be severely penalized (a half page each way). I want the papers to be fact filled, but very succinct and structured (clear and no fluff!).

The first paragraph should introduce your topic, explain its importance and/or relevant context for which to understand the issues, and then give a clear statement of your position/thesis.

The next set of paragraphs should explain the facts which you have learned while researching your topic. All of the facts given should support your thesis. If they don't, then they do not belong. For instance, if your paper has the thesis that "pornography is a good thing" you probably should not include a brief explanation of the history of porn. While very interesting, it does not support your thesis. If it doesn't finish the statement "pornography is a good thing because....", then it doesn't belong. Be succinct. You should have at least 4 specific reasons which support the position taken, and each reason must be supported by facts developed from research.

Your last paragraph should be a conclusion which could include a restatement of your position, and maybe a little more of your personal experience as related to the topic (not necessary though).

Things to keep in mind:

1. *Never quote:* In science we rarely quote. The idea is that we want the facts to be the main point of discussion. The words we use to convey those facts are unimportant. As a colleague once said "rarely in science does someone write a sentence so beautifully that it needs to be quoted." With Poetry, Literature and Philosophy the specific words used are the central focus and quotation is critical. No so much in science.

2. Be wary of History: Many students find history very interesting (as do I), but in only a few cases is history useful as a premise to support a thesis (as illustrated in my example above). For most of you, try to avoid going into an explanation of the history. Always aim to support the opinion you have stated in the first paragraph.

Format details:

The paper needs to be 1.5 spaced, 12 pt font size and either Times New Roman, Cambria or Ariel in font type. The margins (all around) need to be 1 inch. The paper should have a title page and a bibliography page (neither of which are included in the 2 page requirement; that is only for the body of the paper). The paper needs to be in APA format, and include 'in-text' citations. You should have at least 5 citations, and they need to be academic sources; academic research/review journals and/or books written by academics. Websites should be avoided unless they are academically rigorous (see me). Never use me or the text as a source (GO TO THE LIBRARY!!!!!!). I want all of you to go beyond what you are learning in class, and bring back to the class more information (or a different perspective).

How this works:

My goal for this paper is for students to go out and learn about something that we don't have time to get to in class, but is really important. I also want your paper to be a learning experience for the rest of the class as well. So this is how it works:

Step 1: Get a topic! I have selected topics for you, before the end of this first week, everyone needs to sign up for a topic. This is first come first serve, and the topics are limited to a small number of students. Once the topic fills up, it is closed. The topics are listed as a blackboard discussion board. To sign up, simply post under that topic (I want this one!). I will indicate how many people can post for each topic (it varies). I am open to someone coming up with their own topic, but it MUST be checked with me. I am unlikely to allow this for many people, but give it a try.

Step 2: Turn in your paper (due date). There are three due dates for the papers, and the due date for your paper depends on the topic you have chosen (or were left with). Basically, there are three due dates: the beginning of week 3, week 6 and week 9, and a set of topics will be due for each date. The topics due for each date are noted on the discussion board sign up, and were set up to align with the topics we are discussing in lecture during those time points. On the week that your paper is due, you will need to post your paper (as an attachment) in the appropriate discussion board by Sunday, 8 pm (or earlier), of that week (the Sunday that starts that week: so Jan. 20th for the week 3 group). Remember, everyone only turns in one paper this term. So you will EITHER turn in one on week 3, 6, OR 9.

Step 3: Discussion. For everyone who is NOT posting a paper on a particular week, you must read and reply to at least 5 papers (They should be about as many different topics as possible). I would like to generate a certain amount of discussion within these topics, but with 100 people commenting on the papers of 50 people (in one week), it can be a little difficult. When you reply/comment on a person's paper, you should do so in a manner which encourages discussion. Your comment should refer specifically to something mentioned in the paper, and your comment/question should be clear and informed. Your comment should NEVER attack the person themselves or be denigrating in any way. Some students were forced to take a point of view, which may not necessarily be their personal opinion. Play nice so that the discussion will be informative...this is not a battle to determine who is right, it is a discussion to reveal the issues related to these topics. For people presenting a paper on a particular week, you will need to respond to at least 5 of those who are replying to your paper. You need not confirm or disconfirm their reply if you do not feel you can or should (but you can if appropriate). Your goal is to educate your readers to the best that you can. Thus your responses should help with clarifying issues. In the unlikely case that 5 people do not reply to your paper, then you can act as the rest of the class and reply to 5 other papers. Discussions should NOT start till Monday morning at 8am of that week.

Grades for these papers/discussions:

For the term, each student will be graded for 1 paper and 3 discussions. The paper will be worth 20 pts. Each discussion will be worth up to 5 points. If the least you do is reply to 5 people, then you will earn a maximum of 3 pts. If your discussion goes beyond this minimum, then your score will elevate up to a max of 5 points. The replies do need to encourage discussion, so the quality of your replies will also affect your grade. Any reply which consists of something as simple as "Cool, I really like what you said" will earn NO credit. This does not encourage discussion since it does not add a point of view or reflect on a specific point of fact.

Quizzes: There will be many quizzes this term. The quizzes will be mediated by Blackboard and will consist of 15 multiple choice questions. Each quiz will cover a specific set of readings (in most cases, a chapter from the text), and so will be focused on the assigned reading rather than the lecture material itself (although there will be overlap between lectures and chapters of course). Essentially the quizzes are designed to help you understand the readings. For each quiz, there will be a short time period within which you must enter, and complete, the quiz (usually 24 hours). When you enter the quiz, you will have only 20 minutes to complete the quiz. This is not much time, so you should be prepared as if this were a full on exam taken in the classroom. Keep a clock to monitor your time. If you go over the 20 minute limit, you will NOT be kicked out of the quiz, but Bb does keep track of your time. For every 2 minutes you go over, there is a possibility that you will lose 1 point (deducted by me after the quiz).

“B” version of the quiz: when the quiz closes (the 24 hour period is over, and everyone had completed the quiz), then a “B” version of the same quiz will open. For goal for this version is to understand your errors. Even though the questions are the same, you will get more feedback, and have the ability to retake this version multiple times. Your goal is to retake it till you earn 15/15. If you do then I will give you back half of your lost points on your initial attempt. Understand, this score for the “B” version does not become part of your overall grade, but is only a measure to determining how many points you get back. For example, if you scored 10/15 on the initial “non-B” version, then earn 15/15 on the B version, then your final score for the first attempt becomes 12.5/15. For the B version, you will be given 2 days to try and earn 15/15. If you do not earn 15/15, even though you made an attempt, you will not earn any of your points back. Thus if you earn 8/15 initially, and then redo the “B” version 6 times, but only reach a final 12/15, you DO NOT earn any points back...your final score for the quiz is still 8/15.

Each quiz adds a potential 15 points to your overall grade, and there will likely be 8-9 quizzes (so 90-105pts total).

Exams: There will be 3 exams this term. The first two will be **worth 100 pts each** and will only cover the material presented since the last exam. All exams will be composed of multiple choice questions and some short answer questions. On exam day, you will need to bring your pencil for the multiple choice questions (scan tron will be provided) and you can use either a pencil or pen for the short answer questions (room on the exam will be made).

In lecture, we will not have time to cover all of the material in the readings, but I expect you to know the material. The material tested will come MOSTLY from my lectures, though, with items not covered only in your assigned readings being less likely to be tested, but some questions will cover that material. The point is that the book is there to help you and guide you, but come to the classes!!!! Those that come to class will do well, and those that do not, will not do well. On test days, the exam will start promptly at the start of class, and will take one hour. You should bring a pencil, but exam answer sheets will be provided. You should also bring your notebook because we will continue lecture for the remaining time.

As we get closer to an exam, I will be able to tell you exactly what topics will be on the exam.

Final grade: The final grade will be determined by assessing the number of points that you get from the homework assignments and exams out of the total number of points possible:

Homework assignments (3-4 @5pts each)	20
Paper (20 pts)	20
Paper discussions (3 @5pts each)	15
Quizzes (9 @15pts each)	105
<u>Exams (3 @100pts each)</u>	<u>300</u>
Total points possible	460

Keep in mind, these scores may change if I decide to add a new assignment or not to give an assignment I reserve the right to make spontaneous changes in the term, although will try hard not to. Thus, as of now, the homework, discussions and the paper account for about 12% of your final grade, the quizzes account for 23% and the exams account for about 65%. Letter grades will be applied as follows:

93-100%= A (4.0)	77-79.99%= C+ (2.3-2.5)	60-62.99%= D- (0.7-0.9)
90-92.99%= A- (3.6-3.9)	73-76.99%= C (2.0-2.2)	59.99%-below= F (0.0-0.6)
87-89.99%= B+ (3.3-3.5)	70-72.99%= C- (1.7-1.9)	
83-86.99%= B (3.0-3.2)	67-69.99%= D+ (1.3-1.6)	
80-82.99%= B- (2.6-2.9)	63-66.99%= D (1.0-1.2)	

A grade less than a 60% will be a failing grade. Do not fail this class. I will try to explain the material to the best that I can, but it is up to you to read the text book and to come to me if there is something that doesn't make sense or that you need help with. I can't help you if I don't know there is a problem. The homework assignments are a good assessment. If you do not recognize or understand the homework, come and see me as soon as possible!!!!

Summary of Important dates

It is important to understand that there are many Academic deadlines this term. Be aware of them! While I tend to be pretty flexible is someone wants to withdrawal or change from decimal grading to Pass-No Pass, there are deadlines for such actions. [Click here to see the Academic Schedule.](#)

Final points:

How to study: Let me give some pointers on how to study for this course. The biggest issue for most students is that they do not understand how much effort it takes to do well. I expect my students to not only understand, but to remember the facts, terms, and concepts presented in this course. My tests are fair, but challenging. It takes a lot of effort to do well in this course. Studying a few hours the night before the exam will not work out so well for you. The main reason for this is simply that we will be covering a lot of information; it is not difficult to understand, but it is a lot. Start studying a week in advance! Organize your notes, compare them with the handouts and the book. Re-write them, it really helps. Outline the chapter, don't just read it. Then when you have stumbled on something which you don't understand, you can ask me and I will explain it to you. I am here solely to help you learn the material. If you start studying ahead of time, you will be able to take advantage of me. This really, REALLY helps. Clearly this advice is very brief. I have created an extended in-depth description of techniques that can be used and have posted in on my website. Please look it over. If you are not doing well, come and talk with me as soon as you can. Take responsibility for your efforts and do not expect the same strategy to lead to a better grade on the next exam. If you are not doing well, change your strategy!!!!

Late Work/Make up Policy: Homework and other assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. If the work is late, a point will automatically be docked for every day late. In the end, missing an assignment will be devastating to your grade, so turn them in! For the assignments, please do NOT email them to me. I will likely lose track of it. If you are turning in something late, I will need a hard copy. Because of the nature of the paper/discussion assignment, there is hardly an excuse that will work. The papers and the discussion really needs to be accomplished as scheduled. Because of the essay part of the exam, there will be little flexibility in terms of changing your exam date. You will need to have a fantastic excuse to make up an exam or to postpone an exam. I will be even more resistant to letting people take exams early. This is especially true for the final exam. The exam date is known, schedule your life around this date; I will not change it to match your life (I am talking to those who are trying to leave early for break).

Attendance Policy: Come to class! Your attendance will not affect your final grade directly, but I cannot over emphasize the fact that those who miss class WILL NOT do well. If you miss class, do not simply ask what we covered (and to give an impromptu lecture). I am an absent-minded professor and will not remember exactly what we did. Your job is to get the notes from a classmate, and if you need to, bring them to me and I can explain/go over them with you. You should get to know someone in class and get their phone number in case you miss a class. In addition, there could be a spontaneous in class activity which would lead to points. If you are not at class, you will not get points.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Do not do these things. Cheating and Plagiarism are serious offenses and will be dealt with severely! This could mean failing the test or assignment, failing the class or being excused from this college. I have little to no patience with cheating and will deal with the issue with the most severe action at my disposal. It is always better to simply work hard and learn the material. If you are having a problem learning the material, come see me. I have plenty of time to help you. Do not resort to cheating!

Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please let me know if there is anything I can do to help. If you think there is something “going on” which is inhibiting your ability to learn, please contact the [Accessible Education Center \(AEC\)](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu) either by email (uoaec@uoregon.edu) or by phone (1-541-346-1155) or come and talk with me. Don’t be shy; I have had numerous students come to me after failing an exam and casually mention that they thought they were ADHD, Dyslexic, learning disabled or had anxiety issues. Support through the AEC is not special treatment, but is there to help you be the best that you can be. Let us help before the exam.

The GTF: It is fantastic that we have a GTF to help with this course. For the most part, he will be helping with the grading. He does not have a regular office hour, but will set up appointments as needed. Just give him an email. IF you have questions about how the exam was graded, then set up an appointment with him first to go over the exam. IF you have further questions, please come and see me. Also, it is unlikely that he will be available during the final exam week. So make sure that you talk to him about any issue before that time. Any questions during exam week should be presented to me.

The Final Grade: I know that you work really hard for your grade, but please do not ask me to “up your final grade” because you are “sooooo close” to the grade change cut off (e.g. you earned a 79.85%, but the B- come at an 80%). I am very flexible with turning in (some) assignments late, and I do curve the exam grades (as needed), but I am pretty inflexible with the final grade. A 0.5% point increase may not seem much, but this is out of 460 possible points. So it is like asking for 3 point gift on an assignment, quiz or exam. Would just ask me for 3 more points on your exam just because it would make you feel better? I am very happy to talk about missing grades or errors in my calculations, but don’t ask for a gift.

Finally: It is important that you do well and learn the material. So feel free to email me anytime with questions. I understand that many questions will come when you are studying at night. Get on the email or phone and leave a message, I will respond. Also, feel free to catch me after class or before class and ask me anything. I am there to help you learn and understand the material as much as I can. So use me!

Finally, Finally: If you are not doing well on the exams (D or less), you MUST come and see me so that we can talk about changing things so that you do better.

Finally, Finally, Finally: There is plenty of time to discuss your grade for the course, or grades for each assignment or exam during the course. When the course is over, do not email me begging for a re-evaluation. It is not going to happen. While I am flexible (to some extent) during the term and independently for each assignment, I try really hard not to second guess the final grade. That grade is the result of a mathematical formula based on 100’s of points which you could have earned. Missing at grade level by a percentage point is painful, but I am unlikely to change it. I know this sounds very...well...fascist of me, but when you have a few hundred students in a term, it is amazing how just a few percent becomes quite a large number of students. Essentially, focus on doing your best on each assignment/exam, and your final grade will take care of itself.