PSY 280 – Psychology of Human Sexuality
Fall 2015

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Required Text:


Required Reading:


Course Objectives: The general objective of this course is to help you develop an understanding and appreciation for human sexuality. This course will be taught from a behavioral perspective (versus a public health model, or a biological basis). The specific objectives of the course are for students to:

1. Understand the psychology of human sexuality from a theoretical perspective.
2. Use a scientific underpinning human sexuality and the relationship between theory and research in this area.
3. Know that human sexuality is closely tied to the physiological mechanisms that interact with behavior
4. Develop a knowledge base that benefit your future relationships and professional endeavors, particularly the importance of understanding sexuality in clinical and counseling settings
5. Appreciate the ethical issues that pervade human sexuality and how they apply to the study of psychology.
6. Develop an appreciation for both the diversity of behavior that accompanies human sexuality and the diversity that comes from sexual orientation and the identification of gender even in instances that it is not congruent with biological sex

Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives:

1. Look over the study guide. It is more a map than a summary of what to study for. It helps organize your learning as you go.
2. Next, get started on the reading. Just like you are reading a magazine; just read over it like there isn’t an exam on it.
3. Don’t get fooled into believing that an online class requires less time than the on-campus class.
4. You should be reviewing the slides on-line and taking notes on them just like you would in class. Your brain remembers things that it has seen and written down again, so it is imperative that you do this.

5. While taking notes on the class material, keep track of where the class notes overlap with the book. If the book goes into greater detail than I do on the same topic, take notes from the book as well. You will be expected to recognize the correct material on an exam in the form of a multiple choice test.

6. Once you are finished with taking notes, I suggest you make note cards to make your studying active.

7. Start with a pile of blank 3x5 note cards. Break down your notes into smaller pieces on note cards. For example, for the first unit, there was a lot of anatomy. You might want to print out a copy of a structure with the important features left blank. On the back, you can have a completed figure. You might create flashcards for specific terms that you are unfamiliar with (Eg. Corpora Canvernosa). You get the idea. By the time you are finished with your notecards, you should have a whole stack of them.

8. Now, spend the majority of your time working with the flashcards. Break them down into small groups that you can carry with you. Five or so that are related. Maybe you commit to memory male anatomy. You should challenge yourself with the flashcards. Make sure that you know what is on the back of each one by reading the cue on the front. Make a pile of the ones that you know and the ones that you need to work on.

9. Plan to get through a certain number of flashcards a day. Maybe it is 15. Five in the morning, five in the afternoon, five after dinner. Then, anytime you have a spare minute, review the flashcards (and not your phone!). Standing in line for coffee, you can get two cards done. Waiting for class to start, you can get one card done. Walking around campus, you can get two cards done. See, you have already learned five things by lunch and haven’t even really started studying yet.

10. Yes, this plan requires you spend a little bit of time every day on the material. That is the best way to study and far superior to waiting until the last second.

11. Remember, for my exams, it is important to both master certain terms, but also start to develop a knowledge base so you can defend a position later in the course.

12. Be sure to review your past exams and learn from previous mistakes. Remember, earlier exams count for later exams, so keep at it.

How do I take an On-line course?

All of our assignments, interactions, etc will be through blackboard. There will be no meetings on campus, nor will you need to be on-line at particular time. Often the biggest issue people have with an on-line course is having trouble with the technology. I am not the best person to contact if the technology isn’t working. You should call 351 – HELP and talk to the help desk people.

Expectations

1. The course is broken down into elements that contain information that I would like you to learn. Several elements will then be considered during a unit exam to assess mastery. Generally, you can pace yourself through the course anyway you want (fast or slow), but there are four
exams that must be completed and there are points during the course where I have to be able to grade them. So they do expire. Please note that a course spanning six weeks moves very fast. Since you may take the exams whenever you like, I will not be granting extensions for taking the exams. Plan on taking the exam a few days before the due date in case the unexpected happens and you need more time.

2. As you progress through the units, be sure to master the slides that are posted in the “course materials” section. Read any other articles that I post. Read the corresponding chapter in your book. Try to integrate material as you go. I would suggest taking notes. Pay particular attention to where the course material overlaps with the book.

3. Keep in touch with me, via email, and let me know how things are going. Your candid feedback is helpful and appreciated. Please note that UNC email often filters out mail from outside vendors. If you don’t hear back from me in a reasonable time period (24-hours), try sending me email from your bearmail account.

4. You can expect from me interesting and engaging material. Prompt replies to your email (within 24 hours), and speedy grading of exams. I generally grade exams with a day or two of their expiration date. However, if you are trying to move through the course on a faster pace and want feedback before launching the next exam, then email me and I will get to yours faster.

Tests

All points for the course will be from exams. The exams will be a mix of multiple choice and short answer essay. You will have a limited amount of time complete them from the time you start the procedure on blackboard. These tests are designed to be fast to help me determine how well you have studied. While it is impossible for me to be certain that are not using your book, my notes, a paid consultant, etc, the tests are designed to be timed so that it would be impossible for you to look up answers to the tests as you go. The only way you will be able to do well on the tests is to have studied and mastered the material. You are not permitted to use your book or notes on exams, or look up answers from other sources. Nor are you permitted to take exams with other people.

I will not grant extensions for the exams because of technological problems. I will only reset exams if your technical problem can be verified by IT and I can reset the exam prior to the deadline to take an exam.

These four exams are sequenced and varied to both test your ability to understand the physiological mechanisms at work with human reproductive behavior and desire. Later exams discuss romantic and sexual behavior; intimacy; pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and birth control options; issues of gender and sexual orientation; finally covering extremes in sexual behavior, sex workers and sex dysfunctions. This is done by using multiple choice questions covering material from the course slides and book asking for students to recognize correct information and short answer essays designed to test mastery by asking students to analyze arguments and take a position on a topic by justifying it with material that they have learned from the unit.
The tests will be weighted so that the earlier exams will count for less than the later exams. The final exam has a cumulative component. Each exam will be worth a set number of points, but I can only give a rough range of their worth. I have a rough idea at the beginning of the course of point value, but may adjust each exam’s points as we progress to accommodate covering new material, address topics that have come up during discussion, omit subjects that were not addressed, or to incorporate current events that are related to the course material. This also allows me to curve the exam based on the performance of the students as a whole.

Generally, the exams break down like this (but may change slightly):

Exam I = 13% of your overall grade
Exam II = 16% of your overall grade
Exam III = 30% of your overall grade
Exam IV = 41% of your overall grade

Course grading policy:

Your final grade will be based out of the number of points you earn out of the total possible number of points available on the four exams. This creates a fraction that when multiplied by 100, gives a score from 0 to 100%. A traditional grading scheme will be followed to convert the percentage into a letter grade using the plus/minus system (E.g. 93 or better for an A, 90-92 is an A-, 87-89 is a B+, this convention continues to 60%. Any score 59% or below is an F).

Blackboard computes a raw score for your exam performance (points you earned during the exam). After all the exams are scored, I look at the distribution of scores and see how the class did as a whole. I then curve the exam by deciding how much the exam should be worth (typically, I take the highest score earned). Then I take everyone’s raw score from Blackboard and divide by the total number of points that the exam is worth.

I do this because I know there are inherent flaws to every exam. However, identifying specific questions that students don’t do well on is only beneficial to a point. It does not take into consideration a wider range of issues other than the psychometric properties of the exam. When figuring the curve, I see how well the person who had the best score did. That sets the upper limit. That is the maximum number of points that were possible for the exam. In order to reflect this on blackboard, I would have to go in and somehow change the overall point value of the exam by throwing out questions. That defeats the purpose. Instead, when calculating scores, I take the raw score from blackboard, put it in a spreadsheet in Excel and keep track of how much the exam was worth by pegging it to the person who got the highest grade in the class.

For example, the total point value of Exam I may start at 84 points. That value in blackboard does not change, because everyone will have 84 possible points that were available to them. However, I may only count 74 points. I will notify the class, by email, how many points the exam was worth, how to calculate your percentage on the exam, and invite you to double check your math with me. This email will also serve to notify you that the exam has been graded and that you can look at your performance.
While I do not give points for participating in either classroom discussion (or, if the class is online, participating on the Discussion Board), I do use such discussions as material that you are tested on. A wise student will pay attention to discussions. **Material from class discussions (or, if online, the Discussion Board) will be assessed on the exams.**

**Time Table:** Note: *The exams must be completed no later than the time posted.* Remember, you may take the exam anytime, but after the date posted below you will no longer have access to that exam (and the points that go with it). **There are no make ups, plan your time wisely.** *Failure to take Exam I will signal to me that you have dropped the course.* In order to receive a passing grade, **ALL exams must be completed on time.**

Since you may take an exam anytime you like, and should well before the deadline, I am not flexible about these deadlines. Technical problems, factors outside your control, etc are all dealt with by taking the exam well before its deadline. The deadlines are posted below:

**Aug 24:** Class goes live  
**Sept 27:** EXAM I must be taken no later than this date, start before 12 noon.  
**Oct 4:** EXAM II must be taken no later than this date, start before 12 noon.  
**Oct 11:** EXAM III must be taken no later than this date, start before 12 noon.  
**Oct 18:** EXAM IV must be taken no later than this date, start before 12 noon.  

**Just because the exam deadlines are pushed to the latter part of the term does not mean that you have to wait that long to take them. Get started early! Don’t put off the exams!**

Please pay attention to the deadlines. There are no extensions

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Incompletes: An incomplete grade will ONLY be given for unusual circumstances when the student is unable to complete coursework in the final weeks of the semester. Please refer to the Student Handbook.

Safe Environment: I reserve the right to dismiss anyone from the class who I deem to be disruptive, inappropriate or otherwise counter to the learning environment. The material that we will be discussions can be controversial, emotionally charged, graphic, and it is imperative that students conduct themselves with the utmost respect for other students, the professor and the material. Repeated inappropriate comments, behavior, or disrespect will NOT be tolerated. At the sole discretion of the professor, a student who does not adhere to this directive may be asked to leave the class (receiving an F).

The University of Northern Colorado’s Student Code of Conduct (http://www.unco.edu/dos/pdf/StudentCodeofConduct.pdf) and Honor Code (http://www.unco.edu/dos/communityStandards/honor_code/index.html) strictly prohibit any form of academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and knowingly or recklessly encouraging or making possible any act of plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication. Academic misconduct is an unacceptable activity in scholarship and is in conflict with academic and professional ethics and morals. All incidents of alleged plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty will be investigated and violations of academic integrity will result in a consequence that may be as severe as an F in the class and a recommendation for expulsion. For more information on plagiarism and appropriate paraphrasing, please see:http://www.unco.edu/dos/academicIntegrity/students/index.html

Accommodations Statement
Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services, voice/TTY (970) 351-2289, or fax (970) 351-4166, or visit www.unco.edu/dss as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. I discourage students from seeing if they can manage this class without accommodations first. I believe that if you have been assessed and are permitted accommodations, then you should be using them. If you believe that you may not, in fact, need such accommodations, make this choice carefully. Students who do not make their needs known for accommodations during the first week of class will not be granted accommodations later in the course.

Inclusivity Statement
The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, administrators and staff within CEBS will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples’ perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from their own.

Student Resources
From time to time students who begin to explore issues of sexuality start to realize that they have interpersonal issues that arise from a sexual experience. This can sometimes cause
some distress. However, if you realize that you are struggling with anxiety, depression, stress, or other mental health issues, there are a number of places that you can turn for help.

Where to go for help. For students on campus the closest and least expensive option (often free) is available at the Psychological Services Clinic offered by APCE department on the second floor of McKee Hall. You can phone them for an appointment at 351-1645. These are graduate students training to be psychologists and are supervised by clinical faculty members. They provide an excellent service and are well informed on many issues facing college students, including anxiety, depression, stress reduction and eating disorders.

The next closest resources, if you are student with UNC Health insurance, is the UNC Counseling center in Cassidy Hall, upstairs from the Student Health Center. Their phone number is 351-2496. They offer low cost counseling if you do not have their health insurance.

If you have private insurance, most insurance policies in have mental health carriers consult your insurance card for the number to call for providers in the area. If you do not have health insurance, most states have community mental health centers (Google this).

Acute mental health needs, such as someone who is actively suicidal, or experiencing a psychotic break, is best handled by calling 911 or by visiting the nearest emergency room.

Finally: It is my hope that you enjoy the class and find it a worthwhile way to spend your time. I will do my absolute best to respond to email the same day that I receive it. Please let me know if you have any questions or need anything as the course progresses.