

# Psych 2810

## Human Sexuality

### Spring 2017

TuTh 2:00- 3:15  
Anheuser-Busch Auditorium (rm 111)

*Instructor:* Melanie (Meli) Sheldon, PhD.  
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**Office:** 28 McAlester Hall

Office Hours: Wednesday 11-12  
or by email appointment

#### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

LeVay & Baldwin (2012) Human Sexuality (4<sup>th</sup> Ed)

(Top Hap app is also required)

#### *Course Description*

The course catalogue describes this course as follows:

**PSYCH 2810—Human Sexuality (3).** Survey of research on sexual behavior including sex norms, gender identity, sexual dysfunctions, sexual deviation, homosexuality, and legal aspects of sexual behavior.  
Prerequisite: PSYCH 1000

#### *Course Objectives*

My course is designed as a broad survey of human sexuality. As a psychology course, the emphasis is on the subjective experience of sexuality, but will include an overview of the sexual biology of men and women. Topics include evolution of sexuality, cross-species comparisons, gender, sexual orientation, attraction and desire, romantic relationships, normative behaviors, non-normative behaviors, cultural variation, and sexual violence. I'm not a clinical psychologist, so I'm not going to emphasize sexual dysfunctions and sex therapy.

When you complete this course you should have an introduction to the important topics and findings in the contemporary psychological research on human sexuality. In addition, you should feel informed about general sexual issues that you may encounter in your own life.

## WARNING! Sensitive & Challenging Content

*Most people are sensitive about sexual topics.* In addition, and depending on your background, the content of this course may challenge assumptions or even deep convictions that you hold about a number of issues, including gender, sexual behavior, cultural practices, and sexual orientation. As a result, you may find that your participation in this class makes you uncomfortable on occasion. Ironically, even students who consider their views liberal, informed, and open may feel quite uncomfortable because they least expect to have their views challenged in a university setting.

*You will be exposed to sexually explicit materials in this course.* Also, you will need to learn material that is inconsistent with the Bible as inerrant (note: you do not have to *believe* the material, but you will have to learn it to pass the tests). If you foresee yourself being offended by either explicit materials or perspectives inconsistent with your worldview, you should strongly reconsider whether or not this is a suitable class for you.

*Be respectful* of diverse opinions and perspectives that you encounter. With such a large class, it is certain that we will not all be on the same page with certain issues - especially those that challenge our moral, ethical, and/or spiritual backgrounds. Feel free to share your opinions and perspectives and be respectful when others share their own as well.

The University has some strict guidelines about discrimination and academic dishonesty. For your convenience, I have posted these on the Blackboard website. If you feel that you have been exposed to discriminatory or unfair practices and/or insensitivity to cultural issues in this or any other setting affiliated with MU, you have the right to have your concerns addressed.

***Please, please, please***, let me know (email is best to start) if you have been stigmatized or disrespected by either something I said or by another student in this class. **If you feel that someone other than me should hear your concerns, you will find a list of pertinent University contacts on the BB website (under Policies).**

*Also Please...*

The large number of students in this class *forces* us to be considerate of each other. Please respect any opinions voiced in class. Also, we aren't always aware when we are bothering others with our technology or our grooming, but please try to be considerate of the students around you.

### *Course Structure, Grading, & Assignments*

*Exams.* Because the only feasible way to assign grades in this class is using mechanically graded tests, the bulk of the points earned in this class will be via **multiple-choice tests**. **Four test scores** are required, and each test will be worth 100 points. Four section tests will be scheduled during a class session, and will be predominantly scan format multiple choice exams (see syllabus). *Many students report that my tests are difficult.* They cover both lecture and text material: Lectures will not be duplications of material in the text – sometimes I will lecture on text material, but in general, lectures are ADDITIONAL material. (Note: *You are responsible for learning the chapters in the text via reading, discussions with other students, and interaction with the text website.*)

## ***NO EXAM MAKE-UPS, NO EXCEPTIONS!***

Note: If you are attending a university-sponsored event during a test (e.g., you are playing in a game out of state), ask me about arrangements to have the test proctored for you off-site. I must have at least 2 weeks' notice and you must take the test at the time it is given in class.

**Missed a test?** README: I do not have alternate versions of my tests. Any student who is unable to take the test during the scheduled time will have to make up the missing test score during the final time. THERE IS NO FINAL EXAM FOR THIS COURSE. THE MAKE-UP EXAM WILL BE CUMULATIVE OVER THE COURSE MATERIAL. Missing more than one exam pretty much guarantees that you will do poorly in the course. I will not change exam dates – make sure you can make them!!!! You MAY take all five tests, and then your lowest score will be dropped.

*Lecture Responses.* During each lecture I will offer you an opportunity to respond to the material presented. These responses may be on a scan form, on paper, or on the Top Hat system. These responses serve several purposes. They may help you be more engaged in the material, and they show that you were present in class. Most important for me, I review your responses and get a sense of how the class is learning the material I present. Each one will be worth 10/10 points toward your grade. If you never come to a lecture all semester, your grade will be based entirely on your four test scores. If you come to every lecture, you could have a perfect 260 points averaged into your test scores. For example, if you earned 89% on three tests, you have a B+ average. But if you came to every lecture, you will have earned a solid "A" (94%). Please note: THE FUNCTION OF LECTURE POINTS IS TO REWARD ATTENDANCE, so there are no make ups! The tests are HARD, so come to class!

This semester you may earn lecture points by participating in a research study focused on the process of learning controversial Human Sexuality topics. You can earn 20 lecture points by taking an online survey at the beginning and middle of the course. Follow the instructions for participation when they are sent out over email to earn those points.

In the past, I have also announced ways to earn lecture points outside of lecture attendance. For example, if a campus speaker will be covering a sexuality-related topic, I might award lecture points to students who attend the lecture and write a short (~500 word) description of the experience. If these come up, they will be announced in class and on Canvas.

## ***NO Lecture MAKE-UPS, NO EXCEPTIONS!***

*Please monitor your lecture points on Canvas and email the TA right away if you are missing points* – your paper may have gotten overlooked or your name may not have registered. We can usually track down the problem so you get your points.

Your points will be calculated as a percentage of **400 + lecture** points, and then converted to a letter grade using the University default percentages (e.g., 90.00% is the A-/B+ cutoff). Thus, if you earn 390/410 points, you will have a 95.12%, which is an A. Here is the formula to figure your percentage:

$$\frac{\text{Total points you earned on Tests} + \text{Your total lecture points}}{400 + \text{Your total lecture points}} = \%$$

### *Personal Issues*

*Grading issues:* At least some of you are going to have traumatic semesters. Out of 300+ enrolled students, something unexpected will happen to several of you. Several students will lose a parent, uncle, or grandparent this semester. Also, some students will either become very ill or learn that they have a debilitating illness. Many automobile incidents will occur, and some of you may even be hospitalized as a result. The flu always takes a toll. Backpacks containing texts and computers get stolen. Every one of these events happens to several students every semester that I teach.

**READ THIS CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU ASK ME ABOUT MAKE-UPS:**

*I do not have alternate versions of tests. Therefore, you cannot make up a missed test; the final is the make-up. No exceptions.*

*At the end of the course, during finals week, you will have the opportunity to earn a limited amount of extra lecture points if you do not like your grade. A description of the ways to earn extra points will show up on Blackboard AFTER the fourth exam grades are posted.*

*Non-grading Issues:* If a topic comes up in class that makes you think you may need some guidance, advice, or a medical opinion, what should you do? Your first impulse might be to contact me about it. This might be appropriate if you need more information about a topic we discussed. But, you should bear in mind that I am not a clinical psychologist or physician, and I have **no training** in therapy, medicine, sexual dysfunction, or relationship counseling. In other words, I can teach you the research about the topic, but I don't have any training for helping you with a problem.

There are excellent campus resources available to you as a student. A place to start would be to contact any of the organizations below and tell them that you have some concerns based on material you learned in your Human Sexuality class; they will arrange to have someone answer your questions. Here are places to contact:

Student Health Center **882 – 7481** (Any physical or mental health concern)  
<http://studenthealth.missouri.edu/>

LGBT Resource Center **884 - 7750** (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender advocacy, support, and education) <http://web.missouri.edu/~umcstudentlifelgbt/>

Rape Education Office **882 - 6638** (Information about sexual violence)  
<http://studentlife.missouri.edu/women/services.php>

Women's Center **882 – 6621** (Counseling and Crisis Intervention, Referrals)  
<http://studentlife.missouri.edu/women/>

***Tentative*** Schedule of Topics for Human Sexuality

Date of Class	Reading	Topic/Content
<b>Section 1. Human Sexuality Research and Sexual Anatomy</b>		
Jan 17	Chapter 1	Introduction What is sex?
Jan 19	Chapter 1	Sexual rights and Missouri Sex Laws
Jan 24	Chapter 2	Evolution of two sexes; Selection pressure
Jan 26	Chapter 2	Primate Sexuality/Human mating context
Jan 31	Chapter 3	Female Anatomy
Feb 2	Chapter 4	Male Anatomy
Feb 7	Chapter 5	Human Estrus
Feb 9		<i>Test 1</i>
Mar 9		<i>Test 2</i>
Apr 6		Test 3
May 4		<i>Test 4</i>

