

**PSY 2311**  
**Psychology of Human Sexuality**

**Instructor**

Dr. Shirley Ogletree  
[so01@txstate.edu](mailto:so01@txstate.edu)

**Course Description**

A psychological and physiological examination of the human sexual experience from conception through old age. Current research findings serve as a basis for study. Major consideration is given to the human sexual system, the sexual act, sexual attitudes and behavior, and sexual complications.

**Prerequisite**

A course in Introduction to Psychology or permission of the instructor is the prerequisite to this course.

**Scope & Nature of the Course**

Our sexuality is a basic part of who we are as individuals and as a society. Obviously we would not be here if our parents and other ancestors had refrained from sexual behaviors. Sexuality permeates many aspects of our daily life. Sex and/or sexually attractive individuals are used to market all kinds of products to us. We at some level evaluate people we meet in terms of our liking of and attraction to them.

Sexuality is a very complicated phenomenon. Clearly the biological bases—the basic anatomical structures, the roles of hormones, the physiology underlying sexual arousal and response—are very important to sexuality. Just as important are the psychological and social components of sexuality. How do your upbringing, including your parents' behaviors and statements related to sexuality when you were growing up, and your religious beliefs influence who you are sexually today? How does your self-esteem as well as your level of stress and general mood affect how you feel sexually? Do the messages conveyed by media (for example, do we think of 70-year-old individuals as being attractive and likely sexually active) affect our sexuality? Where do male/female differences in sexual attitudes and behaviors come from? What is love? How can we enhance sexual communication in a relationship?

These are some of the topics that we will be covering in this course. As with most psychology courses we will also include a discussion of research methodology. While peoples' ideas and theories are important, we need data from soundly conducted studies to evaluate the worthiness of these theories and ideas. Research methodology will be covered in Lesson 1, and studies using various methods will be included in the coverage of many topics throughout the course.

Welcome to the course. I hope that the information you use here will enhance your personal life and, in some instances, your professional life.

**Required Materials**

You are required to use the following textbook in order to complete this course:

*Sexuality Now: Embracing Diversity* (third edition, 2010 copyright) by Janell L. Carroll is required. The publisher is Wadsworth Cengage Learning. The ISBN is 978-0-495-60274-3.

**Course Goals**

After completing this course you should be able to describe:

- our sexual history, including an evolutionary perspective, influences of ancient cultures, the Judeo-Christian heritage, Enlightenment and Victorian era influences, and sexuality in U.S. history;
- how media may impact our sexuality;
- cross-cultural influences on our sexuality;
- theoretical approaches to studying sexuality;
- several research methods for conducting research on sexuality as well as prominent sexologists in the past;
- the biological and psychological variables affecting our sex and gender;
- how our gender roles impact being a sexual male and female;
- the male/female anatomical structures and physiological processes underlying our sexuality;
- the hormonal changes associated with menarche, menstruation, and menopause;
- health problems related to sexuality and how males and females may perform self-examinations to promote their personal sexual health;
- the sexual response cycle as well as the role of the senses in arousal;
- gender similarities and differences in communication styles as well as kinds of communication that may enhance or detract from a relationship;
- different perspectives on understanding the nature of love and intimate relationships;
- how sexuality changes throughout the life cycle, including child and adolescent sexuality as well as sexuality in adult relationships;
- sexual behaviors and fantasies, including solitary behaviors as well as sexual behaviors between individuals;
- the continuum of sexual orientation, possible determinants of sexual orientation, and attitudes/behavior related to sexual orientation;
- advantages and disadvantages of different forms of contraception as well as issues related to abortion;
- sexual dysfunction, including possible causal factors and treatment;
- the causes, prevalence and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases; and
- sexual victimization, including sexual assault, sexual abuse of children, and sexual harassment.

### **Course Outline**

#### *Lesson 1: Perspectives, Research, and Communication (Chapters 1, 2, & 3)*

You will learn about sexuality from a historical perspective, including the Judeo-Christian heritage and other diverse perspectives. Theories guide research; both are included here. The “onion” model of communication, as well as kinds of communication/communication techniques, are also considered.

#### *Lesson 2: Biological Foundations- Gender and Sexuality (Chapters 4, 5, & 6)*

The focus of the second lesson is on prenatal male/female development, the development of gender roles/traits, and anatomical and physiological bases of male and female sexuality. Sexual health is also covered.

#### *Lesson 3: Lifespan Sexuality (Chapters 8 & 9)*

Sexuality in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood are considered from a developmental perspective. In addition, information relating to dating, marriage, and divorce is included.

#### *Complete the Midcourse Exam*

#### *Lesson 4: Love, Sexual Expression, and Sexual Orientation (Chapters 7, 10, & 11)*

The three chapters included here describe perspectives on love, various sexual fantasies and behaviors, and attitudes toward as well as possible underlying causal factors related to sexual

orientation.

*Lesson 5: Contraception and Sexual Dysfunction (Chapters 13 & 14)*

Different methods of contraception, including advantages and disadvantages of each, will be included in this lesson. Causes and treatments of various sexual dysfunctions are also considered.

*Lesson 6: Social Problems and Issues (Chapters 15, 16, & 17)*

Bacterial and viral sexually transmitted diseases will be considered. In addition, defining, explaining, and, in some cases, treating atypical sexual behavior will be included as will causes and consequences of sexual victimization.

*Lesson 7: Sexual Values*

You are asked to interview others, comparing male/female opinions about premarital sexuality, or consider your own sexual values. How have your sexual values changed over time, and are your values and behavior congruent?

*Complete the Final Exam*

**Course Procedure**

You have nine months from your date of enrollment to complete this course. The course material is divided into seven lessons. For each lesson you will be expected to carefully read and review the assigned chapters from your text as well as the online course content. The online course content may include a review of some of the major points in the text and/or additional material not included in your text. The course is divided into seven lessons. (To help you plan out your progress throughout the course, complete the [Course Study Schedule \(.pdf\)](#) before you begin your first lesson.) For each lesson, you will be expected to carefully read and review the assigned chapters from your text, as well as the material in this online course. For each lesson in this course, after reading the chapters from your text and the online content, complete the self-assessment and assignment.

*Self-Assessments:* Self-assessments are objective assessments designed to help students gauge their readiness for the assignments. They are not graded, but I strongly encourage you to complete them, as some of the questions may appear on your exams. As soon as you submit a self-assessment, you should check your answers. If you miss more than one item in a self-assessment, you may want to review that lesson's material before proceeding to the assignment for that lesson.

*Assignments:* At the end of each lesson, you will be asked to submit an assignment. Each assignment includes a quiz with fifteen multiple-choice questions (accessible by clicking *Assessments* in the left menu bar), worth one point each, and an essay question (accessible by clicking *Essays* in the left menu bar), worth five points. Each assignment, then, is worth twenty points; a total of 140 points (20 X 7 assignments) of your grade is based on the assignments. *Both parts of each assignment are required (excepting the Lesson 7, which has only an essay component). You may submit no more than two assignments per week.*

*Exams:* You will take two exams for this course: a midcourse exam and a comprehensive final exam. After you have submitted the first three assignments, you may apply to take the midcourse exam, and after you have submitted all seven assignments, you may apply to take the final exam. (See the [Correspondence Course Information \(.pdf\)](#) page for information on arranging to take these exams.) I strongly recommend that you wait until the first three assignments are graded and returned to you before you take the midcourse exam, and that you wait until all seven assignments are graded and returned to you before you take the final exam. (You should do so because a percentage of the questions on the midcourse and final exams will

come from the multiple-choice questions in the assignments; you need review the assignment questions and essay feedback to study for your exams.)

Your midcourse exam will contain sixty multiple-choice questions, with twelve of these coming from your previous self-assessments and assignments. The other questions will come from material covered in your text and the course content. Each question is worth two points, so the midcourse exam is worth a total of 120 points.

The final exam consists of seventy multiple-choice questions worth two points each, for a total of 140 points. Ten of these questions will come from material covered in Lessons 1 to 3; sixty of the questions will come from Lessons 4 through 7. Of these sixty questions, twelve will come from the multiple-choice questions included in self-assessments and assignments. As was the case with your midcourse exam, the remaining questions will come from text and course content.

### **Grading Criteria**

Your grade is based on 400 points. Of these points, 140 (35%) are based on your seven assignments, 120 (30%) are based on your midcourse exam, and 140 (35%) are based on your final exam.

Final course grades are computed as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>
A	360 - 400 points (90% or better)
B	320 - 359 points (80% - 89%)
C	280 - 319 points (70% - 79%)
D	240 - 279 points (60% - 69%)
F	Below 240 points (below 60%)

No pluses and minuses will be added to the final, reported grade. ***You must submit all assignments and make a 60 percent or better on the final exam in order to pass the course.***

### **Students with Disabilities**

The Office of Distance and Extended Learning (ODEL) is committed to helping students with disabilities achieve their education goals. A disability is not a barrier to correspondence study, and ODEL strives to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to individuals in coursework and test taking. Students who require special accommodations (e.g., testing accommodations, information in alternative format, sign language interpreting services) need to provide verification of their disability to the [Office of Disability Services](#), Suite 5-5.1 LBJ Student Center, (512) 245-3451 (voice/TTY).

### **Free Tutoring Resources**

A variety of free tutoring resources are available for students enrolled in correspondence courses. All correspondence students have access to several hours of free online tutoring from Smarthinking for subjects ranging from grammar and writing to mathematics and Spanish. Free online tutoring for writing-related assignments is also available from the Texas State Writing Center. For information on accessing these resources, please visit the Office of Distance and

Extended Learning's [Free Tutoring](#) page. Currently-enrolled, degree-seeking students able to visit the Texas State campus are eligible for free in-person tutoring from the [Student Learning Assistance Center \(SLAC\)](#) on the fourth floor of Alkek Library and from the [Math Lab](#) in Derrick 233.

### **Scheduling Your Time**

To some extent you can set your own pace in a correspondence course, but it is important that you schedule your time effectively. You should be able to complete each lesson, along with the assignment for each lesson, in two weeks, so completing the course in four to five months is quite possible if you carefully budget your time. Remember, you have a maximum of nine months to complete this course. Use the [Course Study Schedule \(.pdf\)](#) to help you proceed through the course effectively.

### **Faculty-Student Contact**

According to "Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education," faculty-student contact is very important. Even though this is a correspondence course, I encourage you to contact me personally if you have any concerns, questions, or problems. My office phone number is 512.245.3156 or 512.245.2526. If you prefer, you are welcome to e-mail me by using the Mail tool in the left menu bar. (It is important to keep all mail related to this course contained within this TRACS site.) My policy is that during non-holiday breaks or announced away times, any email I receive between Monday morning and Friday at noon will receive a reply within 48 hours. Emails received between Friday at noon and Sunday night will receive a reply on the next business day.

### **Texas State Academic Honor Code**

The Texas State Academic Honor Code serves as an affirmation that the University demands the highest standard of integrity in all actions related to the academic community. The Honor Code applies to all Texas State students, including correspondence students. As stated in the Texas State [Student Handbook](#),

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry and creation, the students, faculty and administration of our university live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful and honest.

**WE ARE CONSCIENTIOUS.** We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor and shun mediocrity, special requests and excuses.

**WE ARE RESPECTFUL.** We act civilly toward one another and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views.

**WE ARE HONEST.** We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity....

Academic work means the preparation of an essay, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that is to be submitted for purposes of grade determination.

Violation of the Honor Code includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.

Cheating means engaging in any of the following activities:

- Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report or computer files, data listing, programs, or from any electronic device or equipment.
- Using, during a test, printed, audio, or electronic materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
- Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work.
- Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the content of an unadministered test.
- Substituting for another student—or permitting another person to substitute for oneself in taking an examination or preparing academic work.
- Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or obtaining information about an unadministered test.
- Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work, any research paper or other assignment prepared by another individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of the rough or final versions of an assignment by a professional typist.
- Submitting the same essay, thesis, report, or other project, without substantial revision or expansion of the work, in an attempt to obtain credit for work submitted in another course.
- Falsifying data.

Plagiarism means the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written, oral, visual, or original performative work that is offered for credit.

Collusion means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing any work offered for credit.

Abuse of resource materials means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft, or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course content.

### **Psychology Department Policy**

The Texas State Psychology Department has also adopted a policy on academic honesty, which applies to correspondence students as well as to on-campus students. As the policy states,

The study of psychology is done best in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Academic dishonesty, in any form, destroys this atmosphere. Academic dishonesty consists of any of a number of things that spoil a good student-teacher relationship. A list of academically dishonest behaviors includes:

- passing off others' work as one's own;
- copying off of another person during an examination;
- signing another person's name on an attendance sheet;
- in written papers, paraphrasing from an outside source while failing to credit the source or copying more than four words in sequence without quotation marks and appropriate citation.

The Psychology Department faculty believe that appropriate penalties for academic dishonesty include an "F" in the course and/or prosecution through the Student Justice System.