

PSY/WGS 316 The Psychology of Human Intimacy and Sexuality
Fall 2025
Tue / Thurs 11:30 – 12:45 Lake Ontario Hall 174

Instructor: Luke Galen, Ph.D.

Office: 2220 ASH

Office Hours: Tues/ Thurs: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m

Online hours via zoom email to schedule virtual apt.

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Course Catalogue Description: “A comparative analysis of sexual practices, reproductive strategies, and intimate relationships using competing viewpoints (e.g., cultural psychology and evolutionary psychology). Topics will include the biological and social contributions to gender identity, attraction, dating, cohabiting and marriage; sexual orientation, factors in relationship stability and divorce; sexual deviations and the social control of sexuality and reproduction.”

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

Objective 1: Demonstrate factual knowledge of psychological science, methodology, and research in the study of intimacy and sexuality.

Objective 2: Explain the different interpretations of the origins and function of relationships and sexual behavior; especially a contrast of the evolutionary/ biological, and social views.

Objective 3: Demonstrate awareness of cultural/ social differences in sexuality.

Objective 4: Explain the underlying similarity in the sexuality (physiology, psychology and behavior) of all humans.

Text: Levay, S. (2024). *Discovering Human Sexuality* (6th ed.). Oxford University Press Academic US. <https://gvsu.vitalsource.com/books/9780197750377>

Option 1: GVSU Save textbook Blackboard or <https://lakerstore.gvsu.edu/gvsusave>

Option 2: buy your own text (but get 6th ed.)

Other readings: Handouts and course blackboard.

Class Format: In- class Lecture/Discussion

Prerequisites: PSY 101

Grading: Grades will be based on 2 in-class exams, 2 mini papers, and 10 quiz/ assignments.

The exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions drawn from lecture and the book. The final exam is **non-cumulative**.

	<u>Points</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Exam I (midterm)	65	33%
Exam II (Final)	65	33%
Mini papers (x2)	10 pts x 2 = 20	10%
Quiz/ Ass. (12 total, drop 2)	5 pts x 10 = 50	25%
Total	200 points	100%

Attendance: Attendance will not be recorded every class period, but quizzes and exams will contain a significant amount of content covered **only from class (i.e., not in the text)**. Poor attendance and failure to record notes will result in poor performance on tests. In the case of absences, it is the student's responsibility to obtain notes and keep up-to-date about any information that was covered. Students should read assigned chapters **before** they are covered in class.

Assignments and Quizzes: There will be 12 class assignments or low stakes quizzes taken in class throughout the semester (i.e., about once a week). They will not be announced ahead of time and cannot be made up. The student may drop the lowest 2. They will cover the reading material and in class slides and are specifically designed so that the student keeps up on the reading, to help them remember what we covered in class. Each quiz is worth 5 points. They are similar to the material used on the exams. Since the student can drop the lowest 2, missed quizzes cannot be made up. Out of fairness to your fellow students, **do not email me with requests to make up quizzes**.

Missed quizzes/ assignments/ exams: If you miss the quiz or exam deadline, this will result in total loss of points. In accordance with university policy, the only exceptions those that involve appropriate documentation: illnesses, death in the family, university activities.

Mini papers (x2): Two short papers, each worth 10 points, will require the student to locate and summarize articles pertaining to areas of ongoing sexuality research. Detailed handouts will be posted on course Bb containing instructions.

General University Policies: <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>.

Academic Dishonesty: Any evidence of cheating (e.g., using notes during exam, looking at another student's answers), or plagiarism (copying portions of the paper from other sources) will result in a failing grade in the course and any other actions as allowed by GVSU policy. This also applies to the use of AI: do not copy anything from the conversation into any assignment. Interaction with AI assistant is a learning experience.

Class Courtesy: Please be on time and turn off cell phones and devices. Social media and internet activity is a distraction for you as well as those seated around you. A respectful and friendly atmosphere in the classroom is important for all of us. Please limit your private comments and conversations with those around you to either before or after class. Talking should be limited to comments shared with the entire class rather than with only a subgroup seated next to you. Respect classmates by listening to them as you would have them listen to you.

Disabilities: If you have a disability, it is up to you to determine if you wish to disclose that information and request classroom accommodations. If you wish to request educational accommodations due to a disability, you should register with the Disability Support Resources (4015 JHZ; 331-2490), if you haven't already done so. If you wish to request accommodations, please meet with me privately (e.g., during office hours) to discuss how to best meet your educational needs. This should occur early in the semester rather than later (e.g., after failing a test).

Tentative Class Schedule:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading*</u>
Wk 1 Aug 26 28	*See course blackboard for specific pages in textbook and articles Perspectives on sexuality: history.	Ch. 1
Wk 2 Sep 2 4	Major paradigms / research	Appendix A
Friday Sept. 5th: Deadline to opt out of GVSU Save online textbook program		
Wk 3: Sep 9 11	Response and arousal	ch. 6 158 - 173
Wk 4 Sep 16 18	Gender i.d. and intersex	Ch. 4,5
Sept 19th 5:00 p.m. (Friday) deadline for 75% tuition refund.		
Wk 5 Sep 23 25	Trans, non-binary, & 3 rd gender	5.4 p. 128 -136; article
Wk 6 sep 30 Oct 2	Sexual orientation	Ch. 11
	Gay parents and reorientation articles.	
Wk 7 Oct 7 9	Phys. Attraction & relationships, love,	ch. 6.1, 8
Wk 8 Oct 14	Relationships, matching	Relationships text 88-102; 176-184
Midterm exam: Thurs Oct 16th		
Wk 9 Fall Break no class Tuesday Oct. 21st		
Oct 23 (Thurs.)	Jealousy, breakups	Levay text 240 – 246; Relationships text 315 – 325
Wk 10 Oct 28 30	Sexuality in adulthood; marriage	Ch 12 390 - 402
Last day to withdraw (grade of 'W'): Nov 7th, 5:00		
Wk 11 Nov 4 6	Childhood and adolescence	Ch. 12
	Readings: Red/Blue sex; Sex ed article	
Wk 12 Nov 11 13	Sexual problems/ dysfunctions	Ch. 14 446 - 476
Wk 13 Nov 18 20	Atypical sexual variations	Ch. 13
Wk 14 Nov 25	child SA, pedophilia	ch. 13
Thanksgiving break Thurs Nov 27th.		
Wk 15 Dec 2 4	Sexual assault	ch. 16

Final: Tuesday, December 9, 10:00 am - 11:50 am.

Human Intimacy and Sexuality (PSY/ WGS 316)

Fall 2025

Name: _____

Year in School, Major: _____

Reason for taking this course (Psych major elective, WGS major, general elective):

Previous coursework in psychology or related coursework (gender theme), related experience (e.g., clinical internships, volunteer), or interesting info:

Any particular topics you want to see covered in addition to, or related to those on the syllabus?