

PSYCHOLOGY 136 - HUMAN SEXUALITY

SUMMER, 2005

1. Instructor:

James P. McHale
3435 Tolman Hall; 642-7093
Off. hr: before and after class

Reader:

Sarah Gorchoff
5309 Tolman; 642-5292

2. Class Meeting Days and Times:

Class Meetings:	Tue & Weds	1 - 4 PM, 159 Mulford
Section Meetings:	Thursday	10:30 AM – 12 noon, 101 Morgan

3. Required Text:

Miracle, Miracle & Baumeister (2003). Human Sexuality: Meeting your Basic Needs.
NJ: Prentice Hall.

4. Course Description:

Psychology 136 provides a basic foundational introduction to the study of human sexuality, a field concerned with how men and women experience and express themselves as sexual beings. The class has been designed for students who have never before taken a college-level class in Human Sexuality. Those with prior college courses in human sexuality or with vocational background in human sexuality fields will find the material quite basic and are advised against enrolling in this class. If you do decide to enroll, you do so with the understanding that the mission of this course is to provide a basic, broad overview, and not advanced, in-depth coverage of the various topics we will address over the next six weeks.

This offering of Psychology 136 is divided into two "parts." The first part is more focally concerned with biology and behavior; the second, with psychological and social issues. Part one of the course begins by examining students' own knowledge and views about sexuality; the inter-play between culture and sexuality; research approaches central to the field; basics of male and female anatomy and sexual response; and processes of procreation and birth. We then discuss issues central to gay, lesbian and bisexual men and women. After the midterm, we will discuss gender similarities and differences and trace sexuality through the life cycle; explore relationship issues, including common relationship difficulties and patterns of communication; examine sexual harassment and acquaintance rape; go over the basics of sex therapy; discuss controversies surrounding pornography; and cover fundamentals of safe sex and sexually transmitted diseases.

Class meetings will draw on diverse formats, including "traditional" lectures by Dr. McHale, by Sarah Gorchoff, a graduate student in Berkeley's psychology program, and by guest speakers; video tapes and films; and small group writing and discussion exercises. Students will be encouraged to think critically about their own preconceptions, to form their own informed and unique views, and to respect the diverse views of others.

To provide students with the opportunity to discuss certain topics in greater detail, the class will periodically be divided up into smaller discussion groups during regular Tuesday or Wednesday class meetings. After today's class, you and 8-10 of your classmates will be assigned to a given discussion group. Your group will be given some "get acquainted time" and a practice assignment in tomorrow's class meeting (Wednesday, May 25). Subsequently, whenever a discussion group is scheduled (the dates are below), you will hook up with these same individuals to talk about assigned topics of interest. Discussion groups typically meet for approximately 30 minutes, and are followed by general class discussion. Each time a group meets, you and your fellow group members choose 2 or 3 people to serve as "discussion leaders." Everyone serves as group leader once in the semester. The leaders are given the discussion topic and get the discussion rolling. Twenty percent of your final grade is based on your participation in these group discussions. Discussion leaders get 8 points toward the final grade during the class period in which they lead the group discussion; during class meetings when students are participants rather than leaders (3 times), they earn 4 points toward the final grade. Hence, a total of 20 points can be earned. Further details about these discussions and membership of your group will be provided in tomorrow's class (May 25). Don't miss this class!!!

The Thursday class meetings are typically offered for students interested in seeing films or engaging in smaller group discussions; these meetings are optional and material discussed on Thursday will generally not appear on the exam.

5. Exam Dates and Determination of Grades:

The dates of the required Discussion groups are as follows:

- Group 1: Wednesday, June 1
- Group 2: Tuesday, June 14
- Group 3: Wednesday, June 15
- Group 4: Tuesday, June 21

The dates for the mid-term and final are as follows:

- Midterm: Wednesday, June 8, 1 pm - 4 pm
- Final: Wednesday, June 29, 1 pm - 4 pm

Please mark all of these dates on your calendar. No make-ups for the Discussion Groups or for the exams will be given, and no "extra credit" projects are available. In very, very extraordinary cases, students who miss the first exam for documented, life-threatening reasons may be given the option of staying after the final exam to answer additional essay questions from the first half of the course. Please do not miss the mid-term. **If you know now that you will be away for the mid-term or final, you should not plan to enroll in the course.** This is a firm rule. Every year, two or three students approach me and ask me to make exceptions for them. I can't and won't do this - it's unfair to everyone else in the class. No early or late final exams. Please don't ask.

The mid-term exam consists of thirty multiple choice, true-false and/or matching questions and two essays. The final exam, which is cumulative, consists of forty multiple choice, true-false and/or matching questions and one essay. The reading load is substantially heavier for the second half of the course, so please plan accordingly.

As a gesture to students who may be busier with commitments during a certain period of the semester, we assign greater weight to the **higher** of your two exam grades - so that the higher grade is weighted 50% and the lower grade only 30% when we calculate your final grade for the class. For those interested, the formula for calculating your own final grade for the semester is:

- Multiply points earned on your poorer exam by three: _____
- Multiply points earned on your better exam by five: _____
- Multiply Discussion Group points (max 20) by five: _____
- Add any points earned from extra credit writing: _____

- Add these 4 numbers, and then divide by five: _____

This number reflects the percent of possible points you earned. Grades will be assigned as follows:

90 - 100%	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
below 60%	F

Students need to bring SCANTRON sheets (available at the ASUC store) to the exams; paper will be provided for the essay questions. Sarah Gorchoff will be reading your examinations. Sarah will also hold an office hour following the exam (time and place TBA) should you have any questions about grading. You can contact her about grading issues only (not with course-related questions or problems; please direct any such questions to Dr. McHale) by phoning 642-7093.

Episodically, we will offer extra credit points for completing in-class writing assignments. Today, for example, you can earn up to 12 points for thoughtfully completing the opinion survey we are about to distribute. **Please note: No make-ups for missed extra credit writing assignments will ever be available, for any reason.** These are "bonus" points only, linked 100% to your in-class attendance. We will never accept writing assignments turned in the next day because the student "forgot" to turn in their work the day of class. Please do not ask to make up missed writing assignments or to turn in an assignment after the fact. Note too that students are not graded on a curve in this class, meaning that you and your classmates are not in competition for grades -- so study together!!

6. Course Expectations

The aim of Psychology 136 is to provide accurate knowledge about sexual behavior, sexual orientation, gender and sex roles, while encouraging students to think critically about sexuality. It is expected that class members will come to this course with a wide range of sexual attitudes and values, some liberal and others conservative and traditional. Every effort will be made to present information even-handedly and with respect for these differences of opinion. At the same time, students will be asked to thoughtfully evaluate arguments, be willing to challenge conventional wisdom and maintain an open mind, and respect the diversity of others' view-points. Please (1) be on time for class; (2) actively contribute to discussions and share ideas; (3) talk to the instructor after class if you have questions or need help. Following these guidelines will help you acquire accurate sexual knowledge and critical thinking skills and enhance your own health.

7. Course Meetings and Topics:

May 24	Course Introduction; Writing Assignment; Cultural Variations; Research Perspectives
May 25	Research and Human Sexuality (DG); The Male Sexual System
May 26	Film: The History of Sex
Readings:	Chapters 1, 2 & 17
May 31	The Female Sexual System
June 1	Human Sexual Response: Conception, Pregnancy, and Childbirth * (DG)
June 2	Film: Breasts*
Readings:	Chapters 3, 5 & 12
June 7	Sexual Orientation
June 8	EXAM #1
June 9	TBA
Readings:	Chapter 11 (read for the exam!)
June 14	Gender and Sexuality through the Lifespan (DG)
June 15	Sexuality, Communication and Relationships (DG)
June 16	Film or Guest Speaker
Readings:	Chapters 8, 9, 10, 14 & 15
June 21	Sexual Coercion (DG)
June 22	Safe Sex and STDs
June 23	Film or Guest Speaker
Readings:	Chapters 6, 7 and 13
June 28	Sexual Dysfunction and Sex Therapy *
June 29	FINAL EXAM
Readings:	Chapter 4 (read for the exam!)

(DG) Discussion group to be held this class meeting

Note: The DG on May 25 does not count toward the 20 DG points

* Explicit films to be shown during this class meeting

Note: Students may elect to absent themselves during the showing of these films.

Students who would prefer not to view explicit films may step out of class during those periods of time when the videos are aired, and may also skip all of the Thursday optional meetings, with no adverse effect on their grade in any way.