

Course Description and Welcome

This course is concerned with one of the core aspects of our lives and of our own development. It involves some of the deepest issues in human relationships, as well as addressing defining aspects of ourselves.

This course provides an interdisciplinary introduction to the study of human sexuality. You will examine human sexuality from historical, cultural, developmental, behavioural, physiological, psychological, sociological, and relational perspectives. Perhaps most importantly, this course will allow you to reflect upon your own experiences, development, background and value stance with regard to sexuality.

This course is taught from a learner-centered perspective which emphasizes the exploration of meaning and knowledge through personal and interpersonal discovery. This means the course experience will be different for every one of you, as you bring to the content your own beliefs, values and experiences. We hope as you learn the content, you will explore what each topic means to you, and the assignments and online discussions will bring you to a deeper level of understanding about course content and your personal attitudes.

The course material will address a variety of topics in sexuality, therefore, be prepared some topics may challenge your beliefs systems and may create discomfort, whereas other topics may resonate and give voice to your experiences and worldview. You are highly encouraged to engage with the course material using critical self-reflection. If for whatever reason the course material creates emotional distress, you are highly encouraged to seek support from appropriate services.

Course Objectives

1. Develop an appropriate *depth and breadth of understanding* of the field of human sexuality, specifically the following topics: sexual science research methods, sexuality across the lifespan; relationships and communication, gender identity and sexual orientation, sexual attraction and love, sexual behaviors, anatomy and physiology, sexual pleasure and sexual problems, sexual coercion, harassment, aggression and abuse, contraception, STI's, HIV and AIDS, sexual variations, sex therapy, and the commercialization of sex; recognizing the implications of course content and putting it into a broader context;
2. Develop a *global understanding* of issues related to human sexuality, comprehending the variety of political, religious, cultural, biological, social, and historical forces that shape sexuality;

3. Develop a sense of the *historical development* of the field of human sexuality, including the changes in research, perspective and knowledge that have occurred over time;
4. *Understand and critically evaluate methodologies* used in sexuality research;
5. Come to understand that aspects of human sexuality can be *considered, and evaluated in many ways*. It is hoped that students will become more aware, open, and accepting of the diversity in human sexuality; including sexual expression, gender construct, sexual identity, and sexual value systems;
6. Develop *independence of thought*, and the ability to challenge accepted truths about human sexuality and think critically about sexuality as it appears in research and the media;
7. Develop a *love of learning*, or intellectual curiosity, regarding human sexuality, by getting personally involved with course content, and reflecting on the personal experiences that have contributed to your development as a sexual being, and the values you hold related to sexuality;
8. Understand the *personal and practical implications* of course content; becoming informed about issues related to sexuality that will aid in the development of an intelligent, responsible, and fulfilling sexual life;
9. Engage in critical self-reflection.

Course Materials and Resources

1. Textbook (required)

Rathus, S.A., Nevid, J. S., Fichner-Rathus, L., Herold, E. S., & McKay, A. (2013). Human sexuality in a world of diversity (4th Canadian edition). Toronto: Pearson.

The second edition of your textbook has a companion website which has additional resources such as chapter overviews, practice test questions, and Web resources for each chapter. Though this is NOT the same edition as your book, you may still find this content useful to learn course content.

Also, if you purchase your textbook new, you will have an access code for MySearchLab (www.mysearchlab.com) which includes all of the text-specific resources for the current edition of the book, an e-book version of the text, and other study—related resources. Information about this resource can be found in the preface of your text, and also on the access code card you receive when you purchase your new text.

NOTE: companion websites and mysearchlab are not required elements of the course.

Also, you can rent an electronic copy of the textbook for the duration of the semester at a reduced rate .

2. Access to a university-level library

The University of Guelph Library provides support to distance students.

3. Computer with regular internet access

4. Online Resources

It is highly recommended that you utilize the writing and study resources of the University specifically intended for Distance Education Students (see the Resources tab at the top of this page). Please take the time to explore the other resources listed there as well.

Please ensure that you have reviewed this [*Learner Services and Resources*](#) link for all relevant and important information as well as the [DE Handbook](#). In particular, ensure that you review the sections that pertain to Assignment Submissions and Returns, Online Quizzes or Tests and Final Examinations

How This Course Is Organized

This 12-week course is organized into the following units:

1. Introduction and Sexual Science Research Methods
2. Female and Male Anatomy and Sexuality Across the Lifespan
3. Sexual Arousal and Response and Sexual Dysfunction
4. Attraction and Love
5. Relationships, Intimacy and Communication
6. Sexual Orientation
7. Gender Identity and Gender Roles
8. Sexual Techniques and Behaviour Patterns
9. Sexual Coercion, Harassment, Aggression and Abuse and Commercialization of Sex
10. Contraception and Abortion & STI's, HIV & AIDS
11. Sexual Variations
12. Review

13. Evaluation and Grading

14. Weekly Quizzes (10%)

Research Paper (30%) due Week 5

Reflection Assignment (20%) due Week 10

Final Exam (40%)

15. Within the Assignments sections of this course website you will find details about all of your course assignments and how they will be evaluated (graded).

16. Please note: All assignments are due on Sunday at 11:59 pm of the week in which they are due (see the course Schedule page for specific dates).