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**THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**



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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

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**PSY 420**  
**SEMINAR IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY:**  
**PSYCHOLOGY OF HUMAN SEXUALITY**

COURSE OUTLINE FALL 2021

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**Instructor:** Dr. Geoff MacDonald email: gmacdonald@psych.utoronto.ca  
Office hour: Thursdays 4-5 pm  
(<https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/87467037556>)  
password: sidsmith

**Class time:** Tuesdays 1-3 pm (<https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/86386859434>)  
password: sidsmith

**Course Overview:** Sexuality is a topic of growing interest in psychology. Although sexual selection is arguably the strongest driver of human evolution and the management of sexual needs is deeply intertwined with cultural practices, psychology has left many fundamental questions regarding human sexuality largely unanswered. This course will survey multiple issues including sexual orientation, sexual attraction, short and long term sexual relationships, sexual fantasy, and paraphilias. It will also include outside speakers with relevant expertise. Please be aware that we will be covering some very sensitive material.

**Assessment:** There are four pieces of assessment for this course— class facilitation (25%), participation (25%), thought papers (20%), and a final paper (30%).

1. **Class Facilitation.** In weeks without guest speakers, students will lead a class discussion. The session will begin with up to 30 minutes spent recapping the assigned reading. The presenters will then lead a class discussion. Students who are not presenting will provide feedback and a suggested grade. Your final grade will consist 50% of the average class grade and 50% from me. Presenters must make an appointment to discuss their presentation with me as a group at least one week before their presentation! (25%)
  2. **Participation.** Each student is expected to contribute something every class. This class is meant to be a safe place to try out ideas, so participation grades will be based less on the quality of students' contributions, but more on getting involved (but not overinvolved) at least a little each week. Because of the seminar format of the class, I am asking for webcams to be on during class to facilitate participation. I want to see respectful engagement with the class each session from everyone. I will also be taking attendance. Participation grade will also include the constructiveness of your feedback to class facilitators. You should submit your comments to me within 24 hours after class. **(25%)**
  3. **Thought Papers.** Each student will submit 3 thought papers over the course of the term. Thought papers should be 1-2 pages and should explore critiques, related ideas, or thoughts about potential new research (thought papers should not be summaries of the reading). Thought papers can address only one of the week's readings, but better grades will go to those who integrate both readings. Thought papers are due at the start of that week's class. **(20%)**
  4. **Final Paper.** The final paper involves proposing a new research idea based on course material. This paper should be a research proposal with an introduction, methods, hypothesized results, and discussion. The topic does not have to be the same as your presentation. The final paper should be a maximum of 10 double-spaced pages. It is due "the last week of class." **(30%)**
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**Late assignments:** Thought papers are due at the **START OF CLASS** on the due date. Late thought papers will not be accepted. The late penalty for the final paper is 5% per working day (Monday-Friday).

**Course website on Quercus:** This course uses the University's learning management system, Quercus, to post information about the course, including materials required to complete class activities and course assignments, share important announcements and updates, and foster academic discussion between learners. The site is dynamic and new information and resources will be posted regularly as we move through the term. The principal source of information about all course-related work will be the course site in Quercus, so please make it a habit to log in to the site on a regular if not daily basis. **SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT GRADES POSTED ONLINE:** Please note that any grades posted within the Quercus Grade Centre are posted for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, included any posted in Quercus at any point in the term, until they have been formally approved by the Course Instructor at the end of the course.

**Email policy:** I will respond as quickly as possible to email inquiries, although I do not answer email on weekends.

**Accessibility Needs:** Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) ([accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://accessibility.utoronto.ca)) at the beginning of the academic year. Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will then assess your medical situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

**Writing:** As a student here at the University of Toronto, you are expected to write well. The university provides its students with a number of resources to help them achieve this. For more information on campus writing centres and writing courses, please visit <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>.

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:** All students, faculty and staff are expected to follow the University's guidelines and policies on academic integrity. For students, this means following the standards of academic honesty when writing assignments, citing and using source material appropriately, collaborating with fellow students, and writing tests and exams. Ensure that the work you submit for grading represents your own honest efforts. Plagiarism - representing someone else's words as your own or submitting work that you have previously submitted for marks in another class or program - is a serious offence that can result in sanctions. Speak to me or your TA for advice on anything that you find unclear. Also, see the U of T writing support website at [www.utoronto.ca/writing](http://www.utoronto.ca/writing). Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations.

**Religious Accommodation:** As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of backgrounds, cultural traditions, and spiritual beliefs. For my part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (like a test, or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

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**Re-Marking policy:** Faculty of Arts and Science policy on re-mark requests for term work specifies that students have two weeks from when the work was returned to make such a request.

**Specific Medical Circumstances:** If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Because it is often best not to see a doctor at the present time, please use the illness self-declaration tool on ACORN to provide documentation for your illness.

**Accommodation for Personal Reasons:** There may be times when you are unable to complete course work on time due to non-medical reasons. If you have concerns, speak to me. It is also a very good idea to speak with an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can support you in requesting extensions or accommodations, and importantly, connect you with other resources on campus for help with your situation.

**Mental health and well-being:** As a student, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These factors may affect your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate fully in daily activities. All of us benefit from support and guidance during times of struggle. There are many helpful resources available through your college Registrar or through Student Life ([studentlife.utoronto.ca](http://studentlife.utoronto.ca)). An important part of the University experience is learning how and when to ask for help. Please take the time as early as possible to inform yourself of available resources and do not hesitate to seek assistance from your Teaching Assistant or the Course Instructor to help learn what supports are available.

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**Class Timetable:**

Week	Date	Reading
1	September 14	Organizational meeting. No reading.
2	September 22	Sexual Orientation  Bogaert, A. F., & Skorska, M. N. (2020). A short review of biological research on the development of sexual orientation. <i>Hormones and Behavior, 119</i> , 104659.  Khan, S. (2015). Not born this way. <i>Aeon</i> . <a href="https://aeon.co/essays/why-should-gay-rights-depend-on-being-born-this-way">https://aeon.co/essays/why-should-gay-rights-depend-on-being-born-this-way</a>
3	September 28	Sex and Well-Being  Mollaioli, D., Sansone, A., Ciocca, G., Limoncin, E., Colonnello, E., Di Lorenzo, G., & Jannini, E. A. (2021). Benefits of sexual activity on psychological, relational, and sexual health during the COVID-19 breakout. <i>The Journal of Sexual Medicine, 18</i> , 35-49.  Park, Y. & MacDonald, G. (in press). Single and partnered individuals' sexual satisfaction as a function of sexual desire and activities: Results using a sexual satisfaction scale demonstrating measurement invariance across partnership status. <i>Archives of Sexual Behavior</i> .
	October 5	Sexual Desire  Chivers, M. L. & Brotto, L. A. (2017). Controversies of women's sexual arousal and desire. <i>European Psychologist, 22</i> 5-26.

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Week	Date	Reading
5	October 12	<p>The Social Construction of Sexuality</p> <p>Guest Presenter: Shayne Sanscartier, MacDonald Lab Graduate Student</p> <p>Hammack, P. L., Mayers, L., &amp; Windell, E. P. (2013). Narrative, psychology and the politics of sexual identity in the United States: from 'sickness' to 'species' to 'script'. <i>Psychology and Sexuality, 4</i>, 219-243.</p> <p>Supplemental (not required) reading: Hooker, E. (1957). The adjustment of the male overt homosexual. <i>Journal of projective techniques, 21</i>, 18-31.</p>
6	October 19	<p>Culture and Sexuality</p> <p>Chen, F. (2017). Gender, sexuality, and social change in contemporary China. <i>Sexuality &amp; Culture, 21</i>, 953-975.</p> <p>Majumdar, C. (2018). Attitudes towards premarital sex in India: Traditionalism and cultural change. <i>Sexuality &amp; Culture, 22</i>, 614-631.</p>
7	October 26	<p>Casual Sex</p> <p>Krems, J. A., Ko, A., Moon, J. W., &amp; Varnum, M. E. W. (2021). Lay beliefs about gender and sexual behavior: First evidence for a pervasive, robust (but seemingly unfounded) stereotype. <i>Psychological Science, 32</i>, 871-889.</p> <p>Mastick, J. L., Kruk, M., Conley, T. D., Moors, A. C., &amp; Ziegler, A. (2021). Gender similarities and differences in casual sex acceptance among lesbian women and gay men. <i>Archives of Sexual Behavior, 50</i>, 1151-1166.</p>

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Week	Date	Reading
8	November 2	Commercial Sexuality  Guest presenters: Vivienne Lawrence, Independent Escort Dylan Tower, Oasis Aqualounge  Reading to be determined
9	November 9	Break week!
10	November 16	Intersections with Identity  Ocampo, A. C., & Soodjinda, D. (2016). Invisible Asian Americans: The intersection of sexuality, race, and education among gay Asian Americans. <i>Race Ethnicity and Education, 19</i> , 480-499.  Spell, S. A. (2017). Not just black and white: How race/ethnicity and gender intersect in hookup culture. <i>Sociology of Race and Ethnicity, 3</i> , 172-187.
11	November 23	Sexuality and Intimacy  Riggs, D. W. & Bartholomaeus, C. (2017). Transgender young people's narratives of intimacy and sexual health: Implications for sexuality education. <i>Sex Education, 18</i> , 376-390.  Muise, A., Kim, J. J., Debrot, A., Impett, E. A., & MacDonald, G. (2020). Sexual nostalgia as a response to unmet sexual and relational needs: the role of attachment avoidance. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 46</i> , 1538-1552.

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Week	Date	Reading
12	November 30	<p>Pornography</p> <p>Grubbs, J. B., Lee, B. N., Hoagland, K. C., Kraus, S. W., &amp; Perry, S. L. (2020). Addiction or Transgression? Moral Incongruence and Self-Reported Problematic Pornography Use in a Nationally Representative Sample. <i>Clinical Psychological Science</i>, 2167702620922966.</p> <p>Vaillancourt-Morel, M. P., Rosen, N. O., Willoughby, B. J., Leonhardt, N. D., &amp; Bergeron, S. (2020). Pornography use and romantic relationships: A dyadic daily diary study. <i>Journal of Social and Personal Relationships</i>, 37, 2802-2821.</p>
13	December 7	<p>Sex Therapy</p> <p>Guest Presenter: Rae Dolman, The Mindfulness Clinic</p> <p>Esther Perel, Rethinking Infidelity: <a href="https://www.ted.com/talks/esther_perel_rethinking_infidelity_a_talk_for_anyone_who_has_ever_loved?language=en">https://www.ted.com/talks/esther_perel_rethinking_infidelity_a_talk_for_anyone_who_has_ever_loved?language=en</a></p> <p>Kleinplatz, P. J., Ménard, A. D., Paquet, M. P., Paradis, N., Campbell, M., Zuccarino, D., &amp; Mehak, L. (2009). The components of optimal sexuality: A portrait of “great sex.” <i>The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality</i>, 18, 1-13.</p>

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