### Psychology of Human Sexuality

### Course Syllabus

## Psyc 2330, section 001, CRN51085, 3 credit-hours

## Spring 2020, University of New Mexico

## Class times: Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00 am – 12:15 pm

**Class location: Kiva 104, UNM Main Campus**

**Teacher:**

**Geoffrey Miller, Ph.D.; Associate Professor of Psychology, UNM**

Office hours: Tuesdays 1:30-2:30 pm, in Logan Hall 160

[gfmiller@unm.edu](mailto:gfmiller@unm.edu), 277-1967 (office)

**Teaching Assistant:**

**Tessa Cappelle, Psychology Ph.D. student**

Office hours: By appointment

tcappelle@unm.edu

**Course Description**

**This syllabus will be crucial to your success in this course. Read this whole syllabus before the first class meets. Refer to it regularly throughout the course.**

Sexuality is central to our lives. It leads to our most important relationships – with lovers, spouses, and children. It drives much of our social-networking, status-seeking, and consumer behavior. It evokes our strongest passions — lust, love, pride, hope, and ecstasy, but also jealousy, heartbreak, despair, shame, and regret.

This course introduces the psychology of human sexuality in its evolutionary, historical, cultural, reproductive, social, and ethical contexts. We’ll explore:

* The history, nature, and challenges of sex research
* Sexually transmitted organisms and STIs
* The origins and functions of sexual reproduction, and sexual evolution
* Mate choice, sexual selection theory, and signaling theory
* Physical attraction and social attraction
* Sexual arousal, orgasm, and pleasure
* Sexual activities: masturbation, foreplay, and copulation
* Sexual competition and mating markets
* Sexual jealousy, pair-bonding, and mate-guarding
* Ovulatory cycles and estrus
* Sexual conflict, sexual assault, and psychopathy
* Sex differences, cross-sex empathy, gender, and feminism
* Homosexuality, bisexuality, and sexual fluidity
* BDSM, kink, and unusual sexual preferences
* Sexual barter, material proof, prostitution, pornography, and sexual consumerism
* Sexual selection for mental health, intelligence, conscientiousness, and commitment
* Sexual morality, mating ethics, consent, and virtue-signaling
* Romantic love and romantic proof
* Sexual relationships, marriage, and monogamy
* Polyamory and open relationships
* The future of sexuality

This course will focus on sexual psychology, behaviors, emotions, and relationships. It will not be a remedial ‘sex education’ course, so will not focus very much on medical, clinical, or health issues such as genital anatomy, contraception, pregnancy, or sexual dysfunctions.

**Course Goals**

The main goal of this course is to help students develop deeper scientific and practical insights into their sexual origins, instincts, preferences, emotions, orientations, and identities, so they can

* accept their sexuality, whatever it is
* enjoy better sex with less guilt, shame, and regret
* enjoy happier, more fulfilling relationships
* understand the diversity of sexual activities and relationship patterns in current society
* develop more scientifically informed views on issues at the intersection of sex, relationships, politics, and public policy
* develop the foundation for ongoing, lifelong learning about sexuality that improves their quality of life and relationships

**Student Learning Objectives**

[You don’t need to worry about this section for the moment; it’s pretty technical, and is mostly for administrative purposes]

The Psychology Department follows NM HED Area IV and UNM Area 4 Competencies for Social and Behavioral Sciences. This course sets three goals for our students:

1) Students will demonstrate acquisition of both factual knowledge about the psychology of human sexuality, and the ability to conceptualize and apply this knowledge to their own behavior, relationships, families, and society.

* SLO 1: Learning will be demonstrated by performance on weekly quizzes that cover the key issues in the psychology of sexuality: sex research, sexually transmitted infections, sexual evolution, mate choice, signaling theory, physical attraction, social attraction, sexual arousal and pleasure, sexual activities, sexual competition, mating markets, sexual jealousy, ovulatory cycles, sexual conflict, sex differences, sexual orientation, sexual consumerism, sexual morality, romantic love, monogamy, polyamory, and marriage.
* SLO 2: Students will demonstrate their abilities to apply what they have learned regarding the basic issues in the psychology of human sexuality (see above) to factual, practical, theoretical, and philosophical issues by participating in lectures using student response devices (iClickers).
* Addresses HED/UNM Area IV/4, Competencies 1, 2, 3, & 4

2) Students will understand and be able to apply principles of the scientific method and critical thinking to issues in human sexuality.

* SLO 1: Learning will be demonstrated by performance on multiple quizzes that cover the key issues in the psychology of sexuality as listed above, particularly in understanding sex research through lab experiments, online surveys, national representative data sets, historical analyses, sexual physiology, brain imaging, behavior genetics, and other methods and data sources.
* SLO 2: Students will demonstrate their abilities to apply what they have learned regarding the scientific method and critical thinking to theoretical, philosophical, and practical issues by participating in lectures using student response devices (iClickers).
* Addresses HED/UNM Area IV/4, Competencies 1, 2, 3, & 4

3) Students will be able to read, interpret, and apply insights and findings from scientific journal articles.

* SLO 1: Students will answer weekly online quizzes that require understanding required journal article readings.
* Addresses HED/UNM Area IV/4, Competencies 3 & 4

**Credit Hour Statement**

This is a three credit-hour course. Class meets for two 75-minute sessions of direct instruction for the fifteen-week Fall 2019 term. Students are expected to complete a *minimum* of six hours of out-of-class work (reading, note-taking, lecture review, online quizzes) each week. Given that the weekly online quiz takes a maximum of 30 minutes each week, students should expect to devote at least 5.5 hours each week to reading the required readings, reviewing lecture notes, and reviewing the Powerpoint slides for each lecture.

**Course Requirements**

Overall, the main requirements for this course are:

* Read the required readings before each class
* Attend each class and answer the iClicker 2 questions in class
* Review your class notes, and the lecture Powerpoints on UNM Learn, after class
* Complete the online quizzes each weekend

**Required materials**

**Technology**

For this class, you’ll need an iClicker 2 in each class, and some weekend computer access for the weekly online quizzes.

* **iClicker 2.** If you don’t already own one, these areabout $53 new from the UNM bookstore. You must get an iclicker 2 rather than an iclicker (original) or an iclicker plus – only an iclicker 2 will allow you to take the polls in this course. You should register your iclicker 2 for this class by midnight Monday evening Jan 27, so you can use it in class on Thues Jan 28. For instructions on registering, see the UNM Learn site instructions under ‘Register your iclicker’.
* **Computer access.** You’ll do an online quiz for this class every weekend. This will take about 30 minutes per quiz. You can complete each weekend’s quiz any time between Friday at noon and Monday at midnight. You can use your own computer at home, or any of the UNM computers available on campus.

**Textbooks and readings**

Readings for this class will be from three books that you’ll need to buy: one human sexuality textbook and two popular science books on evolutionary approaches to sexuality.

**1) Discovering human sexuality (4th edition)** (2018) by Simon LeVay, Janice Baldwin, & John Baldwin. Sunderland, MA: Sinauer, ISBN-13: 978-1605352756 (looseleaf if possible)

* UNM Bookstore: $148 new, $120 used; Amazon: $141 new, $126 used, **$30 new rental (best option is this from Amazon – choose two-day or Prime shipping!)**
* This is the best-written, most evolutionarily-oriented textbook on human sexuality.

# 2) Why women have sex: Women reveal the truth about their sex lives, from adventure to revenge (and everything in between) (2010). By Cindy Meston & David Buss. New York: St. Martin’s Griffin. ISBN-13: 978-0312662653 (paperback)

* UNM Bookstore: $22 new rental, $20 used; Amazon.com: $18 new, $17 used, $8 Kindle
* An empirically-based exploration of female sexuality by a leading sex researcher and an evolutionary psychologist.

**3) What women want** (2016) by Tucker Max and Geoffrey Miller. New York: Anchor Books, ISBN-13 978-0316375337 (paperback)

* UNM Bookstore: $18 new, $15 used; Amazon.com: $12 new, $5 used, $12 kindle
* This is our recent book of dating advice for young straight men, but it's based on scientific insights and evidence that apply to everybody's mating strategies.
* Warning: This book is written in a very blunt, candid, self-help style; it includes profanity, jokes, satire, and politically incorrect observations

**Notes on the textbooks and readings**:

* Important: weekly assigned readings before each class will take about two or three hours, depending on your reading speed. If you don’t do the readings conscientiously, you won’t learn much in this course, and you won’t get a good grade.
* Beyond the three required textbooks, there will be about nine journal articles to read. They are mostly very short, but quite dense – give yourself plenty of time to read them. These will uploaded on UNM Learn.
* After each reading assignment listed in the course schedule below, I give the page count for the actual text you’ll need to read (excluding boxes to skip, or journal article references), so you can plan your reading times.
* Read the assignments in the order listed for each class; they’ll make more sense.
* Read when you’re awake and attentive, in plenty of time before the class when they’ll be discussed. Take notes on them. Digest them. Be ready to discuss them in class.
* The online quizzes are open-book, so it will be helpful to use underlining or highlighting while reading so you can locate key ideas, terms, and findings during the quizzes.
* You won’t typically need to bring your textbooks to class.

**Distinctive challenges**

**This course’s textbooks and lectures include sexually explicit material,** including graphic depictions of male and female sexual anatomy, sexual positions, and sexual activities. Any images and videos shown in class may be sexually explicit, and may include nudity and/or sexual humor.

**This course presents some striking new theories and data about sex, which is one of the most emotionally-charged, controversial areas of human behavior, culture, and morality**. This course includes detailed lectures, readings, quizzes, discussions, and videos about explicit topics. It covers not just vanilla, consensual, long-term, monogamous, heterosexual relationships, but also short-term affairs, infidelity, and jealousy; sexual coercion; sexually transmitted organisms and infections; masturbation, oral sex, and anal sex; sex in other species with strange mating systems; sex in other cultures; pornography and prostitution; gay and lesbian sex; polyamory, kink, and unusual sexual preferences. If you are not open to learning about these topics in an open-minded, scientific way, this is not the right course for you*.*

**Also, this course views human sexuality in the context of evolutionary biology, animal behavior, sexual selection theory, and behavior genetics; the implications of this evolutionary-genetic perspective might conflict with some of your religious or political beliefs**. Evolutionary approaches to human sexuality are based on evolutionary biology, the fossil evidence for human evolution, our behavioral similarities to other primates, and other theories and facts. Its perspective and its implications can be hard to reconcile with belief in the literal truth of creation stories from various religions. Whatever your religious beliefs, you’ll need to master and discuss the course material as it's presented.

This evolutionary perspective also challenges some common assumptions that human sexuality is a “blank slate” influenced mostly by parenting, culture, and media. If you have a strong gender feminist view that all sex differences are socially constructed, or a cultural relativist belief that all sexual norms have equal moral validity, you’ll face some interesting challenges reconciling the course content with your political beliefs.

Bearing in mind these warnings, I am happy to discuss in a mutually respectful way any of your concerns, and I will seek workable solutions that reconcile your right to religious and political freedom of belief, my right to academic freedom in teaching, and the university's need to maintain intellectual standards in teaching and grading.

If you would like to take a Psyc 2330: Psychology of Human Sexuality course, but this is not the right section for you, for whatever reason, there is usually at least one other in-person or online section taught each term.

**Class structure**

In class, we’ll have lectures, discussions, videos, and iclicker polls that will serve as attendance and participation checks. There will be a brief break halfway through class, usually about 5-10 minutes.

Lectures: For about half of each class, I’ll be lecturing with Powerpoint slides and occasional video clips. Usually I won’t repeat the material in the readings, but will talk about additional ideas, perspectives, theories, historical contexts, empirical findings, and course content in relation to current events and social issues. Sometimes we’ll have guest lectures from visiting sex researchers. I’ll upload each Powerpoint lecture to UNM Learn within about a day after each class, so you can review its contents.

Videos: I’ll usually show a couple of short videos during each class to illustrate some points about the class content. I’ll include links to each video in the Powerpoint lecture that I upload to UNM Learn after each class, so you can go back and rewatch it if you want.

iClicker polls: Throughout class, there will be iClicker polls to check whether you’re present and paying attention. It doesn’t matter what you respond, only that you do respond. Answering these iClicker polls will determine your class attendance and participation grade.

Class rules

Your classmates deserve your civility, respect, and cooperation. Many UNM students have worked hard to get to this university, work hard to get the grades and pay the tuition to stay here, and have many conflicting responsibilities, such as part-time work, children, spouses, elderly parents, volunteer work, sports, etc. UNM tuition and fee rates are about $250 per credit-hour for NM residents, so this 3 credit-hour class costs about $750, or about $26 for each of our 29 class meetings; for non-NM-residents, it’s over $80 per class. Please appreciate how much your classmates are paying to be here, and the sacrifices they have made to attend UNM.

To help everybody learn as much as they can from this course, there are some class rules, which I enforce strictly:

* Do not arrive late. Near the start of each class, there will be an iClicker participation check to see who has arrived on time. It is best to have a seat and be ready for class by five minutes before class. Learn how long you’ll need to find parking.
* Do not leave early. Each class ends with another attendance check to see who has stayed for the whole class. Do not start to pack up your notes and books before class ends, unless we’re clearly finished with class early, or if you have a genuine emergency.
* Do not talk to other students in class while I’m lecturing, unless I specifically ask you to. Even quiet whispering can be very distracting to students around you.
* During discussions, be thoughtful, respectful, and constructive. Discuss issues based on theories and evidence, not just personal anecdotes and opinions.
* Do not eat food in class. It’s distracting to other students. Safely sealed drinks (e.g. coffee cups with lids or water bottles) are OK to bring and to drink during class. However, I do not want to see any students eating anything in class, and I am especially aggravated by noisy food being eaten from crinkly plastic bags. During the breaks half-way through class, you can leave the lecture room to have a snack if you need to. Or you can just eat breakfast before class, and eat lunch after class.
* Turn off mobile phones and electronic entertainment devices in class. Do not use them to call, text, engage with social media, or web-surf. If you must remain available for a child or other dependent, set your phone to vibrate silently. Any use of phones or tablets in class can be very distracting and disheartening to other students around you.
* To protect the privacy of everyone in class, do not record audio or video in class. If you see someone recording, let me know. We discuss sensitive sexual issues in class. It must remain a private space where students feel comfortable sharing their views and experiences, without fear that their comments will end up on YouTube. I’m very serious about this. DO NOT RECORD THE LECTURES. If you are caught violating your fellow students’ privacy by recording classroom lectures or discussions, you will be dropped from this class, and may be subject to UNM disciplinary action.
* Do not come to class if you are too tired or ill to participate properly; do not come if you have a cold and are likely to be infectious. We’ll excuse absences for illness given a doctor’s note; just email the TA and let her know.
* If you are a parent: If you need to bring a baby or young child to class occasionally, that’s OK, but please alert me before class when you do. Older children may not be appropriate to bring to class, given the sexual content. I can give excused absences if children are sick and need you at home.
* If you are on a UNM sports team, please let the TA know in advance when you will need to miss classes and quizzes due to travel and sports events.
* If someone else in class is violating any of these rules: please raise your hand to let me know, or speak to me privately during the break or after class.

**Grading**

**Your grade for this course will depend on two things:**

* **40%: attendance and participation (A&P) checks in every class through iClicker.** We’ll keep track of what % of the time you answer iClicker questions during class. You’ll get a percentage grade for each class, and these will add up across classes to determine 40% of your overall grade.
* **60%: weekly online quizzes through UNM Learn/Blackboard.** There will beabout 14weekly online quizzes on UNM Learn/Blackboard. These will add up to determine 60% of your overall grade.

So you can know how well you are doing, every attendance score and quiz grade will be posted on the UNM Learn site as the grade is entered in our records. At the end of term, there will be a fairly generous grading curve to determine final course grades. In previous versions of this class, the class average was about a B or B+, although the grade average out of 100 points was only in the 70s (e.g. averaging about 70% on attendance and quizzes.) There will also be a couple of options for extra credit, discussed below.

**Attendance & participation (A&P) checks in every class with iClicker: 40% of final grade**

For the first two classes, I’ll just take attendance with sign-in sheets. From the second week onwards, we’ll use iClicker records to keep track of ‘attendance and participation’ (A&P). There will be about half a dozen iClicker A&P checks throughout each class, starting after 11:00 am, and continuing until the end of class around 12:15. To get A&P points for a class, you’ll need to have your iClicker registered, with you, charged, and ready to hand. We won’t keep track of what specific answers you give to any polls in class – those are totally confidential, and the anonymity of your answers is fully protected. However, we will keep track of what percentage of polls you answer.

If you answer every poll in a class, you’ll get a maximum of 10 A&P points for that class. If you answer at least one poll, you’ll get a minimum of 2 A&P points. If you answer none, we’ll assume you’re absent, and you’ll get zero A&P points. We’ll add up you’re A&P points across all the classes, which will be about 29 classes and 290 possible A&P points; these will determine 40% of your final grade. The A&P points will encourage regular attendance, and active engagement, so you get the benefits out of being at a real university with real students and a real professor – rather than just reading textbooks at home, or taking an online course.

**Weekly online quizzes through UNM Learn: 60% of final grade.**

Almost every weekend, there will be an online quiz that you’ll complete through UNM Learn. These will be made available from every Friday at noon through midnight the next Monday.

Every quiz will include 20 multiple-choice questions based on course readings and lectures. Quizzes will be open-book and open-notes: you can refer to readings, notes from lectures, and lecture Powerpoints. However, tests will be timed with a 30-minute limit (one and a half minutes per question), so you’ll need to be familiar enough with the readings and lectures that you can find information quickly if you need to look it up.

There is no penalty for guessing. Each correct answer is worth one point, plus you’ll get a bonus of 5 points just for completing each quiz, so each quiz is worth 25 points total. Grades on the 14 or so quizzes will be added up at the end of term, for a maximum of 350 quiz points, and these will determine 60% of your final grade. Thus, each of the quiz is worth about 4% of your course grade. Do not panic if you miss a quiz – most students miss a quiz or two, and they still do fine with their final grade.

Each quiz will cover the previous week’s readings, and the class lectures and discussions. If you read the assignments carefully and pay attention in class, you will probably do well on the quizzes. If you miss a class, you’ll be able to download the Powerpoint lecture from UNM Learn, but you’ll miss whatever I said that wasn’t on the Powerpoint slides, and whatever we talked about in class. This makes class attendance very important.

The quiz questions will range from very easy to quite hard. Most of the questions should be easy if you have kept up with readings and lectures. There may be a couple of questions that require a bit of thought, and which I do not expect most students to get right. If you consistently get at least 70% on the quizzes, you are doing very well, and would probably get at least a B in the course.

Take the quizzes by yourself, without help from anyone else. Violations of academic integrity will be subject to the normal university procedures and penalties.

Quiz answers will be revealed on UNM Learn after you finish each quiz, so you’ll have immediate feedback on how well you did. These quizzes will help you give you quick feedback about how well you’re doing all the way through the term, so you can improve your study habits if you are not happy with your quiz grades. Also, taking many little quizzes rather than a few big exams gives a more reliable assessment of how well you really know the material; since your grade is less vulnerable to random disruptions like getting a cold before an exam.

**Extra credit**

You have two options for getting extra credit in this class (choose one or the other, not both); further details for each will be uploaded to UNM Learn as separate documents.

* **Research participation**: As in Psych 105, you can get extra credit for participating in psychology research in our department. For each hour of research participation credit, you can get 10 extra credit points. You’re limited to four (4) hours credit maximum, or a maximum of 40 extra credit points compared to the 600 points maximum from A&P and quiz points. Thus, extra credit can raise your course grade by up to 7%, e.g. from a B to an A-. Instructions for research participation through the SONA system will be uploaded to UNM Learn.
* **Movie reports**: these are one-page, single-spaced analyses of how the course content relates to a movie about human sexuality. There will be a list of about 10 possible movies to choose from for this course, such as *Kinsey* (2004), *Her* (2013), *Carol* (2015), or *Professor Marston and the Wonder Women* (2017). These movie reports can be uploaded on UNM Learn, and you can do a maximum of one movie report, for a maximum of 40 points of extra credit. Instructions for writing movie reports will be uploaded to UNM Learn.

**How to ace this course**

It should be easy to get a good grade in this class, if you attend class regularly, keep up with the readings, answer the quizzes thoughtfully, participate in class discussions, and think about what you are learning. If you read the assignments and listen closely to the lectures and peer discussions, you will probably do very well on the quizzes. There are also opportunities for substantial extra credit with research participation or movie reports. I love giving A’s to students who learn a lot and who think about their lives and relationships in new ways.

On the other hand, if you treat this course as a soft option, you will do badly. If you skip lectures, fail to do your assigned readings, don’t take the quizzes seriously, and don’t engage with class polls and discussions, you will get a disappointing grade. I am not afraid to give a C, D, or F to someone who deserves one.

You will get a lot of ongoing feedback in this course: about 29 A&P scores and about 14 quiz grades. If you find that you are coming to class and doing the work, but are not doing as well on these as you would wish, please email or see me or the TA to discuss how you can do better. We will be glad to help.

**Accommodation Statement**

Accessibility Services (Mesa Vista Hall 2021, 277-3506) provides academic support to students who have disabilities. If you think you need alternative accessible formats for undertaking and completing coursework, you should contact this service right away to assure your needs are met in a timely manner. If you need local assistance in contacting the Accessibility Resources Center, see your academic program office.

**Academic Integrity Requirements**

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. UNM reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or otherwise fails to meet the standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in course work may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

In this class, any audio and/or video recording during classroom lectures and/or discussions also constitutes a violation of academic integrity.

**Safety**

UNM offers several resources to help keep Lobos safe:

* LoboGuardian, [www.loboguardian.unm.edu](http://www.loboguardian.unm.edu) is a mobile app that increases user safety by creating a virtual safety network of friends and family.
* UNM campus has blue light emergency phones. UNM Police Department, (505) 277-2241, offers a free escort service for safety
* Lobo Alerts [www.loboalerts.unm.edu](http://www.loboalerts.unm.edu) is UNM’s emergency text messaging system that can inform you of any emergencies, dangers, or criminal activity on campus.
* For concerns such as sexual misconduct, bullying, hazing see the LoboRespect Advocacy Center, <https://loborespect.unm.edu/>
* For counseling & health services, see Student Health Services <https://shac.unm.edu>
* For free STI testing, see <https://shac.unm.edu/wellness/sti-testing/index.html>
* If you are feeling depressed, anxious, in danger of self-harm, or just need someone to talk to, call the Agora Crisis Center, [www.agoracares.org](http://www.agoracares.org) at (505) 277-3013.

**Resources for victims of sexual misconduct**

UNM prohibits various forms of sexual misconduct, such as sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, and stalking. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted and would like to receive support and academic advocacy, there are many confidential resources available to you. For example, you can contact the Women’s Resource Center, the LGBTQ Resource Center, Student Health and Counseling (SHAC), or LoboRESPECT. LoboRESPECT can be contacted on their 24-hour crisis line, (505) 277-2911 and online at loborespect@unm.edu. You can receive non-confidential support and learn more about Title IX through the Title IX Coordinator at (505) 277-5251 and http://oeo.unm.edu/title-ix/. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UNM Police Department at (505) 277-2241.

**Who to contact about what**

Geoffrey Miller is responsible for assigning all readings, preparing and giving all lecture content, writing all quiz items, and determining final course grades. If you have any questions about course content, please email him or come to his office hours. He is also happy to talk about more general educational issues, research opportunities, grad school options, career plans, etc.

Tessa Cappelle, the teaching assistant, is responsible for managing all the other course logistics and grading, including keeping track of attendance and participation based on iClicker records, granting excused absences, running and grading quizzes, and keeping track of all grade records. If you have any questions about course logistics, grades, absences, or technical problems with iClickers or quizzes, please email her.

**Optional reading and viewing**

**Optional Books**

Apart from the required readings, here are some suggested *optional* books, if you’re interested in diving deeper into certain sexuality topics:

* *The mating mind* (2001) by Geoffrey Miller: sexual selection and human evolution
* *Dr. Tatiana’s sex advice to all creation* (2003) by Olivia Judson: sex in other species
* *Bonk: The curious coupling of science and sex* (2009) by Mary Roach: sex research
* *Perv* (2013) by Jesse Bering: common fetishes
* *Tell me what you want* (2018) by Justin Lehmiller: common sexual fantasies
* *The ultimate guide to kink* (2012) by Tristan Taormino: BDSM
* *Ethical porn for dicks* (2016) by David Ley: the ethics of watching porn
* *Mating in captivity* (2007) by Esther Perel: the challenges of modern marriage
* *The all-or-nothing marriage* (2017) by Eli Finkel: research on good relationships
* *Intended for pleasure* (2010) by Ed & Gayle Wheat: Christian guide to sex & marriage
* *Designer relationships* (2015) by Mark Michaels & Patricia Johnson: open relationships

**Optional Movies**

See the 10 suggested movies on the instructions for ‘movie report’ extra credit assignments

**Optional TV series**

I recommend the TV series *Masters of Sex* (2013-2016) about the early days of sex research, starring Michael Sheen as Dr. William Masters and Lizzy Caplan as Virginia Johnson; there were 4 seasons with 46 episodes available: <http://www.amazon.com/Masters-Sex-Michael-Sheen/dp/B00HI4EGQA/>. Other recent TV series and mini-series with interesting sexual themes include *American Playboy*, *Broad City, Mad Men, Polyamory, Rick and Morty, Scandal, Shameless, The Affair, The Girlfriend Experience*, *The Handmaid’s Tale*, and *Transparent*.

**Optional Podcast**

You can check out the free “Mating Grounds” podcast that I did with Tucker Max back in 2014-2016. It’s mostly science-based dating advice to young straight men, but it might also interest women who are curious about how guys think and feel about women, dating, and sex. We’ve also done expert interviews with several leading sex researchers. We released over 200 episodes, which were downloaded over two million times.

* Apple podcasts: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-mating-grounds-podcast/id894712811>
* Podbay: <https://podbay.fm/podcast/894712811>
* TuneIn: <https://tunein.com/podcasts/Health--Wellness-Podcasts/The-Mating-Grounds-Podcast-p1136800/>

**Also see: Personal website**

At my personal website, [www.primalpoly](http://www.primalpoly).com, you can find lots of other resources about my research, books, journal papers, short articles, other classes, interviews, podcasts, and recommended reading.

**Also see: YouTube channel**

On my youtube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/geoffreymillerphd>, you can see about 30+ videos on various topics, many of them related to the psychology of sexuality.

**Course Schedule: Readings and topics for each class**

**Note: this provisional schedule is subject to change; I’ll give updates as necessary in class, in announcements on the UNM Learn website, and/or in emails.**

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(No readings required before the first class)

1: Jan 21 **Introduction to course content**

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Before this class:

* Buy all three required textbooks and iClicker 2
* Register your iClicker 2 on UNM Learn by midnight Monday Jan 27

Required readings (c. 31 pages): finish before class

* Meston & Buss, Introduction, pp. xi-xxii (12 pages)
* Max & Miller Introduction, pp. 3-6 (4 pages)
* This syllabus (c. 15 pages)

2: Jan 23 **Introduction to course mechanics**

(Online quiz 1: available Jan 24 – 27; register your iClicker by midnight Jan 27)

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Required readings (16 pages):

* Levay Ch. 1: Sexuality: pathways to understanding, pp. 4-20, including box 1.3 (boxes 1.1 are 1.2 are optional & not on the quiz) (16 pages)

3: Jan 28 **The science of sex**

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Required readings (43 pages)

* Levay Ch. 1: Sexuality: pathways to understanding, pp. 4-20, including box 1.3 (boxes 1.1 are 1.2 are optional—will not be covered in the quiz) (16 pages)
* Levay Ch. 15: Sexually transmitted infections, pp. 467-496 (boxes 15.1, 15.2, and 15.3 are optional) 27 pages)

4: Jan 30 **Sexually transmitted organisms**

(Online quiz 2: available Jan 31 – Feb 3)

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Required readings (40 pages)

* + - Max & Miller Ch. 4: Understand what women want … and why, pp. 69-78 (10 pages)
    - Max & Miller Ch. 10: Show them what you’re working with (Signaling Theory), pp. 165-172 (8 pages)
    - Meston & Buss, Ch. 7: A sense of adventure, pp. 145-166 (22 pp)

5: Feb 4 **Mate choice and signaling**

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Required readings (20 pages)

* + - Levay Appendix A: Sex and evolution, pp. 564-583 (20 pp); caution: this chapter is challenging, and requires careful reading

6: Feb 6 **Sex and evolution**

(Online quiz 3: available Feb 7 - 10)

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Required readings (37 pages)

* Meston & Buss, Ch. 1: What turns women on? pp. 1-27 (27 pp)
* Levay Ch. 5: Attraction, arousal, and response: Sections on attraction, pp. 124-135 (box 5.1 is optional) (10 pp)

7: Feb 11 **Physical attraction**

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Required readings (31 pages)

* Max & Miller Ch. 11: The power of popularity and prestige (Social proof), pp. 173-185 (13 pp)
* Max & Miller Ch. 13: Stylin’ and profilin’ (Aesthetic proof), pp. 196-213 (18 pp)

8: Feb 13 **Social attraction**

(Online quiz 4: available Feb 14 - 17)

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Required readings (37 pages)

* Meston & Buss, Ch. 2: The pleasure of it, pp. 28-49 (22 pp)
* Levay Ch. 5: sections on arousal and orgasm, pp.135-151, including box 5.2 (boxes 5.3 and 5.4 are optional) (15 pp)

9: Feb 18 **Sexual arousal, orgasm, and pleasure**

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Required readings (30 pages)

* Levay Ch. 6 Sexual behavior pp. 156-187, including box 6.1 & box 6.3 (boxes 6.2 and 6.4 are optional) (30 pages); caution: this chapter includes sexually explicit drawings and descriptions

10: Feb 20 **Sexual activities**

(Online quiz 5: available Feb 21 - 24)

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Required readings (34 pages)

* + Meston & Buss, Ch. 4: The thrill of conquest, pp. 78-98 (21 pp)
  + Max & Miller Ch. 15: Find the right mating markets, pp. 231-246 (13 pp)

11: Feb 25 **Sexual competition and mating markets**

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Required readings (22 pages)

* + Meston & Buss, Ch. 5: Green-eyed desire, pp. 99-116 (18 pp)
  + Finkel, E. J., & Eastwick, P. W. (2015). Attachment and pairbonding. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences, 3*, 7-11 (4 pp); note: this is a short journal paper, but it is packed with ideas, so give yourself plenty of time to read it.

12: Feb 27 **Sexual jealousy**

(Online quiz 6: available Feb 28 – March 2)

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Required readings (12 pages)

* Levay Ch. 2: pp. 38(bottom)-44(bottom) (including box 2.4 on feedback loops and table 2.1 on hormones) (7 pages)
* Gangestad, S. W., & Haselton, M. G. (2015). Human estrus: Implications for relationship science. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 1*, 45-51. (5 pp); note: this is short, but dense, give yourself plenty of time to read it

13: March 3 **Ovulatory cycles**

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Required readings (39 pages)

* Max & Miller Ch. 9: The tender defender (The agreeable & assertive traits), pp. 148-161 (14 pp)
* Meston & Buss, Ch. 10: The dark side, pp. 211-235 (25 pp)

14: March 5 **Sexual conflict and alternative mating strategies**

(Online quiz 7: available March 6 - 9)

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Required readings (30 pages)

* Levay Ch. 16: Sexual assault, harassment, and partner violence 500-529 (30 pp)
* (note: this lecture may be distressing if you have been involved in a sexual assault; please let the TA know in advance if you would prefer to skip this class)

15: March 10 **Sexual assault**

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(March 12: No class: Geoffrey away at conferences)

(No online quizzes the weekends of March 13-16 or March 20-23)

(Spring break March 14-22: No classes March 17 or 19)

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Required readings (28 pages)

* Max & Miller Ch 2: Understand what it’s like to be a woman, pp. 30-49 (20 pp)
* Schmitt, D. P., et al. (2017). Personality and gender differences in global perspective. International J. of Psychology, 52, S1, 45-56. (8 pp); note: this is short, but dense, give yourself plenty of time to read it

16: March 24 **Sex differences and cross-sex empathy**

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Required readings (19 pages)

* Levay Ch. 4: Sexual development and diversity, pp. 88-107(bottom), including box 4.2 (box 4.1 is optional) (19 pages)

17: March 26 **Sex, gender, and feminism**

(Online quiz 8: available March 27 – 30, covering previous 3 classes on March 10, 24, and 26)

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Required readings (29 pages)

* Levay Ch. 12: Sexual orientation pp. 372-401, including boxes 12.1, 12.2, and 12.5 (boxes 12.3 and 12.4 are optional) (29 pp)

18: March 31 **Homosexuality and bisexuality**

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Required readings (26 pages)

* Levay Ch. 13: Atypical sexuality: pp. 406-434, including box 13.1 (boxes 13.2, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5 are optional) (26 pp)

19: April 2 **BDSM and unusual sexual preferences**

(Online quiz 9: available April 3 - 6)

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Required readings (34 pages)

* + Meston & Buss, Ch. 8: Barter and trade, pp. 167-190 (24 pp)
  + Max & Miller Ch. 12: How rich do you need to be? (Material proof), pp. 186-195 (10 pp)

20: April 7 **Sexual barter, trade, and material proof**

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Required readings (34 pages)

* Levay Ch. 17: Sex work, pp. 534-560, including boxes 17.1 and 17.2 (boxes 17.3 and 17.4, are optional) (26 p)
* Salmon, C. (2012). The pop culture of sex: An evolutionary window on the worlds of pornography and romance. *Review of General Psychology, 16*(2), 152-160. (7 pp); note: this is short, but dense, give yourself plenty of time to read it

21: April 9 **Sexual consumerism and the sex industry**

(Online quiz 10: available April 10 - 13)

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Required readings (50 pages)

* + Max & Miller Ch. 6: Get happy (The mental health trait), pp. 99-116 (18 pp)
  + Max & Miller Ch. 7: Smarten up (The intelligence trait), pp. 117-134 (17 pp)
  + Max & Miller Ch. 18: Talking to women, pp. 277-291 (15 pp)

22: April 14 **Sexual selection for mental traits**

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Required readings (41 pages)

* + Meston & Buss, Ch. 6: The call of duty, pp. 117-144 (28 pp)
  + Max & Miller Ch. 8: Get your life together (The willpower trait), pp. 135-147 (13 pp)

23: April 16 **Conscientiousness and commitment**

(Online quiz 11: available April 17 - 20)

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Required readings (38 pages)

* Max & Miller Ch. 3: Clarify your mating goals and ethics, pp. 50-66 (17 pp)
* Miller, G. F. (2007). Sexual selection for moral virtues. *Quarterly Review of Biology*, *82*(2), 97-117. (21 pp); note: this is a long, challenging, and dense; give yourself plenty of time to read it

24: April 21 **Sexual morality**

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Required readings (41 pages)

* Meston & Buss, Ch. 3: The thing called love, pp. 50-77 (28 pp)
* Max & Miller Ch. 14: Show her how you feel (Romantic proof), pp. 214-227 (13 pp)

25: April 23 **Romantic love and romantic proof**

(Online quiz 12: available April 24 -27)

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Required readings (30 pages)

* Levay Ch. 7: Sexual relationships pp. 192-222, including box 7.2 and 7.3 (boxes 7.1 and 7.4 are optional) (30 pp)

26: April 28 **Sexual relationships**

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Required readings (28 pages)

* Levay Ch. 11: Sexuality across the lifespan: Adulthood, pp. 342-359 (middle), including box 11.1 (box 11.2 is optional) (17 pages)
* Henrich et al. (2012). The puzzle of monogamous marriage. *Phil. Trans.Royal Society of London B, 367*, 657-669. (11 pp); note: this is long, challenging, and dense, give yourself plenty of time to read it

27: April 30 **Marriage and monogamy**

(Online quiz 13: available May 1 - 4)

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Required readings (22 pages)

* Miller, G. F. (2019). Polyamory is growing – and we need to get serious about it. Quillette magazine, Oct 29. <https://quillette.com/2019/10/29/polyamory-is-growing-and-we-need-to-get-serious-about-it/> (6 pp)
* Weitzman, G., Davidson, J., & Phillips, R. A. (2009). *What psychology professionals should know about polyamory*. Baltimore, MD: National Coalition for Sexual Freedom. (Read pp. 7-23). (16 pp)

28: May 5 **Polyamory and open relationships**

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Required readings (5 pages +)

* Fleischman, D. (2018). Uncanny vulvas. (Blog on sex bots). *Jacobite*, April 24. (5 pages); note: this is short, but dense, give yourself plenty of time to read it
* *Possible additional reading to be announced*

29: May 7 **The future of sexuality**

(Online quiz 14: available May 8 - 11)

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(Final exams May 11-15: No final exams in this class)