

**Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 3670 3.0 Psychology of Sexual Orientation
Thursdays 2:30-5:30 PM
Winter 2024**

Course is delivered synchronously and in person. Students will complete group work assignments in lecture and as out of class work.

Instructor and T.A. Information

Instructor: Donald V. Brown, Jr.
Office Hours: by appointment
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T.A.	Hannie Smolyanitsky	Michael Stead
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Office Hours	By appointment/email	By appointment/email

Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology)

Course Credit Exclusions

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

Course website: [eClass](#)

All course materials will be available on the course eClass site, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. The site will be your central access point for course materials.

Course Description

Catalog Description: Examines how psychology theorizes and researches sexual orientations. Numerous theoretical perspectives are discussed and empirical research is reviewed. Issues include development of sexual orientations, and attitudes towards those with minority sexual orientations and identity development.

Course Description: Though this is a psychology course, it will be facilitated with a diverse array of materials in order to ensure comprehensive understanding of **sexuality studies** as an interdisciplinary field of study—how it intersects with the production and use of psychological knowledge. We will review and analyze materials, both theoretical and empirical, from academic disciplines outside of psychology as a way of contextualizing the narrative(s) that psychology has advanced around human sexuality over time, specifically in relation to individuals with diverse sexual identities. We will review historical trends as well as contemporary developments in the study of sexuality as a broad field. Regularly, throughout

the term, as a complement to this work, we will narrow our focus to the specifics of psychological processes related to the development and expression(s) of, as well as the diverse reactions to, human sexuality and diverse sexual orientations.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Critically analyse theoretical approaches to sexualities and gender identities
2. Identify social trends and processes related to sexualities and gender identities.
3. Discuss the origins of sexual orientations and transgender identities.
4. Describe how attitudes toward sexual and gender minorities vary across cultures.
5. Understand the social, cultural and psychological repercussions of racism, sexism, heterosexism and anti-homo/bi/trans sentiment.
6. Critique the assumptions of and quality of research related to sexual and gender minorities.

Specific Learning Objectives

1. Critically evaluate theoretical and empirical materials related to human sexuality to assess their utility for research and practice in psychology/psychological science
2. Examine how personal experience(s), theory, and practice all interrelate to establish contemporary perspectives on human sexuality and sexual orientation
3. Contextualize extant knowledge in the study of human sexuality with regard to academic discipline, national, cultural, and social geography/geographies and associated biases
4. Recognize and utilize (with appropriate caution) contemporary terminology related to sexual and gender identities, and their academic study
5. Communicate effectively, through collaborative and individual written work, your own understanding of human sexuality and its concomitant social trends and processes

Required Text

There is no required text for the course. Required readings will be available through York Libraries or posted to eClass.

Course Requirements and Assessment:

Assessment	Weight	Grading	Due Date (<i>by 11:59 PM</i>)
<i>Individual Assessments</i>			
Online Foundations Quiz	25%	100 Points	February 5
Forum Posts/Participation	15%	completion	Weekly
Group Evaluation	5%	completion	February 16
<i>Group Assessments</i>			
Group Contract	5%	completion	February 8
History Assignment	15%	50 Points	February 15
Sexuality Case Study Assignment	15%	50 Points	March 14
Social Media Assignment	20%	50 Points	April 11

Description of Assignments

There will be both individual and group assignments for our course. For individual assignments, each student will receive an individual grade. For group-based assignments all members of the group will receive the same grade (see below for more details).

Individual Assessments: The first assignment you will complete is a *foundations quiz*, which will ask you to demonstrate your knowledge and ability to apply the introductory material discussed in the course from January 11th through January 25th. This will be an online, take-home quiz to be completed on eClass by the specified due date. The quiz will open after class time on February 1st and will close by midnight on the due date. You can use notes from class, class readings, and your peers as resources to complete the quiz, if you wish. However, you are submitting your own work as an individual. The main objective is to write it in your own voice as this is an individual assessment. Be sure to cite any materials in APA format, with quotes and page numbers, to help support any claims made in your short answer responses. If any form of plagiarism or AI intervention is detected by the TAs, you will receive a 0 for this assessment.

Beginning February 1st you will also be asked to complete *weekly discussion forum posts*. These posts will be your individual contribution to group discussion spaces where you should discuss readings, group work planning, and upcoming group assignments. The expectation is that your posts are substantive statements or thoughtful questions posed about assigned readings, planning for the completion of an upcoming assignment, or the integration of the two. Your forum posts can integrate course readings into assignment preparation or act as a way to share resources with your group members toward successful completion of group assessments. No matter what you choose to post, you must show some engagement with your group and with course material each week in order to receive credit. You should also read and respond to posts made by your small group members as these exchanges should form the basis for ongoing conversation. TAs will check for posts weekly as you will have from the end of class until the beginning of the following week's class meeting to make your submission.

Following submission of the group contract (see below) and the first group assignment, you will be asked to provide feedback to your TA on how things are going with your group thus far. This will take the form of an individually submitted *group evaluation*. Were expectations met when translating the contract into working on the first assignment? Is everyone working well together? What are your concerns, if any, with your group's ability to complete the remaining assignments? These are the types of things you will be asked to reflect on in your submission. Your TA will review these and reach out if there are any concerns identified that require intervention.

Group Assessments: Group assignment submissions should include the name of all group members, your group number, the date of the submission, and the course and assignment title at the top of the page. The body of the document should include the names of all group

members next to their contributions to the assignment. Although the complete written product should be cohesive, we would still like to be able to see where every group member has contributed to the final submission. All assignments will be submitted as group papers (or slide copies), one submission per group. Assignments should be submitted, by the assigned due date/time, for marking by your designated TA for the course. More details about assignment requirements and submission procedures will be discussed in class as assignment distribution and due dates approach.

Once you are assigned to your small group for the semester, you will immediately begin work on a **group contract**. This contract should address how it is you and your group members intend to work together throughout the term. You should be explicit about timelines, roles and responsibilities, submission procedures (who will submit on eClass for the group), and any other details that will aid you in working together successfully. Your contract should be detailed, explicit, and signed by all members of your small group before being uploaded to eClass. Additional assignment details will be posted to eClass throughout the term.

Class Format and Attendance Policy

Although class participation is not a formal component of your evaluation, it is expected that you attend class each week prepared to engage with the material through active listening and group discussion. If you must miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to discuss missed material(s) with your peers. Lectures, presentations, and discussions will not be recorded for later use.

Grading as per Senate Policy

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 89, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar – [Grading Scheme for 2023-24](#)

Missed Tests/Midterm Exams/Late Assignment

Lateness in submitting any assignment will result in a decrease in the grade for that assignment. **One (1) point** will be subtracted for every subsequent day until you/your group submit your assignment. This only applies to assignments for which points are given. Completion assignments **will not** be accepted late.

Given the group-based nature of many of the assignments, it is anticipated that you will work collaboratively to share the burden of getting things done on time and at a high standard. If your entire group is unable to complete a submission for any reason, please be in touch with

your assigned TA as soon as possible to discuss the circumstances. Only under **extreme mitigating circumstances** will alternative assignments be provided.

Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Undergraduate Fall/Winter 2023-2024 Important Dates](#)

	Fall (Term F)	Year (Term Y)	Winter (Term W)
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 21	Sept. 21	Jan. 23
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 5	Oct. 26	Feb. 7
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 12	Feb. 11	18-Mar
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)	Nov. 13 - Dec. 7	Feb. 12 - April 10	March 19 - April 10

Add and Drop Deadline Information

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

You may [withdraw from a course](#) using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as 'W'. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.

Academic Integrity for Students

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#)

Test Banks

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as “Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation” (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or “encouraging, enabling or causing others” (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The university encourages students with disabilities to register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors as necessary. Please let me know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course.

<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

Excerpt from Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

1. Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.

All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs. For further information please refer to: [York University Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC 3670 course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

Course Schedule

January 11, 2024 Acknowledging Our Lens(es) | Course Introduction & Overview
January 18, 2024 Foundations: Establishing Lens(es) for Analysis
January 25, 2024 Foundations: Refining our Lens(es) | What is Sexuality Studies?

UNIT II | Sexuality in Development: Identity & Biopsychosocial Factors

February 1, 2024 Childhood & Adolescence
February 8, 2024 Adulthood & Aging
February 15, 2024 Interiority, Fluidity, & Change
February 22, 2024 Reading Week | No Class Meeting

UNIT III | Embodiment Matters: Addressing Health, Body, & Mind

February 29, 2024 Physical Health, Sexuality, & Bodies
March 7, 2024 Mental Health & Psychological Well Being
March 14, 2024 Healthy Relationships & Pleasure

UNIT IV | Sexuality in Broader Perspective: Society, Attitudes, & Practices

March 21, 2024 Recontextualizing Heterosexuality
March 28, 2024 Discrimination & Forms of Violence
April 4, 2024 Social Justice, Allyship, & Advocacy