

PSY 317: Sexual Assault: Context, Interventions, Prevention

Summer 2025 Section II: July 1 – August 15, 2025

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Office Hours: Please email me to set up a meeting.

Part I: Course Objectives and Key Disclaimers

Course Objectives

- To define sexual assault within the legal and social context of the United States.
- To understand the prevalence, nature, and impact of sexual assault in the U.S.
- To analyze the situational and contextual factors associated with sexual assault.
- To explore the physical, psychological, and emotional effects of sexual assault on survivors.
- To understand how systems of oppression intersect with sexual violence.
- To explore the services available to survivors and evaluate how institutions engage with them.
- To assess the effectiveness of various strategies aimed at combating sexual violence.
- To critique current interventions designed to support sexual assault survivors.
- To analyze existing prevention efforts and their impact in reducing sexual violence.

Course Scope

This course will not include direct discussion of all forms of sexual violence. It will focus on adult sexual assault in the U.S., but will not include foci on: sex work, sexual violence in a global context (e.g., female circumcision, etc.), domestic violence, rape as a tool of war, human trafficking, child sexual abuse, or other topics not referenced in the syllabus.

Please read the following important notes about the course:

Course Content

The main topic of this course is sexual violence and, as such, explicit language will be present in reading, course materials, and online discussions. You may find some course readings and conversations uncomfortable, inappropriate, or triggering and you may view some information as offensive or in opposition to your belief system. Sensitivity to such issues is my utmost concern. The presentation of such information is an integral part of the course and the educational experience. If you are concerned, please reconsider taking this course.

Sexual violence is a pervasive social problem that affects everyone in some way, shape, or form. The online classroom is a safe, but not always comfortable, space. Tough discussions will occur, but must be respectful. It is likely that some

individuals in this course are survivors of sexual violence or related topics. Please be respectful of the fact that issues being discussed are likely deeply personal to others present (even if you yourself identify as a survivor!).

This is an academic course. As such, class discussions will not be used to examine personal experiences. If you believe the topics in this course could be triggering or upsetting to you, please consider whether this is the right time to take this course. If you would like to continue to take the course, please participate in self-care before and after logging onto the class.

Limits to Confidentiality

I am a mandated reporter and must report all disclosed cases of sexual assault or harassment as long as the incident: occurred at a university-sponsored event, occurred on university property, or involves a university community member with respect to conduct that may have occurred while they were a university community member. In addition, I am mandated to report suspected child abuse/neglect or any threats of harm to oneself or others.

If you share experiences of sexual assault or harassment during the class, I must share your name and the details of the disclosure to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and MSU Police. OCR will then include these facts (but not your information) in their university statistics on sexual violence. They will also contact you via email to provide university resources. It is your decision if you want to use provided services or respond to OCR's email. If you would like to talk with someone about your experiences during this course but want to remain confidential, see D2L for a list of confidential local and national resources.

While we may discuss and critique the mandate, I still have to follow it, so you should not disclose experiences of sexual violence unless you are comfortable having the information shared with OIE. Despite the mandate, I do not wish to further the culture of silence surrounding sexual violence. All are encouraged to use the resources listed below and on the D2L course resource page (not mandated university reporters) as they process their feelings and experiences in this course.

Here are some MSU Resources in the event that you should need further support.

Resource	Contact Info
Center for Survivors	24-Hour Crisis Hotline 517-372-6666 Crisis Chat (10am-10pm)
Sexual Assault Healthcare Program	Phone: 517-353-2700
Safe Place	Phone: 517-355-1100
Counseling & Psychiatric Services	24-Hour Crisis Hotline (517) 355-8270

Part II: Course Structure & Technology

Structure

- This course will be delivered entirely online through the course management system, Desire2Learn (D2L). The D2L website will be where you will access online lessons, course materials, additional resources, and where assignments and grades will be posted.
- This course is built on a weekly framework. Course materials will become available by **8:00 a.m. Eastern Time (EST) each Saturday**. Once the weekly course materials are posted, the folders will remain open for the rest of the semester. Assignments may be completed and submitted any time the week they are due, however all materials need to be posted to D2L **no later than 8:00 pm (EST) on their due dates. All course times posted in this syllabus are Eastern Standard Time (EST).**

Course Technology Requirements

- **Device Requirements**
 - A desktop or laptop computer is recommended for the best experience.
 - A tablet or smartphone may be used for limited access, but some features may not function properly.
- **Operating System & Software**
 - Windows 10 or newer / macOS 11 (Big Sur) or newer
 - Updated web browser (Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge, or Safari)
 - Microsoft Office or equivalent (Google Docs, LibreOffice) for document creation and submission
 - Adobe Reader or an equivalent PDF viewer
- **Internet & Connectivity**
 - A reliable, high-speed internet connection (minimum 5 Mbps download speed)
 - A backup internet access plan in case of outages

Note: In the case of missing deadlines because of internet connectivity problems, extensions on discussions, quizzes, and papers will not be granted.

- **D2L Access**
 - <https://D2L.msu.edu/>
 - Go to MSU's course management system – D2L using this URL: <https://d2l.msu.edu/>.
 - Login using your MSU username and password.

- If you are officially registered for the course, you will find our course, PSY316, listed under My Courses and available from the Select a Course pull down menu. (If you think you ARE registered but the course does not appear, please contact the D2L Help Desk.)
- **Technical Support**
 - If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem, you can:
 - Visit the [Distance Learning Services Support Site](#)
 - Visit the [Desire2Learn Help Site](#)
 - You can also call the D2L Help Desk at:
 - Toll Free (844) 678-6200
 - Local (517) 432-6200
 - It is much more effective to contact the D2L Help Desk rather than the instructor as D2L staff are available 24/7 and well-trained in helping you navigate technical problems.

Part III: Course Policies and Student Responsibilities

Safe and Respectful Learning Environment

Our online classroom requires trust and safety, and I will try to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. If the material becomes emotionally overwhelming or you find the discussions difficult at any point during the semester, please reach out to me privately or seek the support of formal or informal resources that can help. Some useful resources are referenced in this syllabus.

There will be basic ground rules for class, as below:

1. You know your life and experiences better than anyone else, including the instructor, but avoid assuming that what has been true for you is true for everyone.
2. Never ask another student in the course if they are a victim or survivor (students may choose to discuss their own experiences).
3. Always maintain confidentiality with respect to other students' experiences and views.
4. Do not speak or expect another student in the class to speak on behalf of a group.
5. Keep an open mind and focus on critiquing ideas, not individuals.
6. Commit to learning, not debating.
7. Avoid blame, speculation, inflammatory language, insensitive or offensive comments

Participation

- Everyone's participation is needed to accomplish this course's goals. Reading is required importance; please complete all readings before viewing the corresponding lecture.

- Please aim to create a safe space for the sharing of varied opinions and life experiences. You may challenge and question others' ideas in the discussion posts but do so respectfully. Personal stories shared in class discussion posts should be respected and should not be repeated by other students.

Assignment Submission

Assignments should all be submitted only through D2L in the appropriate folder by the deadline noted on the syllabus. Begin the submission process early so you have time to utilize the resources listed above and work through unexpected problems.

Absences

- Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not participate in this class. If you are going to be absent from class for a week (or more) due to an emergency and are unable to complete an assignment on time, please inform me as soon as possible.

Dropping the Course

- It is your responsibility to understand when you need to consider un-enrolling from a course. Please refer to the Michigan State University Office of the Registrar for important dates and deadlines.

Academic Dishonesty

- Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." The Psychology Department adheres to policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations.
- Plagiarism involves taking credit for someone else's work or ideas, submitting a piece of work (for example, a paper, assignment, discussion post) which in part or in whole is not entirely your own work without fully and accurately attributing those same portions to their correct source. This includes information taken from the Internet. You are expected to do your own, original work on each assignment in each class. If you recycle your own course work from one class to another, you may face an allegation of academic dishonesty.
- If I think you have committed an act of plagiarism, I may take appropriate action, which includes the issuing of a "penalty grade" (e.g., failing an assignment or course) for academic dishonesty. Article 11 of the Academic Freedom Report for Students at MSU, or the "AFR," defines a penalty grade as "a grade assigned by an instructor who believes a student to have committed academic dishonesty."

Accommodations

- Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. If you have a documented disability and verification from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD), and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me early in the semester.
- It is your responsibility to provide documentation of disability to RCPD and meet with an RCPD specialist to request special accommodation before classes start. RCPD may be contacted by phone at (517) 884-7273 (884-RCPD), or via their website (<http://www.rcpd.msu.edu>).
- You may make up course work missed to observe a major religious holiday, participate in a required activity for another course or a university-sanctioned event, or due to personal issues. If you need accommodations, please email me so we can work things out.

Learning Communities and “Netiquette”

- Because our course is delivered entirely online, writing respectfully is critical to our establishing a productive learning environment for everyone. Please think carefully about how easy it is for online communications to be misinterpreted. For online etiquette (Netiquette) suggestions, read [this posting](#).

Communication with the Instructor

- Please see the syllabus before contacting me about course materials or assignments. I can be reached via email at bremere@msu.edu. I will try to respond within 24 hours on weekdays, Monday through Friday, and by 5 pm EST on the Monday following an email sent on the weekend. If travel, illness, or research work is likely to affect my response times, I will notify all students through D2L.
- Please keep the following in mind when emailing me:
First, ask yourself this question: “Can this question be answered by looking in the syllabus or looking on the D2L course site?”
- Please use PSY 317 in the subject so I know you’re a student in this course asking a question.
- Please address the e-mail properly (i.e., Hi, Emily), proofread your email, be polite, and sign your e-mail with your full name, so I know who you are.
- Check your e-mail regularly! During the course, I will email you with announcements and reminders. Please read them ASAP as they will contain time-sensitive course information.

Part IV: Workload, Assignments, and Grading Criteria

Workload

- Summer courses are intense, and an upper-level course is particularly challenging. Plan to spend around 4 hours per day working on PSY 317 (e.g., reading, viewing lectures, working on online, taking quizzes, studying). See D2L for tips and resources on ways to effectively read journal articles/get through readings.
- The best way to be successful in PSY 317 is to stay on top of the material. We follow a compressed schedule so it can be easy to fall behind. Remember, we will cover the same material that is normally covered in an entire semester! You should commit to seven weeks of working hard. **Do not plan a vacation in the middle of this class.**

Readings

- This course does not require a textbook. Instead, required readings will be drawn from a selection of academic articles and other scholarly sources.
- Each week will include a set of mandatory readings that form the core of class discussions, lectures, and assignments. **To succeed in this course, it is essential that you complete all required readings on time, as assignments will draw heavily from them.** Optional readings will also be provided for students interested in exploring topics in greater depth.
- All readings, both required and optional, are posted and regularly updated on the course D2L site. **Please check the D2L page weekly for the most current reading list.**

Assignments

- Assignments will consist of these main components: (1) 7 weekly original discussion posts & peer responses, (2) three quizzes, (3) three critical reflection papers, and (4) one final exam. Here are some further guidelines about what to expect for the assignments:

Weekly Participation in Online Learning Community Discussions (60 points)

- Through the D2L Discussion Board feature, we will create an online learning community of dialogue and interaction. There are seven weekly discussion boards (one each week) each worth a total of 10 points (6 points for the original post and 4 points for a peer response, or 10 points for the original post for the first and last

weeks due to the fact that there is no peer response required for those weeks).

- Discussion posts will open Saturdays at 8:00am and be accessible until 8:00pm Eastern Time on the following Friday. The exception is Week 1; discussion boards will open on Tuesday, 7/1 at 12am.
- Each original post will be due on Wednesday at 8:00pm every week and the peer response post will be due by Friday at 8:00pm Eastern Time (exceptions – Week 1: The original post is due on Saturday 7/5 at 8:00pm and there is no peer response post AND Week 7: Only an original post is due, no peer response post).
- Each student is responsible for:
 - **Original post:** Write a well-developed formal original post of approximately 300 – 400 words in length that responds to a question posted by the instructor (6 points (weeks 2-6) or 10 points (weeks 1 and 7)).
 - **Peer-response post:** Write a comment of approximately 2 – 4 sentences in length in response to questions/ issues raised by one (required) or more of their peers' original post (4 points). No peer response posts for weeks 1 and 7.
- To receive credit for your posts, discussion posts should pertain to the subject matter covered in the specific week. For details on ways to craft your discussion post and specific guidelines, review the "Guidelines for Discussion Post" document on D2L.

Quizzes (60 points)

- Every 2 weeks, you will complete a multiple-choice quiz on D2L covering the lectures, readings, and module materials over a two-week period. You will only have one attempt on each quiz. **Quizzes will open on Saturdays at 8:00am Eastern time and will be accessible until 8:00pm Eastern time on the following Friday.** You will have 60 minutes to complete the quiz. Please remember NOT to start the quiz after 7:00 pm Eastern time on the day that it is due because you will not complete the quiz by 8:00 pm Eastern time!
- There will be 3 quizzes due at the end of week 2, 4, and 6. You can earn up to 20 points on each quiz for a total of 60 possible points at the end of the course.
- The quiz format will be comprised of 35 to 40 questions, (multiple choice and true/false), each worth either 0.5 or 1 points.
 - Quiz 1 will cover materials from Week 1 and 2.
 - Quiz 2 will cover materials from Week 3 and 4.
 - Quiz 3 will cover materials from Week 5 and 6.
- Please follow these suggestions to prevent problems during your participation in this course:
 - Use a recommended browser.
 - Clear your cache and cookies before starting a quiz or exam.
 - Have D2L open only to the quiz browser. If you have the course open in a second browser then you may have guest status in the exam browser and be

logged in with your NETID in the other. Your quiz could end up with blank sections even after you enter data, or it can skip questions.

Critical Reflection Papers (120 points)

- You will be asked to complete three 3–4-page papers this semester. Prompts and rubrics for all three papers will be posted on D2L. Each reflection paper is worth 40 points; the three reflection papers are worth 120 total points. They will be due at the end of weeks 3, 5, and 7.
- These papers should adhere to these guidelines:
 - 3 – 4 pages, double spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman, one-inch margins
 - Use APA style and formatting when citing readings and materials.
 - Papers should incorporate content from readings and lectures while responding to the prompt.
 - You are expected to reflect on the course materials covered during the week. Do not copy and paste information from any of the assigned or optional readings.
 - Reflection papers must be submitted on D2L via the assignments folder.
 - Please “Guidelines for Critical Reflection Papers” on D2L for more details.

Final Exam (160 points)

- The final exam will be administered via D2L and consist of 80 multiple choice and true/false questions. It will start on Monday 8/11 at 8:00am EST and close on Friday 8/15 at 8:00pm EST. **Note: You cannot submit the final exam late.**
- Once you open the exam you will have 2 hours to complete it. It will be cumulative. Please do NOT start the exam after 6:00pm EST on 8/15 because you may not complete it by 8! If you have a conflict with this date, let me know within the first 3 weeks of the course to make accommodations.

Late Work

- **Critical Reflection Papers:** Students are expected to complete work on time. Assignments submitted up to 24 hours late will incur a 10% deduction. Assignments submitted over 24 hours late will incur a 20% deduction for each additional day they are late. Assignments submitted beyond one week will not be accepted. Late work will NOT be accepted for Critical Reflection 3.
- **Quizzes and Final Exam:** These are only available for a specified window of time and there is only one attempt allowed for each.
- **Discussion posts and peer responses:** Due to the fact that discussion posts and peer responses are time sensitive in nature (they respond to the weekly readings and to peer discussion posts), late work will NOT be accepted for the discussion posts/peer responses. However, there will be 7 total discussion/response opportunities and students will be allowed to drop their lowest score so only 6 discussions/responses will be counted towards the final grade.
- **Late work:** will NOT be accepted for extra credit opportunities.

- Given that this course covers sensitive and potentially distressing material please reach out as soon as possible if you anticipate difficulty meeting a deadline due to any personal challenges related to the course content. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis, **provided you communicate at least 24 hours before the deadline.**

Final Grades

The total number of points possible for this class is 400 points:

Weekly Online Discussions	60 points
Quizzes	60 points
Critical Reflection Papers	120 points
Final Exam	160 points

Final grades will be based on a percentage of total points earned.

90% of 400 points	360 points and above	4.0
85% of 400 points	340 points to 359 points	3.5
80% of 400 points	320 points to 339 points	3.0
75% of 400 points	300 points to 319 points	2.5
70% of 400 points	280 points to 299 points	2.0
65% of 400 points	260 points to 279 points	1.5
60% of 400 points	240 points to 259 points	1.0
Less than 60% of 400 points	less than 239 points	0.0

Extra Credit (20 points)

- The total number of extra credit points possible for this class is 20 points:
- There will be **3 extra credit opportunities** (Online Discussions) that will open **during Week 3, 4, and 5**. Each extra credit discussion post is worth 10 points. Complete **any two** extra credit online discussions to earn up to 20 points. **You will only earn points for the first two extra credit assignments you complete.**
- Policy on grade changes:** *These are strict cut-offs and I will adhere to them.* At the end of the semester, if you believe that I made an error in calculating your grade, please let me know. I will check your grade, and I will change it if I have made an error. This is the only circumstance under which I will change a grade. There will be no exceptions.
- To view your grade in D2L: 1) Select your course. 2) Click the Assessments dropdown. 3) Select Grades.

Part V: Course Schedule

- Here is a general indication of when we will cover the topics in the course. However, as the instructor, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule according to the pace of the course and the needs of the students. Please check D2L regularly to keep up with the topics, announcements and reminders. You will be given notice of any changes.

Reminder: All times are East Lansing, MI time (Eastern Standard Time).

Dates	Lecture Topics	Assignment/Quiz Deadlines
Week 1 7/1-7/5	Introduction to PSY 317	Original Discussion Post 1 Due July 5 at 8 PM
	Module 1a.: Defining sexual assault	No Peer Response Post this week
Week 2 7/5-7/11	Module 1b.: Examining the causes and impacts of sexual assault	
		Original Discussion Post 2 Due July 9 at 8 PM
		Peer Response Post 2 Due July 11 at 8 PM
Week 3 7/12-7/18	Module 2a.: Sexual assault on college campuses	Quiz 1 Due July 11 at 8 PM
Week 4 7/19-7/25	Module 2b: Perpetrators	
Week 5 7/26-7/31	Module 3a.: Power and oppression	Original Discussion Post 3 Due July 16 at 8 PM
		Peer Response Post 3 Due July 18 at 8 PM
		Critical Reflection Paper 1 Due July 18 at 8 PM
Week 6 8/1-8/6	Module 3b.: Sexual assault and vulnerable populations	
Week 7 8/7-8/13	Module 4a.: Disclosure & help seeking - secondary victimization	
Week 8 8/14-8/20		Original Discussion Post 4 Due July 23 at 8 PM

	Module 4b.: Services & responses within formal systems	Peer Response Post 4 Due July 25 at 8 PM
		Quiz 2 Due July 25 at 8 PM
Week 5 7/26-8/1	Module 5a.: Advocacy Module 5b.: Prevention	Original Discussion Post 5 Due July 30 at 8 PM
		Peer Response Post 5 Due August 1 at 8 PM
		Critical Reflection Paper 2 Due August 1 at 8 PM
Week 6 8/2-8/8	Module 6a.: Empowerment Module 6b.: Activism and reform Module 6c.: Activism and policy reform – A campus perspective	Original Discussion Post 6 Due August 6 at 8 PM
		Peer Response Post 6 Due August 8 at 8 PM
		Quiz 3 Due August 8 at 8 PM
Week 7 8/9-8/15	This is the last week of class. Your assignments and final exam must be completed by: Friday, August 15, at 8 PM EST.	Original Discussion Post 6 Due August 13 at 8 PM
		No Peer Response Post this week
		Critical Reflection Paper 3 Due August 15 at 8 PM
		Final Exam Due August 15 at 8 PM
		Extra Credit Due August 15 at 8 PM