

## **PSYD11: Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships Fall 2011**

### **Course**

PSYD11H3: The Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

Class Time and Location: Mon 11am-1pm MW264 (Lec01) or Mon 1-3pm AA205 (Lec02)

Website: <https://portal.utoronto.ca/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

### **Instructor**

SiSi Tran, Ph.D.

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Office: Science Research Building, SY141

Office Hours: Mondays 10-11am or by appointment

### **Course Description, Goals, and Objectives**

The course provides an introduction to theory and research in close relationships. It covers topics including (1) theoretical perspectives on close relationships, (2) perceptions of and interactions within close relationships, (3) development and maintenance of relationships, and (4) relationship conflict and dissolution. The course is structured as an undergraduate seminar, geared around class discussion.

The ***general goals and objectives*** of the course are to help students:

1. Learn and gain mastery over basic facts, research findings, terminology, principles, and theories important in various areas of close relationships.
2. Gain a basic understanding of
  - Theoretical Perspectives – major ideas and frameworks that have guided close relationships research: evolutionary, ethological, and interdependence perspectives.
  - Perceptions of and Interactions within Close Relationships – relationship schemas, goals, and interaction patterns.
  - Relationship Development and Maintenance – love, commitment, trust, intimacy, maintenance mechanisms, social support, culture, and influence of technology
  - Relationship Conflict and Dissolution – unrequited love, loneliness, jealousy, envy, conflict, violence, and dissolution.
3. Practice and develop critical thinking skills, written and oral communications skills.
4. Analyze current issues and controversies in the field of close relationships.
5. Find ways to apply psychological findings to everyday life.

Course objectives may be obtained through reading and studying the course packet, through satisfactory completion of assignments, and by attention to and active participation in classroom lectures, discussions, and activities.

### **Required Readings**

“PSYD11 – Interpersonal Relationships” course packet of readings. Supplemental articles can be found in electronic form at the UTOR library (<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/home>).

### **Reaction Papers**

A one-page (approx. 250 words) reaction paper will be submitted each week about the readings for that week. The reaction paper is just as it sounds – a “reaction” to the readings. The assignment is designed to ensure that students think critically about the readings and deliberately express their thoughts and opinions about the topic. The paper should highlight components of the reading that students find interesting, insightful, controversial, and/or

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confusing. This paper can be open and casual “free-thought”. Bullet points will not be accepted. Instead, it should be formatted with complete thoughts, sentences, and paragraphs.

Each reaction paper is worth 15 points (120 points in all). Each reaction paper is due by 12pm (noon) on the Sunday before class. The reaction papers should be submitted via Blackboard Discussion Board. Five points will be deducted from the student’s score for late submissions (between 12:01pm and midnight on Sunday). Reaction papers submitted after Sunday will not be accepted.

### **Class Participation**

As a special topics seminar, this class is structured primarily around class discussion. Thus, it is imperative that students actively participate in class discussions, activities, and exercises. This will greatly enhance the classroom experience. It will make learning more interactive, more fun, more personally relevant, and more enduring. Class participation will be monitored as a whole throughout the course, worth 30 points.

### **Article Summary and Guided Discussion**

Throughout the semester, each student will pair up with another student to guide class discussion around one research article. These articles are not included in the course packet. Instead the articles are supplementary to the course packet. Only the pair of students who are assigned to present the research article will be responsible for reading it. They will then very briefly summarize the theory and findings in a presentation and guide class discussion around the principles from the article. Detailed instructions will be provided in class. The article presentation and guided discussion is worth 100 points.

### **Final Proposal Presentation**

The final presentation will involve pairing up with another student to prepare and present a formal research proposal. This will involve researching a topic of the students’ own interest in relationships, reviewing the literature, and preparing a research proposal to further examine a specific model, theory, or phenomenon. The presentation should include (a) an overview of the model, theory, or phenomenon that the research proposal is designed to examine, (b) details of the sample, method, and expected results of the proposal, and (c) a conclusion about how the proposal is significant and innovative. Visual aids are recommended (e.g., PowerPoint presentation, overhead slides, handouts). The presentation should last approximately 10-12 minutes with a few minutes for questions. The final presentation is worth 100 points.

### **Disabilities**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities who are registered with AccessAbility Services. Students who register and utilize the AccessAbility services will not be identified on their transcript as receiving accommodations. Information disclosed to the service is confidential and is disclosed only with the student’s permission. Students in need of disability accommodations should schedule an appointment with me early in the semester to discuss appropriate accommodations for the course. Talking with me well in advance is always better. There is little to nothing that I can do for you *after* an assignment is due.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University of Toronto’s *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* outlines the behaviours that

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constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences.

*"Scholastic Dishonesty:* Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis."

In this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask me.

### **Grading System**

Class Engagement:	Reaction Papers (15 pts/each)	120 pts
	Class Participation	30
Presentations:	Guided Discussion	100
	Final Proposal	100
Total points		350 pts

### **Course Calendar**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Topic</b>
12-Sep		Introduction to Relationships Research
19-Sep	Autobiography Due	Evolutionary Perspective
26-Sep		Ethological Perspective
3-Oct		Interdependence Perspective
10-Oct	Thanksgiving Break, No Classes	
17-Oct		Schemas, Goals, and Interaction Patterns
24-Oct		Love, Commitment, Trust, and Intimacy
31-Oct		New Frontiers in Relationships Research
7-Nov		Maintenance Mechanisms
14-Nov		Conflict and Dissolution
21-Nov	Individual Meetings	
28-Nov		Student Presentations
1-Dec		Student Presentations

## **Course Readings**

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### **September 12 – Introduction to Relationships Research**

Berscheid, E. (2001). The greening of relationship science. In H. T. Reis & C. E. Rusbult (Eds.), *Close relationships: Key readings in social psychology* (pp. 25-34). New York, NY: Psychology Press.

### **September 19 – Evolutionary Perspective**

Kenrick, D. T., & Trost, M. R. (1997). Evolutionary approaches to relationships. In S. Duck (Eds.), *Handbook of personal relationships* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed, pp. 151- 177). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

#### Article Presentation

Gangestad, S. W., Simpson, J. A., Cousins, A. J., Carver-Apgar, C. E., & Christensen, N. P. (2004). Women's preferences for male behavioral displays change across the menstrual cycle. *Psychological Science*, 15, 203-207.

### **September 26 – Ethological Perspective**

Weinfield, N. S., Sroufe, L. A., Egeland, B., & Carlson, E. A. (2008). Individual differences in infant-caregiver attachment: Conceptual and empirical aspects of security. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications 2<sup>nd</sup> edition* (pp. 78-101). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Fraley, R. C., & Shaver, P. R. (2000). Adult romantic attachment: Theoretical developments, emerging controversies, and unanswered questions. *Review of General Psychology*, 4, 132-154.

#### Article Presentations

Simpson, J. A., Collins, W. A., Tran, S., & Haydon, K. C. (2007). Attachment and the experience and expression of emotions in adult romantic relationships: A developmental perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92, 355-367.

### **October 3 – Interdependence Perspective**

Kelley, H. H. (1997). Expanding the analysis of social orientations by reference to the sequential-temporal structure of situations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 27, 373-404.

Rusbult, C. E., Arriaga, X. B., & Agnew, C. R. (2003). Interdependence in close relationships. In G. J. O. Fletcher & M. S. Clark (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Interpersonal processes* (359-387). Boston, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

#### Article Presentations

Drigotas, S. M., & Rusbult, C. E. (1992). Should I stay or should I go? A dependence model of break-ups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 62, 62-87.

### **October 17 – Schemas, Goals, and Interaction Patterns**

Brehm, S. S., Miller, R. S., Perlman, D., & Campbell, S. M. (2002a). Social cognition. In S.S. Brehm, R. S. Miller, D. Perlman, & S. M Campbell (Eds.), *Intimate relationships* (pp. 95-124). Boston, MA: McGraw Companies Inc.

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Simpson, J. A., Fletcher, G. J. O., & Campbell, L. (2003). The structure and function of ideal standards in close relationships. In G. J. O. Fletcher & M. S. Clark (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Interpersonal processes* (pp. 86-106). Boston, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Shah, J. (2006). When your wish is my desire: A triangular model of self-regulatory relationships. In K. Vohs & E. Finkel (Eds.), *Self and relationships: Connecting intrapersonal and interpersonal processes* (pp. 387-406). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

### Article Presentations

Downey, G., Frietas, A. L., Michaelis, B., & Khouri, H. (1998). The self-fulfilling prophecy in close relationships: Rejection sensitivity and rejection by romantic partners. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 545-560.

Murray, S. L., Derrick, J. L., Leder, S., & Holmes, J. (2008). Balancing connectedness and self-protection goals in close relationships: A level-of-processing perspective on risk regulation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94, 429-459.

### **October 24 – Love, Commitment, Trust, and Intimacy**

Harvey, J. H., & Weber, A. L. (2002). Love and commitment. In J. H. Harvey & A. L. Weber (Eds.), *Odyssey of the heart* (pp. 77-94). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc.

Holmes, J. G., & Rempel, J. K. (1989). Trust in close relationships. In C. Hendrick (Ed.), *Close relationships* (pp. 187-220). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Laurenceau, J. P., & Kleinman, B. M. (2006). Intimacy in personal relationships. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 637-653). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

### Article Presentations

Wieselquist, J., Rusbult, C. E., Foster, C. A., & Agnew, C. R. (1999). Commitment, pro-relationship behavior, and trust in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77(5), 942-966.

Aron, A., Norman, C. C., Aron, E. A., McKenna, C., & Heyman, R. E. (2000). Couples' shared participation in novel and arousing activities and experienced relationship quality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 273-284.

### **October 31 – New Frontiers in Relationships Research**

Goodwin, R., & Pillay, U. (2006). Relationships, culture, and social change. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman's (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 695-708). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Diamond, L. (2006). The intimate same-sex relationships of sexual minorities. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman's (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 293-312). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Boase, J., & Wellman, B. (2006). Personal relationships: On and off the Internet. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman's (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 709-723). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

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### Article Presentations

Anderson, S. L., Adams, G., & Plaut, V.C. (2008). The cultural grounding of personal relationship: The importance of attractiveness in everyday life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 352-368.

Kraut, R., Kiesler, S., Boneva, B., Cummings, J., Helgeson, V., & Crawford, A. (2002). Internet paradox revisited. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(1), 49-74.

### **November 7 – Maintenance Mechanisms and Social Support**

Brehm, S. S., Miller, R. S., Perlman, D., & Campbell, S. M. (2002b). Fostering relationships: Getting, maintaining, and repairing them. In S.S. Brehm, R. S. Miller, D. Perlman, & S. M Campbell (Eds.), *Intimate relationships* (423-454). Boston, MA: McGraw Companies Inc.

Sarason, B. R., & Sarason, I. G. (2001). Ongoing aspects of relationships and health outcomes: Social support, social control, companionship, and relationship meaning. In J. Harvey & A. Wenzel (Eds.), *Close romantic relationships: Maintenance and enhancement* (pp. 277-298). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (2001). Contextual influences on marriage: Implications for policy and intervention. In *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14, 171-174.

### Article Presentations

Murray, S. L., Rose, P., Holmes, J. G., Derrick, J., Podchaski, E. J., Bellavia, G., & Griffin, D. (2005). Putting the partner within reach: A dyadic perspective on felt security in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88, 327-347.

Gable, S. L., Reis, H. T., Impett, E. A., & Asher, E. R. (2004). What do you do when things go right?: The intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits of sharing positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87, 228-245.

### **November 14 – Conflict and Dissolution**

Kline, G. H., Pleasant, N. D., Whitton, S. W., & Markman, H. J. (2006). Understanding couple conflict. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 445-462). New York, NY: Cambridge Univ Press.

Christensen, A., & Pasch, L. (1993). The sequence of marital conflict: An analysis of seven phases of marital conflict in distressed and nondistressed couples. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 13, 3-14.

Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (1995). The longitudinal course of marital quality and stability. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 3-34.

### Article Presentations

Amato, P. R., & Booth, A. (2001). The legacy of parents' marital discord: Consequences for children's marital quality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81, 627-638.

Sullivan, K. T., Pasch, L. A., Johnson, M. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (2010). Social support, problem-solving, and the longitudinal course of newlywed marriage. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 98, 631-644.