

## **PSYD11: Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships Winter 2014**

### **Course**

PSYD11H3: The Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

Class Time and Location: Mondays 11am-1pm, HW408

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

### **Instructor**

SiSi Tran, Ph.D.

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Office: Science Wing, SW531

Office Hours: Mondays 1-2pm 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 major research findings, terminology, principles, and theories in the field of interpersonal relationships.
2. Gain a basic understanding of
  - Theoretical Perspectives – ideas and frameworks that have guided close relationships research: evolutionary, ethological, and interdependence perspectives.
  - Perceptions of and Interactions within Close Relationships – relationship schemas, goals, perceptions, and interaction patterns.
  - Relationship Development and Maintenance – commitment, trust, intimacy, maintenance mechanisms, self- and partner-regulation, sexuality, 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 class lectures, discussions, and activities.

### **Required Readings**

Unlike many university courses, this upper level seminar does not have a traditional textbook. Instead, the readings for this course have been individually selected and compiled from many different sources to more fully represent the field of interpersonal relationships.

The required readings and supplemental articles for the course can be found in the “Course Readings” link on our Blackboard website. All course readings are in compliance with the University of Toronto copyright access guidelines.

### **Reaction Papers**

A one-page 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 own thoughts and opinions about the topic. The paper should highlight components of the readings that students find interesting, insightful, controversial, and/or confusing. Students should use these papers to provide a case for their own perspectives about the ideas, with a clear and compelling analysis. 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 paper is due by 12pm 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 senior level seminar, this class is structured primarily around class discussion. Thus, it is imperative that students actively participate in 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.

### **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.) The students will briefly summarize the theory and findings and guide class discussion around the principles from the article in a 20-minute class discussion. Detailed instructions will be provided in class. The article presentation and guided discussion is worth 50 points.

### **Final Presentation**

The final presentation will involve pairing up with another student to research a topic of their own interest in interpersonal relationships. In the presentation, each pair of students will (a) present a specific model, theory, or phenomenon, (b) review the literature pertaining to this topic, (c) present a set of hypotheses to fill a gap that has yet to be tested in the literature, and (d) propose a methodological procedure to test their predictions. Visual aids are recommended (e.g., powerpoint presentation). The presentation should last approximately 10-12 minutes with a few minutes for questions. The final presentation is worth 50 points.

### **Written Proposal**

The final paper will be an extension of the final presentation from above – students will research a topic of their own interest in interpersonal relationships, including a review of the literature, hypotheses, method, and expected results. Although the presentation for the proposal will be conducted in collaboration with another student, the research paper will be written separately and each student will receive their own mark for the final written proposal. It is expected that the overarching topic and many details of the methods and expected results will be similar for each pair of students. Detailed instructions will be provided in class. The final paper is worth 100 points. Late papers will be accepted up to one week late however 10 points will be deducted from the score for every day that it is late.

**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 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.”

**Grading System**

Class Engagement:	Reaction Papers (15 pts/each)	120 pts
	Class Participation	30
Presentations:	Guided Discussion	50
	Final Presentation	50
Research Proposal:	Final Proposal	100
Total points		350 pts

**Course Calendar**

Date	Deadlines	Topic
Jan 6		Introduction to Relationships Research
Jan 13	Autobiography Due	Evolutionary Perspective
Jan 20		Ethological Perspective
Jan 27		Interdependence Perspective
Feb 3		Relationship Goals and Schemas
Feb 10		Behavioral Regulation & Interaction Patterns
Feb 17	Family Day, No Class	
Feb 24		Sexuality in Relationships
Mar 3		Culture, Internet, and Social Change
Mar 10		Conflict and Dissolution
Mar 17		Individual Meetings (my office SW531)
Mar 24		Student Presentations
Mar 31	Final Paper Due (Sun, April 6th)	Student Presentations

## **Course Readings**

(Readings are in accordance with University of Toronto copyright access guidelines 2014).

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### **January 6 – 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: Psych Press.

### **January 13 – 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: 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.

### **January 20 – 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.

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2012). Attachment theory expanded: A behavioral systems approach. In K. Deaux & M. Snyder (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of personality and social psychology* (pp. 467-492). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

#### **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.

### **January 27 – 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**

Murray, S., Aloni, M., Holmes, J., Derrick, J., Stinson, D., & Leder, S. (2009). Fostering partner dependence as trust insurance: The implicit contingencies of the exchange script in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 324-348.

### **February 3 – Relationship Goals and Schemas**

Felmlee, D., Hilton, K., & Orzechowicz (2009). Romantic attraction and stereotypes of gender and sexuality. In M. Paludi (Ed.), *The psychology of love* (pp. 171-186). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

## PSYD11 – Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

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.

Rusbult, C. E., Finkel, E. J., & Kumashiro, M. (2009). The Michelangelo phenomenon. *Current directions in psychological science*, 18, 305-309.

Fitzsimons, G. (2006). Pursuing goals and perceiving others: A self-regulatory perspective on interpersonal relationships. In K. Vohs & E. Finkel (Eds.), *Self and relationships: Connecting intrapersonal and interpersonal processes* (pp. 32-53). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

### Article Presentations

Campbell, W. K., Foster, C. & Finkel, E. (2002). Does self-love lead to love for others? A story of narcissistic game playing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 340-354.

Lackenbauer, S. D., & Campbell, L. (2012). Measuring up: The unique emotional and regulatory outcomes of different perceived partner-ideal discrepancies in romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 103, 472-488.

## **February 10 – Behavioral Regulation and Interaction Patterns**

Blackhart, G. C., Baumeister, R. F., & Twenge, J. M. (2006). Rejection's impact on self-defeating, prosocial, antisocial, and self-regulatory behaviors. In K. Vohs & E. Finkel (Eds.), *Self and relationships: Connecting intrapersonal and interpersonal processes* (pp. 237-253). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Eldridge, K. A., & Christensen, A. (2002). Demand-withdraw communication during couple conflict: A review and analysis. In P. Noller & J. A. Feeney (Eds.), *Understanding marriage: Developments in the study of couple interaction* (pp. 289-322). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

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

### 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.

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.

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.

## **February 17 – No Class (Family Day/Reading Week)**

**February 24 – Sexuality in Relationships**

Perlman, D., & Sprecher, S. (2012). Sex, intimacy, and dating in college. In R. D. McNulty (Ed.), *Sex in college: The things they don't write home about* (pp. 91-118). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Impett, E. A., Muise, A., & Peragine, D. (2014). Sexuality in the context of relationships. In D. Tolman, L. Diamond, J. Bauermeister, W. George, J. Pfaus, & M. Ward (Eds.), *APA handbook of sexuality and psychology, Vol. W: Person-based approaches* (pp. 269-315). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Associations.

Diamond, L., & Buttersworth, M. (2009). The close relationships of sexual minorities: Partners, friends, and family. In M. C. Smith & N. DeFrates-Densch (Ed.), *Handbook of research on adult learning and development* (pp. 351-377). New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis.

Article Presentations

Mongeau, P. A., Knight, K., Williams, J., Eden, J., & Shaw, C. (2013). Identifying and explicating variation among friends with benefits relationships. *Journal of Sex Research, 50*, 37-47.

Birnbaum, G., Reis, H. T., Mikulincer, M., Gillath, O., & Opraz, A. (2006). When sex is more than just sex: Attachment orientations, sexual experience, and relationship quality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 91*, 929-943.

**March 3 – Culture, Internet, and Social Change**

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.

Olver, K. (2012). Multicultural couples: Seeing the world through different lenses. In P. Robey, R. E. Wubbolding, & J. Carlson (Eds.), *Contemporary issues in couples counseling: A choice theory and reality therapy approach* (pp. 33-46). New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis.

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.

Article Presentations

Manago, A., Taylor, T., & Greenfield, P. (2012). Me and my 400 friends: The anatomy of college students' Facebook networks, their communication patterns, and well-being. *Developmental Psychology, 48*, 369-380.

Perry, M. S., & Werner-Wilson, R. J. (2011). Couples and computer-mediated communication: A closer look at the affordances and use of the channel. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal, 40*, 120-134.

**March 10 – 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.

## PSYD11 – Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

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.

Story, L. B., Rothman, A. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (2002). Risk factors, risk processes, and the longitudinal course of newlywed marriage. In P. Noller & J. Feeney (Eds.), *Understanding marriage: Developments in the study of couple interaction* (pp. 468-492). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

### Article Presentations

Sanford, K., & Wolfe, K. L. (2013). What married couples want from each other during conflicts: An investigation of underlying concerns. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 32, 674-699.

Lavner, J. A., & Bradbury, T. N. (2010). Patterns of change in marital satisfaction over the newlywed years. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 1171-1187.