

## **PSYD11: Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships Winter 2015**

### **Course**

PSYD11H3: The Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

Class Times/Location: Section 1 – Thursdays Noon-2pm, Section 2 – Thursdays 3-5pm, AA206

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: Thursdays 2-3pm 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. Gain mastery over major research findings, terminology, principles, and theories in the field of interpersonal relationships.
2. Practice and develop critical thinking skills by
  - a. analyzing current issues and controversies in the field of relationships, and
  - b. applying psychological findings to everyday life.
3. Practice and develop precision, professionalism, and confidence in written and oral communication skills.

Course objectives may be obtained through reading and studying the course packet, through satisfactory completion of assignments, and by attention to and active participation and engagement 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.

### **Reflection Papers**

A one-page reflection paper will be submitted each week about the readings for that week. The reflection paper is just as it sounds – a “reflection” on 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

## PSYD11 – Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

compelling analysis. Bullet points will not be accepted. Instead, it should be formatted with complete thoughts, sentences, and paragraphs.

Each reflection paper is worth 15 points (120 points in all). Each paper is due by 12pm on the Wednesday before class. The reflection 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 Wednesday). Reflection papers submitted after Wednesday 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 a fellow student to guide class discussion. The discussions should be based in principles from a pre-selected research article (see list of empirical articles below). Only the pair or group of students who are assigned to present the research article will be responsible for reading it. The student presenters will briefly summarize the principles from the article and guide class discussion around those principles in a 25-minute class discussion. Detailed instructions will be provided in class. The guided class discussion is worth 50 points.

### **Final Presentation**

At the end of the term, each student will pair up with a fellow student and present a collaborative research project. The proposal will involve researching a topic of the students' own interest in interpersonal relationships and designing a research study to examine a set of questions that will advance our knowledge in the field. The proposal will then be presented to the class. The presentation should include (a) an overview of the literature pertaining to a domain of relationships psychology, (b) a gap in that literature that the students' proposal seeks to fill, (c) details of the sample, method, and expected results of the proposal, and (d) a conclusion about how the proposal is important and innovative. Visual aids are recommended (e.g., Powerpoint presentation, overhead slides, or handouts). The presentation should last approximately 12 minutes with a few minutes for questions. The final presentation is worth 50 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

## PSYD11 – Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

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:	Reflection Papers (15 pts/each)	120 pts
	Class Participation	30
Presentations:	Guided Discussion	50
	Final Presentation	50
Total points		250 pts

Grade	Point Value	Percentage	Definition
A+	224 to 250	90-100	Excellent
A	211 to 223	85-89	
A-	199 to 210	80-84	
B+	191 to 198	77-79	Good
B	181 to 190	73-76	
B-	174 to 180	70-72	
C+	166 to 173	67-69	Adequate
C	156 to 165	63-66	
C-	149 to 155	60-62	
D+	141 to 148	57-59	Marginal
D	131 to 140	53-56	
D-	124 to 130	50-52	
F	0 to 123	0-49	Inadequate

### **Course Calendar**

8-Jan	Intro to Relationships Research
15-Jan	Evolutionary Perspective
22-Jan	Ethological Perspective
29-Jan	Interdependence Perspective
5-Feb	Relationship Goals and Schemas
12-Feb	Behavioral Regulation and Interaction Patterns
19-Feb	Reading Week
26-Feb	Sexuality in Relationships
5-Mar	Culture, Internet, and Social Change
12-Mar	Conflict and Dissolution
19-Mar	Group Consultations w/ Prof Tran
26-Mar	Student Presentations
2-Apr	Student Presentations

## **Course Readings**

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

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### **January 8 – Introduction to Relationships Research**

No readings.

### **January 15 – 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.

#### Guided Discussion Article

Cantu, S. M., Simpson, J. A., Griskevicius, V., Weisberg, Y. J., Durante, K. M., & Beal, D. J. (2014). *Psychological Science*, 25, 431-438.

### **January 22 – 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.

#### Guided Discussion Article

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 29 – 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.

#### Guided Discussion Article

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.

## PSYD11 – Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

### **February 5 – Relationship Goals and Schemas**

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.

#### Guided Discussion Articles

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 12– 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.

#### Guided Discussion Articles

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 19 – No Class (Reading Week)**

**February 26 – Sexuality in Relationships**

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.

Guided Discussion Articles

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 5 – 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.

Guided Discussion Articles

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 12 – 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.

## PSYD11 – Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

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.

### Guided Discussion Articles

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.