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.  
E-mail: sisi.tran@utsc.utoronto.ca  
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
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
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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Engagement</th>
<th>Reflection Papers (15 pts/each)</th>
<th>120 pts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations:</td>
<td>Guided Discussion</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total points</strong></td>
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<td><strong>250 pts</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>224 to 250</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>211 to 223</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>199 to 210</td>
<td>80-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>191 to 198</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>181 to 190</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>Good</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>174 to 180</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>166 to 173</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>156 to 165</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>149 to 155</td>
<td>60-62</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>141 to 148</td>
<td>57-59</td>
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<td>131 to 140</td>
<td>53-56</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>124 to 130</td>
<td>50-52</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 to 123</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
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**Course Calendar**

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

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

January 8 – Introduction to Relationships Research
No readings.

January 15 – Evolutionary Perspective

Guided Discussion Article

January 22 – Ethological Perspective


Guided Discussion Article

January 29 – Interdependence Perspective


Guided Discussion Article
February 5 – Relationship Goals and Schemas


Guided Discussion Articles


February 12 – Behavioral Regulation and Interaction Patterns


Guided Discussion Articles


February 19 – No Class (Reading Week)
February 26 – Sexuality in Relationships


Guided Discussion Articles


March 5 – Culture, Internet, and Social Change


Guided Discussion Articles


March 12 – Conflict and Dissolution

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Guided Discussion Articles