

PSYD11: Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships Fall 2019

Section 1: Course

PSYD11H3: The Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships

Class Time and Location: Wednesdays 1-3pm, SW316

Quercus Website: q.toronto.ca

Section 2: Instructor

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Office Hours and Location: Wednesdays Noon-1pm or by appointment, SW531

Section 3: Course Description

The course provides an introduction to theory and research in close relationships. It covers topics including (1) theoretical perspectives on close relationships, (2) relationship schemas and goals, (3) behavioral regulation and interaction patterns (4) sexuality, (5) the influence of culture, internet, and social change on relationship dynamics, and (6) relationship conflict & dissolution. The course is structured as an undergraduate seminar, geared around class discussion.

Section 4: Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to

- (1) Understand
 - Identify major theoretical principles in the field of interpersonal relationships
 - Demonstrate comprehension of empirical research in the field of relationships
 - Apply psychological findings to real life situations and circumstances
- (2) Analyze
 - Critically examine and evaluate current issues in the field of relationships
 - Plan and execute a class to elicit in-depth analysis and discussion among students
- (3) Communicate
 - Disseminate and distill complex empirical research to a lay audience
 - Participate in open discussions with professionalism, diplomacy, and thoughtfulness
 - Plan and execute a formal research symposium presentation
- (4) Create
 - Articulate their own perspective with arguments/evidence to support their position
 - Collaborate with fellow students to design novel research ideas/methods

Course objectives may be obtained through carefully reading and reflecting on the principles in the assigned readings, satisfactory completion of assignments, and attention to and active engagement in class lectures, discussions, and activities.

Section 5: 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 Reserves” link on our Quercus website. All course readings are in compliance with the University of Toronto copyright access guidelines.

Section 6: 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, as if writing a short opinion piece for a media outlet. The paper should highlight components of the readings that students find interesting, insightful, controversial, and/or contradictory. Students should use these papers to provide a case for their own perspectives, with a clear and compelling analysis of their ideas. Bullet points will not be accepted. Each reflection paper is worth 15 points.

Throughout the course, it is only natural for students to write the occasional “dud” paper. There may be times when students get stressed, overworked, or overwhelmed and the paper and/or mark doesn’t turn out to one’s liking. There may be times when unexpected circumstances arise and submitting a reflection is the last thing on one’s mind. As such, the course includes a “freebie reflection.” This means that out of the eight reflections for the class, only the top seven papers will be included in the final mark. As such, missed term work submissions (see section 12 below) will not be accepted for reflections.

Reflection papers should be submitted via Quercus Discussion Board. Each paper is due by 12pm Noon on the Tuesday before class. Five points will be deducted from the student’s score for late submissions (between 12:01pm and midnight). Reflection papers submitted thereafter will not be accepted.

Section 7: 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 significantly enhance the classroom experience. It will make learning more interactive, more fun, more personally relevant, and more enduring. Most importantly, active participation (in contrast to passive participation) is a useful way to practice and develop the soft skills that are necessary for success post-graduation! Class participation will be monitored as a whole throughout the course, worth 25 points.

Section 8: Guided Discussion

Throughout the semester, each student will pair up with 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.

Section 9: Research 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

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presentation, handouts). The presentation should last approximately 10-12 minutes with a few minutes for questions. The final presentation is worth 50 points.

Section 10: 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 and/or an AccessAbility consultant early in the semester to discuss appropriate accommodations for the course. Informing me well in advance is always better. There is nothing that I can do for you *after* an assignment is due.

Section 11: 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."

Section 12: Missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Other Emergency

Missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Other Emergency:

All students citing a documented reason for missed term work must submit their request for accommodations **within three (3) business days** of the deadline for the missed work.

Students must submit **BOTH** of the following:

- (1.) A completed **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), and
- (2.) **Appropriate documentation** to verify your illness or emergency, as described below.

Appropriate documentation:

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to **ILLNESS**:

- Submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), along with an **original** copy of the official UTSC Verification of Illness Form (uoft.me/UTSC-Verification-Of-Illness-Form) or an **original** copy of the record of visitation to a hospital emergency room. Forms are to be completed in full, clearly indicating the start date, anticipated end date, and severity of illness. The physician's registration number and business stamp are required.

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- Note: If an end date of “ongoing” is specified, the medical note will be assumed to cover a period of two weeks. If no end date / an “unknown” end date is specified, the note will be assumed to cover a period of three business days (starting from illness start date.)

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- Meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing the accommodations required.

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **ILLNESS**:

- Submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), along with a **hardcopy** of the Self-Declaration of Student Illness Form (uoft.me/PSY-self-declare-form).

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 3 days), submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>) and attach a copy of your letter. **Specify how many days extension you are requesting** on the request form.
- If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that) you will need to meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing the accommodations required.

For missed term tests or assignments in **OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES**:

Submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), along with:

- In the case of a **death of a family member or friend**, please provide a copy of a death certificate.
- For U of T varsity-level or professional **athletic commitments**, an email from your coach or varsity administrator should be sent directly to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work, detailing the dates and nature of the commitment.
- For **religious accommodations**, please email (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work.
- For circumstances **outside of these guidelines**, please email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) on or before the date of the test / assignment deadline to describe your circumstances and ask what documentation would be appropriate

Documents covering the following situations are NOT acceptable: medical prescriptions, personal travel, weddings/personal/work commitments.

Procedure:

Submit your (1.) [request form](#) and (2.) [medical/self-declaration](#)/other documents in person **WITHIN 3 BUSINESS DAYS** of the missed term test or assignment.

Submit to: Keely Hicks, Room SW420B, Monday – Friday, 9 AM – 4 PM. (Slide forms under door if out of office.)

After submitting your documentation, within approximately one to five business days, you will receive a response from your instructor detailing the accommodations to be made (if any).

You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily, as accommodations may be time-critical.

You should continue to work on your assignments to the best of your ability, as extension accommodations may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency.

If an accommodation has been granted but you are unable to meet the conditions of the accommodation (ex. you need a longer extension, or you missed a make-up test), you will need to repeat the missed term work procedure and submit additional forms to request further

accommodation. Note that in the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not be provided.

Completion of this form does NOT guarantee that accommodations will be made. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request for accommodation.

Missed Accommodations

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting the requirements of your accommodation, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations.

(E.g.) If you miss a make-up midterm, you would need to submit another Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form. If your original medical note / documentation included the date of the make-up midterm, then only the Request form is required. If the date of the make-up midterm fell outside of the dates indicated on your original medical note/other documentation, then a new medical note/other appropriate documentation must also be submitted.

Importance of Three Business Day window:

If you are unable to submit your documents in-person within the three business day window, **you must email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) within the three business day window** to explain when you will be able to bring your documents in person. Exceptions to the documentation deadline will only be made under **exceptional circumstances**. Attach scans of your documentation, and be prepared to bring your documents to Keely in-person as soon as you are well. Late documents may not be accepted.

NOTE: Assignments due at end of term

Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, you would need to file a petition with the Registrar's Office (<https://www.utoronto.ca/registrar/term-work>).

NOTE: Final Exams

This policy applies only to missed assignments and term tests. Missed final exams are handled by the Registrar's Office (<http://www.utoronto.ca/registrar/missing-examination>).

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Section 13: Grading System

Class Engagement:	Reflection Papers (15 pts/each – 1 freebie)	105 pts
	Class Participation	25
Presentations:	Guided Discussion	50
	Final Presentation	50
Total points		230 pts

Grade	Point Value	Percentage	Definition
A+	206 to 230	90-100	Excellent
A	195 to 205	85-89	
A-	183 to 194	80-84	
B+	176 to 182	77-79	Good
B	167 to 175	73-76	
B-	160 to 166	70-72	
C+	153 to 159	67-69	Adequate
C	144 to 152	63-66	
C-	137 to 143	60-62	
D+	130 to 136	57-59	Marginal
D	121 to 129	53-56	
D-	114 to 120	50-52	
F	0 to 113	0-49	Inadequate

Section 14: Course Calendar

D11 Relationships Seminar	
Wednesdays 1-3pm	Topic
4-Sep	Intro to Relationships Research
11-Sep	Evolutionary Perspective
18-Sep	Attachment Perspective
25-Sep	Interdependence Perspective
2-Oct	Relationship Schemas and Goals
9-Oct	Behavioral Regulation and Interaction Patterns
16-Oct	No Class - Reading Week
23-Oct	Sexuality in Relationships
30-Oct	Culture, Internet, and Social Change
6-Nov	Conflict and Dissolution
13-Nov	Group Consultations for Proposals
20-Nov	Student Presentations
27-Nov	Student Presentations

Section 15: Course Reading List

1 – Introduction to Relationships Research

No readings.

2 – Evolutionary Perspective

Kenrick, D. T., Newberg, S. L., & White, A. E. (2013). Relationships from an evolutionary life history perspective. In J. A. Simpson & L. Campbell (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of close relationships* (pp. 13-38). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Student-Guided Discussion Article

Cantu, S. M., Simpson, J. A., Griskevicius, V., Weisberg, Y. J., Durante, K. M., & Beal, D. J. (2014). Fertile and selectively flirty: Women's behavior toward men changes across the ovulatory cycle. *Psychological Science*, 25, 431-438.

3 – Attachment Perspective

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R., (2016). The attachment behavioral system: Basic concepts and principles. In *Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics and change 2nd ed* (pp. 3-26). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Student-Guided Discussion Articles

Bartz, J. A., Lydon, J. E., Kolevzon, A., Zaki, J., Hollander, E. Ludwig, N., & Bolger, N. (2015). Differential effects of oxytocin on agency and communion for anxiously and avoidantly attached individuals. *Psychological Science*, 26(8), 1177-1186.

4 – Interdependence Perspective

Agnew, C. R., & Le, B. (2015). Prosocial behavior in close relationships: An interdependence approach. In D. A. Schroeder & W. G. Graziano (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of prosocial behavior* (pp. 362-375). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Reis, H. T., & Arriaga, X. B. (2015). Interdependence and related theories. In B. Gawronski & G. V. Bodenhausen (Eds.), *Theory and explanation in social psychology* (pp. 305-327). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Student-Guided Discussion Articles

Van Houdt, K., & Poortmann, A. R. (2018). Joint lifestyles and the risk of union dissolution: Differences between marriage and cohabitation. *Demographic Research*, 39(15), 431-458.

5 – Relationship Schemas and Goals

Anderson, S. M., & Saribay, S. A. (2005). The relational self and transference: Evoking motives, self-regulation, and emotions through activation of mental representations of others. In M. W. Baldwin (Ed.), *Interpersonal cognition* (pp. 1-32). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

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

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Student-Guided Discussion Articles

Hammond, M. D., & Overall, N. C. (2017). Dynamics within intimate relationships and the causes, consequences, and functions of sexist attitudes. *Psychological Science, 26*(2), 120-125.

Gordon, A. M., & Chen, S. (2013). Does power help or hurt? The moderating role of self-other focus on power and perspective-taking in romantic relationships. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 39*(8), 1097-1110.

6 – No Class (Reading Week)

7 – Behavioral Regulation and Interaction Patterns

Fletcher, G., Simpson, J. A., Campbell, L., & Overall, N. (2013). Communication and interaction. *The science of intimate relationships* (pp. 210-235). Boston, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Overall, N. C., & Simpson, J. A. (2013). Regulation processes in close relationships. In J. A. Simpson & L. Campbell (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of close relationships* (pp.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Student-Guided Discussion Articles

Burnette, J. L., McCullough, M. E., Van Tongeren, D. R., & Davis, D. E. (2012). Forgiveness results from integrating information about relationship value and exploitation risk. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 38*(3), 345-356.

Stinson, D. A., Logel, C., Shephard, S., & Zanna, M. P. (2011). Rewriting the self-fulfilling prophecy of social rejection: Self-affirmation improves relational security and social behavior up to 2 months later. *Psychological Science, 22*(9), 1145-1149.

8 – Sexuality in Relationships

Bradbury, T. N., & Karney, B. R. (2019). Sexual intimacy. *Intimate relationships*, 3rd ed. (pp. 285-321) New York, NY: Norton.

Diamond, L., & Blair, K. L. (2018). The intimate relationships of sexual and gender minorities. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman's (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 199-210). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Student-Guided Discussion Articles

Day, L. C., Muise, A., & Impett, E. A. (2017). Is comparison the thief of joy? Sexual narcissism and social comparisons in the domain of sexuality. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 43*(2), 233-244.

Birnbaum, G. E., Kanat-Maymon, Y., Mizrahi, M., Recanati, M., & Orr, R. (2019). What fantasies can do to your relationship: The effects of sexual fantasies on couple interactions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 45*(3), 461-476.

9 – Culture, Internet, and Social Change

Felmlee, D. H. & Sinclair, H. C. (2018). Social networks and personal relationships. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 467-480). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

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Vitak, J., & Ellison, N. B. (2018). Personal relationships and technology in the digital age. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 481-493). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Student-Guided Discussion Articles

Utz, S., & Beukeboom, C. J. (2011). The role of social network sites in romantic relationships: Effects on jealousy and relationship happiness. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 16, 511–527.

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.

10 – Conflict and Dissolution

Miller, R. (2018). Stresses and strains. *Intimate relationships* 8th ed. (pp. 303-334). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Vangelisti, A. (2006). Relationship dissolution: Antecedents, processes, and consequences. In P. Noller & J. Feeney (Eds.), *Close relationships: Functions, forms, and processes* (pp. 353-374). New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Student-Guided Discussion Articles

Lavner, J. A., Lamkin, J., Miller, J. D., Campbell, W. K., & Karney, B. R. (2017). Narcissism and newlywed marriage: Partner characteristics and marital trajectories. *Personality Disorders-Theory Research and Treatment*, 7(2), 169-179.

Mirecki, R. M., Brimhall, A. S., & Bramesfeld, K. D. (2013). Communication during conflict: Differences between individuals in first and second marriages. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 54(3), 197-213.