COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will focus on the life cycle of adult close relationships, ranging from stages of initial attraction and the development of an attachment, to growth and maintenance of the relationship, to conflict and in some cases, dissolution.

In this seminar we will examine current theories and research in the social psychological study of close relationships. The main goal is to gain a better understanding of the basic processes involved in intimate relationships. An equally important goal is to facilitate independent thinking and critical analysis. You will learn how to successfully gather, evaluate, and integrate information from scientific sources. Additionally, the assignments in this seminar will help you develop more effective oral and written communication skills.

REQUIRED READINGS:

The required readings for each week can be found on the Course Reserves site: www.reserves.uwaterloo.ca/ares/

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION:

1) Attendance and Participation 15%
2) Thought Papers 20%
3) Seminar Leadership 20%
4) Literature Review 15%
5) Research Proposal 30%
1) Attendance and Participation (15%)
DUE: Throughout the course

A seminar course is only successful if students attend and participate regularly. The criteria for evaluating class participation will be based on a student's understanding of material, the ability to foster discussion, demonstration of an understanding for others, and willingness to engage in seminar activities. Discussion is essential to the development and articulation of ideas. Discussion, like writing, is often hard work, requiring preparation and commitment. It also takes practice. Writing bi-weekly thought papers on the readings and attending class with several critical questions for that week’s theme may assist with participation. When you are uncertain about something, please say so during class. You will be helping the group as a whole clarify ideas. If you are having difficulties with participation or course material, do not hesitate to meet with me for strategies.

2) Thought Papers (20%)
DUE: 5pm on each Tuesday before class (submitted to Learn Discussion Forum)

Every other week each student will complete a half-page single-spaced thought paper in response to the required readings (a total of 5 thought papers throughout the term). Thought papers are an opportunity for you to describe your reactions to the readings, critique one or two points, or raise new questions. Students are expected to read each others’ thought papers prior to class and be prepared to comment on others’ ideas to stimulate class discussion.

Note that seminar leaders are not required to submit a thought paper. If your presentation falls on the same week your thought paper is due, you may skip that week.

3) Seminar Leadership (20%)
DUE: See schedule of readings

In groups of 2 or 3, students will be responsible for leading one seminar during the term (starting in Week 4). For the class, each member will present a summary of one of the articles listed in the course outline for their chosen week. The summary should include a short description of the background of the topic and the rationale for conducting the study, explanation of the methods and results (presenting these in graphs or tables is helpful), and some conclusions. Seminar leaders should prepare some questions based on their article to generate class discussion. In addition, each leader should provide a one to two page summary of their presented article to classmates.

Although each member of the group is responsible for presenting an article individually, group members should work together to come up with examples from television, film, music, books, news media, internet, or other “lay” sources where this topic is represented to examine how scientific research results compare to popular notions of relationship processes. Class activities (e.g. questionnaires, demonstrations, role-plays) may be incorporated in the presentation in addition to the class discussion. Students may use Powerpoint if they wish. Together, group members should present a conclusion that summarizes the articles’ findings and includes concrete suggestions for future research.

Seminar leadership will be evaluated according to: demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the topic, critical examination of readings/resources, communication of the material (presentation and summary hand-out), and engagement level of the class (activity). I will provide you with more detailed evaluation criteria early in the course. Seminar leadership is worth 20% of your final grade and each student in the group will be marked individually.
4) Literature Review (15%)
DUE: Feb. 17th 11:59pm

Choose one of the topics covered in this course and select at least 3 articles to review. In your summary you should include the theory the researchers are drawing from, the research question(s) being addressed, a brief description of the research methods (including how variables were measured and/or manipulated), and the major findings. Comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the study and any alternative explanations for the results. If the article you choose contains more than one study, choose only one to describe in this manner and simply mention the findings of the other studies in a sentence or two. The review should be 3-4 pages double-spaced.

It is recommended that you review articles for the topic you plan to use for your research proposal. I will provide feedback on your literature review that will help you improve the introduction section of your research proposal. However, you are permitted to choose a different topic for the proposal if you wish.

The literature review must be submitted to the dropbox on Learn before midnight on Sunday, February 17.

5) Research Proposal (30%)
DUE: April 7th 11:59pm

For the final paper, you will be writing the introduction and methods sections of an empirical journal article, and a limited discussion section (as you will not have actual results to discuss). You must reference at least 5 different articles (which may include the 3 you used in your literature review). APA format is required.

This paper will require you to be thoughtful and creative in approaching the challenges of conducting research on close relationships. The paper should be between 10-12 pages double-spaced.

The research proposal must be submitted to the dropbox on Learn before midnight on Sunday, April 7.

Assignment Deadlines

You are responsible for informing me in advance if you are unable to complete an assignment by the scheduled date. Missed due dates are only acceptable in the case of medical problems (with a medical note) and for serious compassionate reasons. Late submissions, without advance permission, will be given a 10% reduction in the total possible grade for each 24 hours after the due date. No assignments will be accepted if submitted more than one week after the deadline.

Difficulty with assignments is not a sufficient reason for an extension. Any student who finds himself/herself struggling with an assignment during the term is encouraged to meet with me as soon as possible to discuss strategies for success. It is important to begin assignments well in advance of the due date in case of problems.
WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1 – January 9: Introduction

WEEK 2 – January 16: Relationship Initiation

Required Reading:


Professor’s Articles:


WEEK 3 – January 23: Attachment Style

Required Reading:


Professor’s Articles:


**WEEK 4 – January 30: Self-Regulation and Goals**

**Required Reading:**


**Seminar Leaders’ Articles:**


**WEEK 5 – February 6: Relationship Theories & Beliefs**

**Required Reading:**


**Seminar Leaders’ Articles:**


**WEEK 6 – February 13: Commitment**

**Required Reading:**


**Seminar Leaders’ Articles:**


**READING WEEK – February 20**

**WEEK 7 – February 27: Marriage**

**Required Reading:**


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 8 – March 6: Sex and Intimacy

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 9 – March 13: Relationship Maintenance

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


**WEEK 10 – March 20: Insecurity and Self-Fulfilling Prophecies**

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


**WEEK 11 – March 27: Conflict and Aggression**

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


**WEEK 12 – April 3: Relationship Dissolution**

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


ADDITIONAL NOTES AND POLICIES

Accommodation for Illness or Unforeseen Circumstances:
The instructor follows the practices of the University of Waterloo in accommodating students who have documented reasons for missing quizzes or exams. See http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/students/accom_illness.html

Academic Integrity:
**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70. In addition, consult http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes for the Faculty of Arts’ grievance processes.

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72.

**Academic Integrity website (Arts):**
http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

**Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo):** http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:
**Note for students with disabilities:** The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term.

Using Turnitin in this course:
**Turnitin.com:** Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen the final assignment in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course. If you do not wish to submit your assignment to Turnitin, you must let me know by March 1. You will be required to submit an annotated bibliography instead.