

# **Renison University College**

## **Psych 354R, Interpersonal Relations**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30-2:30pm, or by appointment

### **Course Overview**

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of research and theory on interpersonal relations. The course will present the principles and processes that affect the nature and progress of close relationships. We will focus mainly on intimate or romantic relationships, from the initial stages of attraction and relationship formation, to the development of commitment and intimacy as well as conflict. We will examine the processes that help us maintain, or lead to the dissolution, of these relationships.

### **Objectives**

This course will do the following:

- Appreciate the importance of studying intimate relationships.
- Compare and contrast different approaches, frameworks, and models for studying intimate relationships.
- Consider how different people interpret relationship events based on contextual and personal/social influences, including early family experiences, personality characteristics, and beliefs and values.
- Critically evaluate psychological research on intimate relationships, and apply this evaluation to studies in the media.
- Explore differences and similarities between heterosexual and same-sex relationships, and compare how women and men approach intimate relationships.
- Examine the stages of intimate relationships, and how relationships develop and change across the life span.

### **Materials and Resources**

Required text: Bradbury, T.N., & Karney, B.R. *Intimate Relationships*.

Recommended: Online study guide: <http://www.wwnorton.com/college/psych/intimate-relationships/>

## Requirements

Assignment 1: Article Review 10%

Online Midterm 20%

Assignment 2: Scenario Analysis 15%

Participation in weekly discussions and learning activities 15%

Final Exam 40%

Research participation: You can also earn an additional 3% in bonus marks by participating in online studies.

## Proposed Schedule of Classes

Week	Lecture	Topic	Textbook
1	1	Introduction and Research Methods	Ch. 1 & 2
2	2	Theoretical Frameworks	Ch. 3
3	3	Sex & Gender	Ch. 4
4	4	Attraction & Mate Selection <i>Assignment 1 due</i>	Ch. 5
5	5	Individuals in Relationships	Ch. 6
6	6	Communication & Intimacy	Ch. 7
7	7	Conflict & Aggression <i>Midterm</i>	Ch. 8
8	8	Beliefs & Values	Ch. 9
9	9	Meaning, Memory, & Motivated Reasoning	Ch. 10
10	10	Stress & Social Support <i>Assignment 2 due</i>	Ch. 11
11	11	Relationship Interventions	Ch. 12
12	12	Relationships Across the Lifespan	Ch. 13

## Notes/Policies:

1) **Website:** Please check the LEARN website regularly. I will post announcements, lecture slides, grades, etc. Although all the lecture slides and accompanying audio will be posted, I recommend that you take your own notes as much as possible. Research shows that people have greater memory for the material when they take their own notes.

2) **Attendance:** To succeed, listen to all of the lectures. The lectures generally follow the structure of the textbook, but I'll also talk about some additional research that is not covered in there. On the flip side, there are some topics in the text that I won't talk about in the lectures – mainly things I don't feel need much further explanation or discussion. You should definitely still read about those topics, and be prepared to answer questions about them on the midterm and exam - unless I've specifically indicated in your syllabus not to read those pages in the text.

3) **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](http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/students/accom_illness.html). Students may take make-up tests if they inform me in advance that they will be unable to take the test (whenever possible) and have verifiable evidence of a medical problem.

4) **Cross-listed course:** Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

- **Psych 354** is cross-listed with **Psych 354R** (formerly Psych 221R). Only one of these two courses can be taken for credit towards the degree.

## 5) **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://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

**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://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

**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://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

**Academic Integrity website (Arts):**

[http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

**Academic Integrity Office (University):** <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

6) **Note for students with disabilities:** The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), 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 OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

## **Research Experience Marks Information and Guidelines**

Experiential learning is considered an integral part of the undergraduate program in Psychology. Research participation is one example of this, article review is another. A number of undergraduate courses have been expanded to include opportunities for Psychology students to earn grades while gaining research experience.

Since experiential learning is highly valued in the Department of Psychology, students may earn a **"bonus" grade of up to 3%** in this course through research experience. Course work will make up 100% of the final mark and a "bonus" of up to 3% may be earned and will be added to the final grade if/as needed to bring your final grade up to 100%.

The two options for earning research experience grades (participation in ONLINE (web-based) research studies and article review) are described below. Students may complete any combination of these options to earn research experience grades.

### **Option 1: Participation in Psychology Research**

Research participation is coordinated by the Research Experiences Group (REG). Psychology students may volunteer as research participants in online (web-based) studies conducted by students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Participation enables students to learn first-hand about psychology research and related concepts. Many students report that participation in research is both an educational and interesting experience. Please be assured that all Psychology studies have undergone prior ethics review and clearance through the Office of Research Ethics.

#### ***Educational focus of participation in research***

To maximize the educational benefits of participating in research, students will receive feedback information following their participation in each study detailing the following elements:

- Purpose or objectives of the study
- Dependent and independent variables
- Expected results
- References for at least two related research articles
- Provisions to ensure confidentiality of data
- Contact information of the researcher should the student have further questions about the study
- Contact information for the Director of the Office of Research Ethics should the student wish to learn more about the general ethical issues surrounding research with human participants, or specific questions or concerns about the study in which s/he participated.

Participation in ONLINE studies is worth .25 credits for each 15-minutes of participation. Researchers will record student's participation and will advise the course instructor of the total credits earned by each student at the end of the term.

#### ***How to participate?***

Study scheduling, participation and grade assignment is managed using the SONA online system. All students enrolled in this course have been set up with a SONA account. You must get started early in the term.

For instructions on how to log in to your SONA account and for a list of important dates and deadlines please, as soon as possible go to:

<http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~regadmin/regparticipant/sonainfo/#SonaSignUp>

*\*\*\* Please do not ask the Course Instructor or REG Coordinator for information unless you have first thoroughly read the information provided on this website.\*\*\**

More information about the REG program is available at:

<http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~regadmin/regparticipant/>

## **Option 2: Article Review as an alternative to participation in research**

Students are not required to participate in research, and not all students wish to do so. As an alternative, students may opt to gain research experience by writing short reviews (1½ to 2 pages) of research articles relevant to the course. The course instructor will specify a suitable source of articles for this course (i.e., scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, other printed media). *You must contact your TA to get approval for the article you have chosen before writing the review.* Each review article counts as one percentage point. To receive credit, you must follow specific guidelines. The article review must:

- **Be submitted before the last lecture. Late submissions will NOT be accepted under ANY circumstances.**
- Be typed
- Fully identify the title, author(s), source and date of the article. A copy of the article must be attached.
- Identify the psychological concepts in the article and indicate the pages in the textbook that are applicable. Critically evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article. If inappropriate or incorrect, identify the error and its implications for the validity of the article. You may find, for example, misleading headings, faulty research procedures, alternative explanations that are ignored, failures to distinguish factual findings from opinions, faulty statements of cause-effect relations, errors in reasoning, etc. Provide examples whenever possible.
- Clearly evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article.
- Keep a copy of your review in the unlikely event we misplace the original.