

## PSYCH 450R CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

Winter 2013

Instructor: Dr. Denise Marigold

**When:** Wednesday 1:00-3:50pm **Room:** REN 0201

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**Office Hours:** Tues. and Thurs. 1:30-2:30pm or by appointment **Office:** REN 2607

### 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/](http://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. 17<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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:

Jordan, C.H., & Zanna, M.P. (1999). How to read a journal article in Social Psychology. In R. F. Baumeister (Ed.), *The Self in Social Psychology* (pp. 461-470). Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

Finkel, E.J., Eastwick, P.W., Karney, B.R., Reis, H.T., & Sprecher, S. (2012). Online dating: A critical analysis from the perspective of psychological science. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 13, 3-66.

#### Professor's Articles:

Luo, S., & Zhang, G. (2009). What leads to romantic attraction: Similarity, reciprocity, security, or beauty? Evidence from a speed-dating study. *Journal of Personality*, 77, 933-964.

Eastwick, P.W., & Finkel, E.J., (2008). Sex differences in mate preferences revisited: Do people know what they initially desire in a romantic partner? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94, 245-264.

Cameron, J.J., Stinson, D.A., Gaetz, R., & Balchen, S. (2010). Acceptance is in the eye of the beholder: Self-esteem and motivated perceptions of acceptance from the opposite sex. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99, 513-529.

### WEEK 3 – January 23: Attachment Style

#### Required Reading:

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P.R. (2005). Attachment theory and emotions in close relationships: Exploring the attachment-related dynamics of emotional reactions to relational events. *Personal Relationships*, 12, 149-168.

La Guardia, J.G., Ryan, R.M., Couchman, C.E., & Deci, E.L. (2000). Within-person variation in security of attachment: A self-determination theory perspective on attachment, need fulfillment, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 367-384.

#### Professor's Articles:

McClure, M.J., Lydon, J.E., Baccus, J.R., & Baldwin, M.W. (2010). A signal detection analysis of chronic attachment anxiety at speed dating: Being unpopular is only the first part of the problem. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36, 1024-1036.

Collins, N.L., Ford, M.B., Guichard, A.C., & Allard, L.M. (2006). Working models of attachment and attribution processes in intimate relationships. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32, 201-219.

Collins, N. L., & Feeney, B. C. (2004). Working models of attachment shape perceptions of social support: Evidence from experimental and observational studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87, 363-383.

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

##### **Required Reading:**

Murray, S.L., Holmes, J.G., & Collins, N.L. (2006). Optimizing assurance: The risk regulation system in relationships. *Psychological Bulletin*, 132, 641-666.

Fitzsimons, G.M., & Finkel, E.J. (2011). Outsourcing self-regulation. *Psychological Science*, 22, 369-375.

##### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Impett, E.A., Gordon, A.M., Kogan, A., Oveis, C., Gable, S.L., & Keltner, D. (2010). Moving toward more perfect unions: Daily and long-term consequences of approach and avoidance goals in romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99, 948-963.

Finkel, E.J., Campbell, W.K., Brunell, A.B., Dalton, A.N., Scarbeck, S.J., & Chartrand, T.L. (2006). High-maintenance interaction: Inefficient social coordination impairs self-regulation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 91, 456-475.

Peetz, J., & Kammrath, L. (2011). Only because I love you: Why people make and why they break promises in romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100, 887-904.

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

##### **Required Reading:**

Knee, C. R. (1998). Implicit theories of relationships: Assessment and prediction of romantic relationship initiation, coping, and longevity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 360-370.

Schoenfeld, E.A., Bredow, C.A., & Huston, T.L. (2012). Do men and women show love differently in marriage? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38, 1396-1409.

##### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Day, M.V., Kay, A.C., Holmes, J.G., & Napier, J.L. (2011). System justification and the defense of committed relationship ideology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101, 291-306.

Kammrath, L.K., & Peetz, J. (2012). You promised you'd change: How incremental and entity theorists react to a romantic partner's promised change attempts. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 48*, 570-574.

Karney, B., & Coombs, R. H. (2000). Memory bias in long-term close relationships: Consistency or improvement? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26*, 959-970.

## **WEEK 6 – February 13: Commitment**

### **Required Reading:**

Rusbult, C.E., Martz, J.M., & Agnew, C.R. (1998). The Investment Model Scale: Measuring commitment level, satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size. *Personal Relationships, 5*, 357-391.

Lydon, J.E. (2010). How to forego forbidden fruit: The regulation of attractive alternatives as a commitment mechanism. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 4*, 635-644.

### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Arriaga, X.B., & Agnew, C.R. (2001). Being committed: Affective, cognitive, and conative components of relationship commitment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27*, 1190-1203.

Wieselquist, J., Rusbult, C. E., Foster, C. A., & Agnew, C. R. (1999). Commitment, pro-relationship behavior, and trust in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77*, 942-966.

Miller, R. J. (1997). Inattentive and contented: Relationship commitment and attention to alternatives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73*, 758–766.

## **READING WEEK – February 20**

## **WEEK 7 – February 27: Marriage**

### **Required Reading:**

Huston, T.L. (2009). What's love got to do with it? Why some marriages succeed and others fail. *Personal Relationships, 16*, 301-327.

Murray, S.L., Griffin, D.W., Derrick, J.L., Harris, B., Aloni, M., & Leder, S. (2011). Tempting fate or inviting happiness? Unrealistic idealization prevents the decline of marital satisfaction. *Psychological Science, 22*, 619-626.

### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Schoebi, D., Karney, B.R., & Bradbury, T.N. (2012). Stability and change in the first 10 years of marriage: Does commitment confer benefits beyond the effects of satisfaction? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 102*, 729-742.

Doss, B.D., Rhoades, G.K., Stanley, S.M., & Markman, H.J. (2009). The effect of the transition to parenthood on relationship quality: An 8-year prospective study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 96*, 601-619.

Grote, N. K., & Clark, M. S. (2001). Perceiving unfairness in the family: Cause or consequence of marital distress? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 80*, 281-293.

## **WEEK 8 – March 6: Sex and Intimacy**

### **Required Reading:**

Laurenceau, J.P., Barrett, L.F., & Rovine, M.J. (2005). The interpersonal process model of intimacy in marriage: A daily-diary and multilevel modeling approach. *Journal of Family Psychology, 19*, 314-323.

Byers, S.E. (2005). Relationship satisfaction and sexual satisfaction: A longitudinal study of individuals in long-term relationships. *Journal of Sex Research, 42*, 113-118.

### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Brunell, A.B., Pilkington, C.J., & Webster, G.D. (2007). Perceptions of risk in intimacy in dating couples: Conversation and relationship quality. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 26*, 92-119.

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.

Birnbaum, G.E., Reis, H.T., Mikulincer, M., Gillath, O., & Orpaz, A. When sex is more than just sex: Attachment orientations, sexual experience, and relationship quality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 91*, 929-943.

## **WEEK 9 – March 13: Relationship Maintenance**

### **Required Reading:**

Neff, L.A., & Karney, B.R. (2009). Stress and reactivity to daily relationship experiences: How stress hinders adaptive processes in marriage. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 97*, 435-450.

Algoe, S.B. (2012). Find, remind, and bind: The functions of gratitude in everyday relationships. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 6*, 455-469.

### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Stafford, L., & Merolla, A.J. (2007). Idealization, reunions, and stability in long-distance dating relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 24, 37-54.

Aron, A., Norman, C.C., Aron, E.N., 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.

Braithwaite, S.R., Selby, E.A., & Fincham, F.D. (2011). Forgiveness and relationship satisfaction: Mediating mechanisms. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 25, 551-559.

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

### **Required Reading:**

Stinson, D.A., Cameron, J.J., Wood, J.V., Gaucher, D., & Holmes, J.G. (2009). Deconstructing the "reign of error": Interpersonal warmth explains the self-fulfilling prophecy of anticipated acceptance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 35, 1165-1178.

Marigold, D. C., Holmes, J.G., and Ross, M. (2007). More than words: Reframing compliments from romantic partners fosters security in low self-esteem individuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92, 232-248.

### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Murray, S.L., Griffin, D.W., Rose, P., & Bellavia, G.M. (2003). Calibrating the sociometer: The relational contingencies of self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85, 63-84.

Downey, G., Freitas, 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*, 75, 545-560.

Lemay, E.P. Jr., & Clark, M.S. (2008). "Walking on eggshells": How expressing relationship insecurities perpetuates them. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 420-441.

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

### **Required Reading:**

Gottman, J.M., & Driver, J.L. (2005). Dysfunctional marital conflict and everyday marital interaction. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 43, 63-78.

Finkel, E.J., DeWall, C.N., Slotter, E.B, McNulty, J.K., Pond Jr., R.S., & Atkins, D.C. (2012). Using I<sup>3</sup> theory to clarify when dispositional aggressiveness predicts intimate partner violence perpetration. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102, 533-549.



### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Christensen, A., & Heavey, C. (1990). Gender and social structure in the demand/withdraw pattern of marital conflict. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *59*, 73-81.

Simpson, J. A., Rholes, W. S., & Phillips, D. (1996). Conflict in close relationships: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *71*, 899-914.

Frye, N.E., & Karney, B.R. (2006). The context of aggressive behavior in marriage: A longitudinal study of newlyweds. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *20*, 12-20.

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

### **Required Reading:**

Davis, D., Shaver, P.R., & Vernon, M.L. (2003). Physical, emotional, and behavioral reactions to breaking up: The roles of gender, age, emotional involvement, and attachment style. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *29*, 871-884.

Kellas, J.K., Bean, D., Cunningham, C., & Cheng, K.Y. (2008). The ex-files: Trajectories, turning points, and adjustment in the development of post-dissolutional relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *25*, 23-50.

### **Seminar Leaders' Articles:**

Eastwick, P.W., Finkel, E.J., Krishnamurti, T., & Loewenstein, G. (2008). Mispredicting distress following romantic breakup: Revealing the time course of the affective forecasting error. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *44*, 800-807.

Slotter, E.B., Gardner, W.L., & Finkel, E.J. (2010). Who am I without you? The influence of romantic breakup on the self-concept. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *36*, 147-160.

Sbarra, D. A, Smith, H. L., & Mehl, M. R. (2012). When leaving your ex, love yourself: Observational ratings of self-compassion predict the course of emotional recovery following marital separation. *Psychological Science*, *23*, 261-269.

## 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](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](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.