-course description and learning 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. We will examine current theories and research in the social psychological study of close relationships to gain a better understanding of the basic processes and their application across varied relationship contexts. The assignments in this seminar will help you develop more effective oral and written communication skills. More specifically, by the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Describe how relationships develop and change over time using the most influential theories and frameworks in relationships research.
2. Discuss the roles of individual and contextual factors in shaping relationship behaviour.
3. Critically evaluate and integrate research from various scientific sources.
4. Summarize and concisely present empirical research articles.
5. Operationalize variables of interest and design studies to effectively answer questions about relationship behaviour.
6. Evaluate the accuracy of media claims about relationships using scientific sources.
7. Gain insight into your own relationships experiences by applying research on relationship processes.

-required readings:-

The required readings for each week can be found on the Learn website.

-assignments and evaluation:-

1) Attendance and Participation 15%
2) Thought Papers and Questions 20%
3) Seminar Leadership 20%
4) Scenario Analysis Exam 20%
5) Outline of Final Paper 5%
6) Final Paper 20%
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 the 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. Writing thought papers on the readings and attending class with several critical questions for that week's theme will 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 reach out to me for strategies.

In the last half hour of each class, students will be given a research question related to that week's topic and asked to design a study that would effectively answer that question. In small groups you will then discuss your ideas and decide on one study which you will present briefly to the rest of the class for discussion. Students will evaluate their own and their group members’ contribution to the study design and this will form 5% of your participation mark. The remaining 10% will be based on your attendance and contributions to class-wide discussions.

2) **Thought Papers and Questions (20%)**  
**DUE: Midnight on each Monday 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 4 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. Although these are not meant to be formal papers, the quality of your writing will be considered in your grade so be sure to organize your thoughts and write clearly. The 4 papers will be evaluated together for a grade worth 16%.

On alternate weeks each student will submit 2-3 questions for discussion based on that week’s readings (a total of 4 weeks throughout the term). These will make up the remaining 4% of the grade for this component of the course.

Students are expected to read each others' thought papers and questions 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 or questions, however they may wish to do so if they have missed a different week of submissions.

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

In groups of 2 to 4, students will be responsible for leading one hour of the seminar during the term (starting in Week 3). 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, explanation of the methods and results (presenting these in graphs or tables is helpful), and some conclusions. If your article includes more than one study, choose one to focus on in depth (you may wish to briefly mention the conclusions of the others). Seminar leaders should prepare some questions based on their article to generate class discussion. Each article presentation should take no longer than 10 minutes. In addition, each leader should provide a one-page summary of their presented article to the professor, who will upload the summary in Learn for the rest of the students to access.
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. 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). More detailed evaluation criteria is posted on Learn.

4) Scenario Analysis – Open-Book Exam (20%)
DATE: March 30 (Week 12)

Students will be given stories of one couple’s relationship trajectory (i.e., circumstances around the initiation, growth, and maintenance or dissolution of their relationship). You will use the theories discussed in the course to explain the couples’ perceptions and behaviours, and suggest reasons why the relationship progressed as it did. You must cite specific articles from the course (either the required reading or seminar leaders’ articles) to back up your analysis. You may bring all the articles to the exam with you. If you do the weekly readings, attend class, and participate in discussions, you should be well-prepared for this exam.

5) Final Paper: Thriving Relationships or Research Proposal (25%)
DUE: April 10 before midnight

For the final paper, you will write an article geared towards a popular Psychology magazine (e.g., Psychology Today). The question you are trying to answer for readers is “What makes close relationships thrive?” You may choose any topic in the relationships literature to focus on. You will need to concisely communicate the findings of at least three empirical articles on your topic (only one of the articles may be on the course reading list). You will integrate these findings, and any related theories or frameworks, to convey to your ‘lay’ audience practical advice for facilitating a thriving relationship. Use personal anecdotes, hypothetical scenarios, and media representations of your phenomena to make your article engaging for the reader, while maintaining scientific integrity.

Alternatively, you can choose to write a research proposal. You will write 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 three different articles.

5% of the 25% for this assignment will come from a one-page outline you will submit by March 20th. This outline should include your topic, a few sentences on your approach to the paper, and your three chosen articles. I will give you feedback in the dropbox and you can also set up a meeting with me to discuss.

Your final paper should be about 5 pages double-spaced. APA format is required.

Assignment Deadlines

Please try to inform me in advance if you are unable to complete an assignment by the scheduled date. Missed due dates are acceptable in the case of health problems (with a note from a doctor or counsellor) or other exceptional circumstances. Late submissions, without advance permission, will be given a 10% reduction in the total possible grade for each 24 hours after the due date.
WEEK 1 – January 5: Introduction

Optional Reading:


WEEK 2 – January 12: Relationship Initiation

Required Reading:


Professor’s Articles:


WEEK 3 – January 19: Attachment Style

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 4 – January 26: Diversity in Relationships

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 5 – February 2: Commitment and Marriage

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 6 – February 9: Sex

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 7 – February 16: Relationship Maintenance

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


February 23: No class, Fall Break
WEEK 8 – March 2: Insecurity and Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 9 – March 9: Conflict and Aggression

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 10 – March 16: Interventions and Dissolution

Required Reading:


Seminar Leaders’ Articles:


WEEK 11 – March 23: No class, prepare for final

WEEK 12 – March 30: Scenario Analysis (Open-Book Exam)
Renison University College Land Acknowledgement
With gratitude, we acknowledge that Renison University College is located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples, which is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

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
In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. See the UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage (https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage (https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/current-undergraduates/student-support/ethical-behaviour) for more information.

Discipline: Every student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their own actions. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity (https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity) for more information.] 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 Academic Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties are imposed under the University of Waterloo Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline (https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties (https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties).
Students should also be aware that copyright laws in Canada prohibit reproducing more than 10% of any work without permission from its author, publisher, or other copyright holder. Waterloo’s policy on Fair Dealing is available here: https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-guidelines/fair-dealing-advisory. Violation of Canada’s Copyright Act is a punishable academic offence under Policy 71 – Student Discipline.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals. Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, 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 AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.
Electronic Device Policy
The use of mobile computing devices (e.g., cell phones, laptops) in the classroom is limited to note-taking and accessing course materials. Personal surfing of the internet, downloading of non-course related material, use of messaging software, or gaming is not to take place.

Audio and video recordings of classroom lectures or activities must be approved by the professor prior to the beginning of the scheduled session. Recordings may only be used for individual study of materials presented during class and may not be published or distributed without the consent of the professor. Videos that contain images of other students may not be published or distributed without the consent of all students depicted in the video.

Information on Plagiarism Detection
Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students’ submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.

Intellectual Property
Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of the instructor, which can include:

- lecture handouts and presentations (e.g., PowerPoint slides)
- lecture content, both spoken and written (and any audio or video recording thereof)
- questions from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams)
- work protected by copyright (i.e., any work authored by the instructor)

Making available the intellectual property of instructors without their express written consent (e.g., uploading lecture notes or assignments to an online repository) is considered theft of intellectual property and subject to disciplinary sanctions as described in Policy 71 – Student Discipline. Students who become aware of the availability of what may be their instructor’s intellectual property in online repositories are encouraged to alert the instructor.

Contingency Planning
Inclement weather: In the event of a short-term campus closure or the cancellation of an in-person class due to snow or inclement weather, online and remote classes will not be affected.

Interruption or cancellation of in-person classes: In the event of a pandemic-related interruption of in-person classes, including a pivot to remote learning, your Instructor will post details in LEARN. Please check the Announcements section of the course homepage in LEARN for updates.

Interruption or cancellation of in-person examinations: In the event of a pandemic-related interruption of in-person exams, your Instructor will post details in LEARN. Please check the Announcements section of the course homepage in LEARN for updates.

Absence due to influenza-like illness or required self-isolation: If you need to be absent due to influenza-like illness or due to mandatory self-isolation, please complete an Illness Self Declaration. The form is available in the Personal Information section of Quest. Accommodations may be made for students who have completed an Illness Self Declaration without the need for a medical note.
Mental Health Support
All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports if they are needed.

On Campus
- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext. 32655
- MATES: one-to-one peer support program offered by the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7
- Good2Talk: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Empower Me: Confidential, multilingual, culturally sensitive, faith inclusive mental health and wellness service.
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 ext. 6880
- Here 24/7: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- OK2BME: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS website
Download UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)
Download the WatSafe app to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

A respectful living and learning environment for all
Everyone living, learning, and working at Renison University College is expected to contribute to creating a respectful environment free from harassment and discrimination.

You may contact Melissa Knox, Renison’s external anti-harassment and anti-discrimination officer, by email (mnknox@uwaterloo.ca) or by phone or text (226-753-5669). Melissa is an employment and human rights lawyer and part-time Assistant Crown Attorney for the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General. Melissa is experienced in case management, discipline and complaints processes, and works with organizations across Canada to foster safe, respectful, and inclusive work and learning environments through policy development, educational workshops, conflict mediation and dispute resolution, and organizational culture audits.

Harassment is unwanted attention in the form of disrespectful comments, unwanted text messages or images, degrading jokes, rude gestures, unwanted touching, or other behaviours meant to intimidate. According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, discrimination means unequal or different treatment causing harm, whether intentional or not, because of race, disability, citizenship, ethnic origin, colour, age, creed, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, or other personal characteristic.