

Close Relationships (PSY 64400), Fall 2014

General Seminar Information

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Office hours by appointment

Seminar Hours: Wednesdays 8:30-11:20am, in PSYC 2102

Course Information: The syllabus, presentation schedule, assigned readings, sample assignments, and grades will be posted on Blackboard Learn.

Seminar Goals

1. A major goal of this seminar is to expose students to influential research on intimate relationships (e.g., marriage, dating). We will discuss current and future trends in research, as well as classic theories and studies. The primary methods of learning in this seminar are reading, participating in class discussions, and completing assignments.
2. A second goal is to encourage new research projects. Several assignments (class discussion of assigned articles, hypothesis statements, and research proposals) are designed to stimulate new research ideas (e.g., new innovations, challenges to existing research, novel connections to other topics and disciplines).
3. A third goal is to reinforce skills that are needed for a career research. All course activities are designed to elicit "critical thinking." Beyond that, assignments reinforce how to formulate new research ideas (hypothesis statements, research proposal), give presentations (article presentation, research proposal), and summarize research (article summary). All assignments encourage strong communications skills (e.g., statements that are informative, clear, and concise).

Instructor's Expectations

I expect everyone to read this syllabus carefully; treat it like a course manual. I also expect everyone to use the Blackboard Vista course page regularly.

This is a graduate seminar. As such, I expect each student to contribute to class discussions *every week*. This means doing the readings in advance, being thoughtful about the course content, and sharing comments/insights with others. The more prepared each student is, the more interesting the discussions (and, thus, the course) will be.

Students will *NOT* be “spoon-fed” information, “held by the hand” through each requirement, or told repeatedly what to do. I expect students to be highly motivated to learn and to take responsibility for their own learning. If, for example, you come across an analysis that is unfamiliar, make the effort to learn about it. The point is not for you to do merely what is necessary for a good grade in this course (although grades do matter); the point is for you to get some new ideas out of the course and sharpen skills along the way. Ultimately the point is to advance your research training. I strongly encourage you to use this seminar as a way of generating new projects that will result in publications or other desirable outcomes.

Assignments and Grade Components (i.e., more expectations)

1. Participating in weekly class discussions (10%)

It is expected that everyone will contribute to class discussions every week. This component of your grade will reflect my assessment of your participation in class discussions. If you say very little from one week to the next, I will judge this as not contributing; if you say too much, that too makes for a poor contribution to class discussion.

2. Preparing discussion questions (10%)

Each student will be responsible for preparing a list of discussion questions to guide the discussion of a designated topic, to be selected after the first meeting. Sample questions are posted on Blackboard. Discussion questions should be emailed to all seminar students **two days in advance** (by Monday, 9am): fall-2014-psy-64400-001@lists.purdue.edu.

3. Hypothesis statements (20%)

A critical part of doing research is developing interesting and testable research ideas. This assignment involves developing hypothesis statements that are related to or inspired by the readings. You are required to turn in a hypothesis statement for any of **four** class meetings and you can turn in more than that. As a group, we will serve as consultants and discuss your idea.

Specifically, turn in a single page with a testable hypothesis and a brief summary (short paragraph) of the reasoning behind the hypothesis – why you would expect to find support for that hypothesis. *One of your hypotheses will serve as the subject of your research proposal (described below)*. Bring two copies to class of each hypothesis statement you write, one copy to turn in and a second to take notes of others’ comments and retain. This component of your grade will reflect turning in a testable and justified hypothesis statements on six occasions.

4. Presentation of a research proposal (20%)

During one of the last two classes, students will present a research proposal that originated with a hypothesis statement (described above). This assignment involves making a case for a set of ideas that culminate into a main prediction or set of predictions and linking the prediction(s) to specific operational definitions, empirical procedures, and analyses.

The oral presentation should last approximately **15-18 minutes** and convey: (a) the main idea/purpose of the research, ending with a one sentence synopsis of the general aim/hypothesis (e.g., “What I’m proposing to do is...”); (b) why this topic/hypothesis is meaningful; (c) what is known about the topic, describing extant research and relevant theory; (d) the specific hypotheses that will be tested; (e) the method you plan use to test your hypotheses (a brief description of the sample, data collection procedure, possible scale items, etc.); (f) a discussion of how your data will be analyzed (e.g., how manipulations will be assessed for their validity, what sort of statistical analyses will be use to test each prediction); and (g) the broader implications of the research. This is a lot to do in a short time; practice, practice, practice! At the conclusion of your presentation, we will ask questions and discuss your proposed research. The presentation will be evaluated based on content (i.e., how well it does the things listed above) and form (clarity, ease of following ideas, quality of visuals, etc.).

5. Article presentation and written summary (30%)

Each student will present two pre-assigned articles to the class. The article presentations involve doing a conference paper presentation and also providing a written summary. (Articles will be assigned immediately after the first class meeting, based on requests – see the “Article Presentation and Summary” list for each topic.) This assignment serves three functions. First, presentations shed light on research beyond the assigned readings. Second, presentations provide practice at giving research talks, as one would at a conference. Third, written summaries convey the main idea of an article to others in an efficient way (i.e., without having to read the article).

The oral presentation should last **12-15 minutes** and should **summarize** the (a) theory and hypotheses, (b) method, (c) results, and (d) broader relevance/implications. Treat this as if it were your own research that you are presenting. Presentations will be graded based on their content (communicating what was done and why it is meaningful) and presentation skills (e.g., using slides effectively, staying within the time limit).

The written summary should be no more than one printed page (single- or double-sided, including the full citation using APA format, 6th ed.) and should be distributed to class members during the class meeting at which the presentation occurs. Sample summaries are on Blackboard Vista. Written summaries are solely intended to provide an abbreviated record of the article and should NOT be used during presentations.

6. Student choice topic summary and reading list (10%)

The course is designed to cover the most influential research on relationships but obviously omits some topics because of time constraints. This assignment provides an opportunity to delve into a topic that may have been, omitted or to give focused attention on an issue of personal. Specifically: (1) identify a topic on relationships that we did not cover in detail and that interests you, and (2) prepare a handout for class members listing the 3 – 6 most important/influential readings (using APA format for references, 6th ed.). Select readings from high impact peer-reviewed journals.

On the day the assignment is due, you will be asked to explain why you are interested in that topic and whether/why it might be meaningful to others. The assignment grade will be based on how well you argue that the topic is meaningful and whether the list of reading seem to be most relevant for that topic.

General Course Policies

If you have questions, feel free to contact me via email or arrange an appointment. I try to reply within the same day or within 48 hours, but I cannot guarantee the timeframe for email replies. Please do not arrive to class late or leave early. Use of any functions on smart/cell phones during class is prohibited. Use of pads and/or computers is allowed for taking notes or seeking information directly related to the topic of the discussion/lecture going on at that moment. Please do not use class time to communicate with others (texts, FaceTime, etc.) or do other digital activities beyond the purposes the class activity at hand (e.g., no Facebook). You are responsible for observing policies, rules, and regulations of Purdue University, as stated in: http://www.purdue.edu/usp/acad_policies/index.shtml, which apply to, among other things, student conduct, academic honesty, and attendance. Specific policies are described below.

Emergencies and/or Changes in Schedule. You are expected to check the course web page and read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis. The schedule of topics and readings, and/or assignments may change. Students are expected to be flexible and open to such changes. In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Note, for example, that University guidelines state that if a semester is interrupted in or after the 14th week, it will be terminated and the grade earned by that time will be the final grade. In the event of emergency, you can get information about any such course changes through Bb, or by contacting me (arriaga@purdue.edu, 494-6888).

Academic Dishonesty. Anything that is presented as your own work should be your own work, with others' contributions cited or acknowledged appropriately. Dishonesty in academic work will not be tolerated and may result in a failing grade for this course as well as other actions by Purdue University. More specifically, Purdue prohibits "dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty." [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, University Regulations]

Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that, "the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest." All students are expected to follow Purdue University's policies for academic integrity:

<http://www.purdue.edu/odos/aboutodos/academicintegrity.php>.

Nondiscrimination. Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life.

Purdue University prohibits discrimination against any member of the University community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, genetic information, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran. The University will conduct its programs, services and activities consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and orders and in conformance with the procedures and limitations as set forth in [Executive Memorandum No. D-1](#), which provides specific contractual rights and remedies. Any student who believes they have been discriminated against may visit www.purdue.edu/report-hate to submit a complaint to the Office of Institutional Equity. Information may be reported anonymously.

Students with Disabilities. If you have a disability that requires special academic accommodation, please make an appointment to speak with Dr. Arriaga within the first three (3) weeks of the semester to discuss any adjustments. It is important that we talk about this at the beginning of the semester. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Disability Resource Center (<http://www.purdue.edu/drc>) of an impairment/condition that may require accommodations and/or classroom modifications.

Violent Behavior Policy. Purdue University is committed to providing a safe and secure campus environment for members of the university community. Purdue strives to create an educational environment for students and a work environment for employees that promote educational and career goals. Violent Behavior impedes such goals. Therefore, Violent Behavior is prohibited in or on any University Facility or while participating in any university activity. For additional information, go to:

http://www.purdue.edu/policies/pages/facilities_lands/i_2_3.shtml

Students are responsible for observing policies, rules, and regulations of the University as stated in the Purdue University Regulations, Part 5 – Student Conduct (for a detailed description see http://www.purdue.edu/univregs/pages/stu_conduct/stu_regulations.html). Anything that is

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Topics Schedule

August 27 Introduction and overview

PART I: General theories and conceptual frameworks

September 3 Why study relationships?
September 10 Evolutionary underpinnings of mate preferences
September 17 Attachment theory
September 24 Interdependence theory

PART I: Relationship and individual well-being

October 1 Commitment and alternatives
October 8 Trust
October 15 Partner responsiveness, intimacy, and relationship enhancement
October 22 Relationships and enhancing individual well-being
October 29 Partner support: The good and the bad
November 5 Managing relationship threats
November 12 Abusive relationships
November 19 Methods; Distress and interventions
November 26 *NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)*

PART III: Your interests

December 3 Current trends and "student choice" topics
December 10 Research Proposal Presentations
December 17* Research Proposal Presentations

* We will meet during final exam week.

Assigned Readings

Assigned readings for each topic appear on the pages that follow. All readings are available in PDF format on Blackboard, unless noted in class.

****** For the remainder of the syllabus, please contact Dr. Arriaga, Arriaga@purdue.edu ******