

PSY 39200, Close Relationships (Fall 2013)

General Information

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This course meets in PRCE 277 on MWF, 11:30am – 12:20pm. The textbook is:

Miller, R. S. (2012). *Intimate relationships* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Additional readings, resources, and grades for this course will be accessible through Blackboard Learn (Bb), PSY 39200-006.

Course Description, Goals, and Learning Objectives

This course introduces undergraduate college students to major topics in psychological research on intimate relationships. There are many types of close relationships. This course primarily focuses on relationships that currently are, will be soon, or at one point were, romantic involvements. This course has several objectives:

1. *Educating students on current research findings concerning intimate relationships.* There is a science to relationships, meaning that there is substantial research that has been conducted to understand and predict what transpires in intimate relationships. There's a lot published out there – good and not so good stuff. The main point of this class is to provide a structure for covering topics on relationships so that students can navigate all the information out there and develop an understanding and appreciation of relationship science.
2. *Encouraging the application of scientific findings to things that occur around or within us.* Science gets a bad rep as being boring. Not so! In reality, relationship science is exciting and personally relevant because it sheds light on things that affect our lives every day. Of course, relationship topics often make their way into popular media (e.g., movies, songs, news and/or interest articles, and pop psychology books). Many portrayals are misinformed. This course will sharpen students' abilities to discern whether portrayals of relationships are accurate. This course also sheds light on students' own relationships, hopefully giving them greater insight into the how's and why's things in their relationships occur as they do.
3. *Broadening what students know about psychology and sharpening skills in understanding research.* This course is wedded to psychological research and expanding what students know about psychology as an academic discipline. There is also a specific focus on reading and understanding published studies (hark back to your methods class and add some great topics to the mix!).

In the end, I hope this will sharpen your ideas of the “big questions/issues” related to relationships that are so central to human life. There are many such questions/issues, more than you may realize at the outset. Thinking about these questions and how to address them not only will familiarize students with the scientific literature on relationships but also make students more aware of the prevalence and centrality of relationship in their own lives. That said, there is one important **disclaimer**: This is not a “how-to” or self help course. We will not invest time discussing the specific things that occur in students’ own relationships (how to improve them, how to navigate problems or issues). This course is focused on describing and understanding research.

Course Grade and Requirements

Course requirements (detailed in sections below) and contribution to course grade:

75 (75%)	Exams (three exams, each worth 25 points)
15 (15%)	Quizzes on assigned articles (three quizzes, each worth 5 points)
10 (10%)	Group project

100 points Total

Extra credit: There will be opportunities to gain 6 extra credit points, through three options. Guidelines for each will be provided on the course web page.

The course grade will be based on the following scaling system for total points earned:

A+	97 points or higher
A	93 – 96 points
A-	90 – 92 points
B+	87 – 89 points
B	83 – 86 points
B-	80 – 82 points
C+	77 – 79 points
C	73 – 76 points
C-	70 – 72 points
D+	67 – 69 points
D	63 – 66 points
D-	60 – 62 points
F	59 points or lower

Exams

Three multiple-choice exams will cover material from class meetings, as well as textbook and assigned readings. None of the exams are cumulative; the “Topics and Reading Schedule” section below indicates the content to be covered by each exam and the date of each exam. Exams constitute a major part of the course grade. If you must miss an exam, *arrange an appointment with me before the day of the exam*. I will require documentation of a medical or personal emergency that accounts for having to miss an exam. A mere email or phone message that you can’t make an exam will not suffice and will result in an exam score of 0.

Readings

The textbook is: Miller, R. S. (2012). *Intimate relationships* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Additional assigned readings include specific published journal articles, which can be accessed through Blackboard Learn (Bb), PSY 39200-006. You are required to do all readings – textbook and/or assigned articles – by the date in which they are listed below, in “Topics and Reading Schedule”. That is, complete the readings **BEFORE** arriving to class that day. Material from the readings will be included in the exams.

Quizzes on Assigned Articles

Assigned readings include specific journal articles, accessed via links on the course web page. You are required to read all assigned articles, select three, and take a quiz on each of the three.

- Complete the quiz online. The course web provides a link for each quiz.
- **You can take a quiz up until 9:00am on the day the article is assigned** in the Topics and Readings Schedule (below).
- The quiz is “open book”, which means that you can consult material while taking the quiz, including the article and/or your own notes on the article. You can involve others in reading, summarizing, and discussing the assigned article. You can study for the quiz with others. However, **YOU MUST TAKE THE QUIZ ON YOUR OWN**, without assistance from others. Taking the quiz with assistance from others will be treated as an act of academic dishonesty.
- You are required to take three quizzes, but may take as many quizzes as you would like. Your three best scores will be used in deriving your grade for quizzes on assigned articles.
- There will not be any make-up quizzes. It is your responsibility to take three quizzes by the designated date of each quiz.

Assigned journal articles:

1. Coan, J. A., Schaefer, H. S., & Davidson, R. J. (2006). Lending a hand: Social regulation of the neural response to threat. *Psychological Science*, 17, 1032-1039.
2. Finkel, E.J., & Eastwick, P.W. (2009). Arbitrary social norms influence sex differences in romantic selectivity. *Psychological Science*, 20, 1290-1295.
3. Simpson, J. A., Rholes, W. S., Winterheld, H. A. (2010). Attachment working models twist memories of relationship events. *Psychological Science*, 21, 252-259.
4. Schneider, I. K., Konijn, E. A., Righetti, F., & Rusbult, C. E. (2011). A healthy dose of trust: The relationships between interpersonal trust and health. *Personal Relationships*, 18, 668-676.
5. Howland, M., & Simpson, J. A. (2010). Getting under the radar: A dyadic view of invisible support. *Psychological Science*, 21, 1878-1885.
6. Finkel, E. J., Slotter, E. B., Luchies, L. B., Walton, G. M., & Gross, J. J. (2013). A brief intervention to promote conflict reappraisal preserves marital quality over time. *Psychological Science*. DOI: 10.1177/0956797612474938.
7. Salvatore, J. E., Kuo, S. I., Stelle, R. D., Simpson, J. A., & Collins, A. W. (2011). Recovering from conflict in romantic relationships: A developmental perspective. *Psychological Science*, 22, 376-383.

Group project

Guidelines for this requirement will be provided on the course web page.

Topics and Reading Schedule

Do the assigned readings before arriving to class on the date in which they are listed.

Studying Intimate Relationships: The What, How, and Why

Date	Topic	Readings
8/19	Overview of course	
8/21	Methods	Text, Ch. 2
8/23	Methods (continued)	
8/26	Methods (continued) / Big questions	* Coan et al., 2006
8/28	Why we study intimate relationships	Text, pp. 1 – 14 (top only)
8/30	Why we study intimate relationships (continued)	

Building Blocks of Intimate Relationships

Date	Topic	Readings
9/2	NO CLASS: LABOR DAY	
9/4	Friendship (continued)	Text, pp. 27-32 (top only), 220-241
9/6	Friendship	
9/9	Basic attraction: What causes people to seek out each other?	Text, pp. 70-74, 89-100
9/11	Romantic attraction	Text, pp. 74-88
9/13	Sexual attraction (Guest speaker: Dr. Justin Lehmiller)	Text, pp. 274, 278-282, p. 288, pp. 289-300
9/16	Initiating relationships: Forming and managing initial impressions	Text, pp. 32-36, 106-112, 129-132, 152 (flirting)
9/18	Initiating relationships (continued)	* Finkel & Eastwick, 2009
9/20	Is this love?	Text, pp. 244-261
9/23	Individual representations of relational information	Text, p. 14-19, 105, 112-124,
9/25	Couple representations of non-relational information	132-137
9/27	EXAM 1 (covering material through “Is this love?”)	
9/30	Personality and processing relational information	Text, pp. 27-32
10/2	Recall of relational information	* Simpson et al., 2010
10/4	Interdependence and intimacy	Text, pp. 175-196
10/7	NO CLASS: FALL BREAK	
10/9	Interdependence: Origins of commitment	Text, pp. 204-209
10/11	Interdependence: Inferring trust	* Schneider et al., 2011
10/14	Interdependence drives relational behavior	Text, pp. 196-204

* Indicates an assigned article. Quizzes will be open until 9:00am on the day the article is listed; you are required to do a minimum of three quizzes. See “Quizzes on Assigned Articles”, above.

Topics and Reading Schedule (continued)

Maintaining Relationships: Promoting Relational and Personal Growth

Date	Topic	Readings
10/16	Promoting relational and personal growth	Text, pp. 426-433
10/18	Promoting relational and personal growth (continued)	Text, pp. 214-219
10/21	Promoting relational and personal growth (continued)	
10/23	Providing personal support	* Howland & Simpson, 2010
10/25	Providing personal support	

Maintaining Relationships: Managing Relationship Challenges

Date	Topic	Readings
10/28	EXAM 2 (covering material after Exam 1 through “Providing personal support”)	
10/30	Personal stress and distress	
11/1	Relational stress and distress: Feeling hurt, jealous, angry, betrayed	Text, Ch. 10
11/4	Feeling hurt, jealous, angry, betrayed (continued)	Text, pp. 282-289
11/6	Relational stress and distress: Conflict	Text, Ch. 11
11/8	Surviving conflict	* Finkel et al., 2013
11/11	Relational stress and distress: Control and violence	Text, pp. 300-302, 377-390
11/13	Control and violence (continued)	
11/15	Recovering from stress and distress	Text, pp. 332-334 * Salvatore et al., 2011
11/18	“Are we a good match?”	Text, pp. 275-278, 412-416
11/20	Divorce / Group projects	Text, pp. 391-412
11/22	Divorce / Group projects	Text, pp. 416-422
11/25	Viewing of <i>Married in America 2</i>	
11/27	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
11/29	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
12/2	Group projects	
12/4	Group projects	
12/6	Summary and review	

EXAM 3 (covering material after Exam 2) will occur during the designated final exam period.

* Indicates an assigned article. Quizzes will be open until 9:00am on the day the article is listed; you are required to do a minimum of three quizzes. See “Quizzes on Assigned Articles”, above.

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 (email, FaceTime, Skype, texting) 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.

Attendance

You are expected to be present for every class meeting. If you will be absent and you are concerned that your absence will adversely affect your grade, inform Dr. Arriaga of the situation in advance to make appropriate arrangements. If you must miss an exam, *arrange an appointment with Dr. Arriaga before the day of the exam*. Dr. Arriaga will require documentation of a medical or personal emergency that accounts for having to miss an exam. A mere email or phone message that you can't make an exam will not suffice and will result in an exam score of 0. For unanticipated or emergency absences when advance notification to Dr. Arriaga is not possible, you can contact the Teaching Assistant, Sue Phebus (49-46945), an administrative representative of the Department of Psychological Sciences, or the Office of the Dean of Students.

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 exams and quizzes may change. Students are expected to be flexible and open to such changes. Also, 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).

Use of Copyrighted Materials

Do not distribute class lectures or other materials made available for this course. Do not pass any materials from class lectures, notes, or assignment descriptions/guidelines as your own work.

Among the materials that may be protected by copyright law are the lectures, notes, and other material presented in class or as part of the course. Always assume the materials presented during class meetings are protected by copyright unless Dr. Arriaga has stated otherwise. You are permitted to take notes, which you may use for individual/group study or for other non-commercial purposes reasonably arising from enrollment in the course or the University generally. Notes taken in class are, however, generally considered to be "derivative works" of

the Dr. Arriaga's presentations and materials, and they are thus subject to Dr. Arriaga's copyright in such presentations and materials. No individual is permitted to sell or otherwise barter notes, either to other students or to any commercial concern, for a course without the express written permission from Dr. Arriaga. To obtain permission to sell or barter notes, the individual wishing to sell or barter the notes must be registered in the course or must be an approved visitor to the class. Dr. Arriaga may choose to grant or not grant such permission at their own discretion, and may require a review of the notes prior to their being sold or bartered. If Dr. Arriaga's grants such permission, she may revoke it at any time, if she so chooses.

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." [University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972]

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