

PSYCHOLOGY 3810 – THE SCIENCE OF INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS SPRING 2016

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<i>Meeting times:</i> 10:00-11:45am TTH	<i>Office Hours:</i> 12:00-1:00 M/T/TH, 2:30-3:30 MW or by appointment
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COURSE OVERVIEW:

Reviewing survey data about life goals from thousands of high school seniors from 1966-2009, Twenge and her colleagues (2012) found that their most important goal across most generations was “having a good marriage and family,” with “having strong friendships” ranking in the top four among all generations as well. We see evidence nearly every day of the importance of our intimate relationships with friends and romantic partners, and we also are quite familiar with the complexities related to forming and maintaining intimate relationships. Who are we attracted to? What is love? Why do we get jealous? Why do we stay in relationships? Why do we leave relationships? We’ll discuss the different and similar ways that men and women think, feel, and behave with regard to intimate relationship. We’ll also discuss the similarities and differences between heterosexual and same-sex intimate relationships. Human relationships are fascinating, and these are just some of the many questions and issues that we’ll address in this course by reviewing foundational and current empirical research in the field.

Specific Course Objectives

Students should be able to:

1. Describe the major research methods in studying intimate relationships.
2. Describe the major theoretical approaches to understanding human attraction.
3. Describe the major research findings related to friendship and love.
4. Describe the major research findings related to communication, conflict, dissolution, and maintenance in intimate relationships.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of men’s and women’s cognitive, affective, and behavioral similarities and differences in intimate relationships.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of diversity in intimate relationships.
7. Critically evaluate and apply research findings about intimate relationships to real life issues.
8. Demonstrate critical thinking and communication skills through contributions to class discussions and written assignments.
9. Organize, analyze, and synthesize empirical information related to intimate relationships in written assignments and exams.

COURSE READINGS:

Miller, R.S. (2015). *Intimate Relationships*. McGraw-Hill.

Readings are listed below in the course schedule and posted on Moodle.

GRADING:

EXAM I	50 POINTS (19%)
EXAM II	50 POINTS (19%)
EXAM III	50 POINTS (19%)
ARTICLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (6)	60 POINTS (23%)
WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT	40 POINTS (15%)
GROUP PRESENTATION	15 POINTS (5%)
TOTAL	265 POINTS

Your final grade will be determined solely by the total number of points you obtain on the required assignments. You should keep all graded assignments; these will be important if there is a discrepancy between your grades and my records. Your final grade will be determined using the grading system described below:

GRADE	PERCENTAGE/POINTS
A	.900-1.00 (238.5-265)
B	.800-.899 (212-238)
C	.700-.799 (185.5-211.5)
D	.600-.699 (159-185)
F	0-.599 (0-158.5)

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Students must come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings in a thoughtful, considered, sensitive, and respectful manner. Although there is no grade assigned to this requirement, active involvement is an essential component of the learning process. I expect everyone to actively participate to the best of their ability. For those of you who know that you are uncomfortable with talking in class, please make a point of making some time to come and meet with me early in the semester so we can begin working together on ways for you to become more involved in our group discussions.

EXAMS:

Three regularly scheduled examinations will consist of multiple choice and short answer/essay questions that will draw heavily from material that is discussed in class. The exams may also cover anything in the assigned readings—whether or not the information was covered in class. The time and date of the exams are listed on the class schedule below.

EXAM ATTENDANCE POLICY:

I require prior knowledge of any expected absences (such as for University functions, funerals, religious holidays, etc.) from exams. For all unexpected absences (such as illnesses, etc.), I require notice no later than the day of the exam. In some cases, valid documentation for the absence will be required for a make-up exam. Students who are taking a make-up exam are expected to take the make-up exam within one week of scheduled exam. Failure to follow this policy will result in an *automatic point deduction or zero credit* for that exam.

E-MAIL POLICY:

If an assignment is sent through e-mail, it is not considered “submitted” unless I am able to read the e-mail and/or open the attachment successfully. Errors sending e-mail are your responsibility so you are strongly encouraged to not rely on e-mail to send an assignment.

JOURNAL ARTICLES/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Throughout the semester, I will post discussion questions for six of the empirical articles you are assigned to read. Questions will be posted on Moodle one week ahead of the assigned reading. You are expected to respond to each question thoughtfully based on the reading. You are also expected to generate one “discussion” question of your own related to the reading. See handout for more information and the list of readings/due dates.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT:

For centuries, artists have been trying to capture love in its various forms. With this assignment, you will provide two examples of media (e.g., movie, song, art, poetry, novel, fairy tale) that you believe best exemplify love, given your personal and scientific understanding of the concept. Using concepts learned in class, you will develop a 4-6 page paper explaining why your media examples best exemplify love. See handout for further instructions.

GROUP PRESENTATION:

As part of a 2-3 person group, each student will participate in a five-minute group presentation of one study in a research article. There are two research articles (one on 3/3 and one on 4/19) that students will be presenting to the class. Each group will sign up for one study from one article and give a five-minute presentation of the rationale/hypotheses, methods, and results from that study. See handout for more information.

MOODLE:

Please go to the Moodle home page and log in using your AU ID and password. Scroll down to the Course Categories and click on Psychology and find the course or scroll all the way to the bottom and use the search box to search for Science of Relationships. Click on PSY 3810 01 16SP: Science of Relationships.

Grades for the class can be found on Moodle. You are strongly encouraged to verify and monitor your grades on this website throughout the semester (although all graded materials will be handed back to you in class).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

You are expected to attend all class sessions, read all assigned readings, and adhere strictly to the University’s Code of Academic Integrity. Aurora University’s Code of Academic Integrity prohibits the following dishonest and unethical behaviors: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, obtaining unfair advantage, unauthorized access to computerized records or systems, and facilitating academic dishonesty regardless of intent. The definition of each of these terms and the full text of the code is available in Aurora University catalog and on AU website: <http://www.aurora.edu/academics/resources/code.html>.

Therefore the university expects students to do their own academic work. In addition, it expects active participation and equitable contributions of students involved in group assignments. Cheating will result in automatic failure. You are not to represent someone else’s work as your own in homework or any other class assignments. You will not receive credit for any plagiarized assignment nor will you be allowed to make it up.

CLASS SCHEDULE*

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignments**</u>
1-12	<i>Course Overview, Syllabus</i> <i>Introduction – The Nature and Nurture of Intimacy</i>	Vrticka (2013) – URL on Moodle
1-19	<i>Research Methods for Studying Intimate Relationships</i>	Eastwick & Finkel (2008) – DQ
1-26	<i>Attraction</i> NO CLASS – Thursday, January 28th	Swami & Harris (2012) – DQ Walster et al. (1973) – DQ
2-2	<i>Attraction</i> <i>Impression Formation, Self-presentation, and Self-disclosure</i>	Miller (2015) – Chapter 4
2-9	<i>Impression Formation, Self-presentation, and Self-disclosure</i> <i>The Economies of Relationships</i>	Miller (2015) – Chapter 6
2-16	<i>The Economies of Relationships</i> EXAM I – Thursday, February 18th	
2-23	<i>Friendship</i>	Gable et al. (2012) – DQ
3-1	<i>Sex</i>	Conley (2011) – Group Presentations Sanchez et al. (2012) – DQ
3-8	SPRING BREAK	
3-15	<i>Love, Cohabitation, and Marriage</i>	Noller (1996)
3-22	<i>Communication</i>	Miller (2015) – Chapter 5
3-29	EXAM II – Thursday, March 31st <i>Stresses and Strains</i>	
4-5	<i>Stresses and Strains</i> <i>Conflict</i>	Gottman (1994) – Chapter 3
4-12	<i>Power and Violence</i>	Media paper due 4/12 Marano (2014) – URL on Moodle
4-19	<i>Power and Violence</i> <i>Relationship Dissolution</i>	Inesi et al. (2012) – Group Presentations Miller (2015) – Chapter 13
4-26	<i>Relationship Dissolution</i> <i>Maintaining and Repairing Relationships</i>	Conley et al. (2013) – DQ
5-3	EXAM III – Tuesday, May 3, 11:15am – 2:00pm	

*The class schedule provides you with general structure for pacing your reading of the text and gives you an idea of what will be discussed in class each week. This schedule is just an approximation of the pace of the course and may be altered slightly if more or less time is needed to cover a topic. Any changes in reading assignments, course schedule, or other aspects of the class will be announced in class. *You are responsible for all announcements whether or not you are present in class.*

**All readings are available on Moodle.