

PSY 5204: INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Fall, 2015

Monday/Wednesday 9:45 - 11:00 am

N391 Elliott Hall

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Jeff Simpson, S354 Elliott Hall, 626-0025, simps108@umn.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

TEACHING ASSISTANT:

Chloe Huelsnitz, N325 Elliott Hall, miro0047@umn.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

TEXTBOOK: Fletcher, G. J. O., Simpson, J. A., Campbell, L., & Overall, N. C. (2013). *The science of intimate relationships*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

COURSE FORMAT AND GRADING:

Psychology 5204 is primarily a lecture course, but there will be guest presentations, in-class demonstrations of interpersonal phenomena, and hopefully lively discussions of various relationship topics and issues. Participation in class is strongly encouraged, and all questions are welcome. The more people are actively involved in the class, the more deeply the material will be learned. The PowerPoint lecture material and all other course materials (e.g., the syllabus, additional readings) will be posted on the course Moodle website for students. The lectures for a given week can be downloaded on the Monday morning prior to each class.

There will be two multiple-choice/essay examinations held on the following dates:

EXAM 1: Monday, October 26 (regular class time)

EXAM 2: Wednesday, December 16 (regular class time)

Each exam is worth 100 possible points. Approximately 40% of the material on each exam will come from lecture, and 60% will come from the textbook and the weekly articles. The first exam will cover material from only the first half of the course, and the second will cover material from only the second half. Both exams will be held in the classroom (N391 Elliott Hall). **Please do not miss exams.** Make-ups will be given only with official University-approved excuses (see the University and College of Liberal Arts Rules and Regulations for make-up exams). If you do not have a university-approved excuse, you cannot make up an exam. Make-up exams must be completed within **2 weeks** of each exam date in consultation with the instructor and the TA.

Students will also write **5** brief (300-350 word) “thought pieces” in response to 5 of the weekly articles of their choosing during the semester. Each week, 2 or 3 brief research articles will be posted on the Moodle course website as part of the general course reading (supplementing the textbook). Students will choose 5 articles from any week on which to write their thought pieces. *The first 2 thought pieces must be submitted before Exam 1; the last 3 must be submitted before Exam 2.* Each thought piece should be emailed to the TA (Chloe Huelsnitz) as a Word file. Additional instructions about the thought pieces will be provided during the first week of class. Each of these brief writing assignments will be worth up to 10 points (for a total of 50 possible points). If a student is not happy with his/her grade on an earlier thought piece, s/he can write up to 2 additional thought pieces that will replace his/her 2 lowest thought piece

grades *after informing the TA*.

The final course requirement differs for graduate students and undergraduate students. Undergraduate students are required to write a brief paper (no longer than 7-8 double-spaced pages) that either: (1) reviews a specific topic of interest in relationship science or (2) proposes a novel study (or studies). *Undergraduates should submit a 1 paragraph description of their paper idea to the TA by the middle of November for feedback and approval.* The paper will be worth up to 50 points, and it is due on **Wednesday, December 9**.

Graduate students have two options to meet this course requirement. They can either: (1) give a 15 minute presentation (during a class period) on a topic of special interest to them (with the instructor's prior feedback and approval) or (2) write a brief paper (no longer than 7-8 double-spaced pages) that proposes a novel study (or studies). The presentation or paper is worth up to 50 points, and the paper is due on **Wednesday, December 9**.

In sum, there are 300 possible points in the class (exam 1 = 100 points, exam 2 = 100 points, the thought pieces = 50 points, and the paper/presentation = 50 points). Grade cut-offs for all students (both undergraduate and graduate) will be as follows:

A = 280-300 points
A- = 270-279 points
B+ = 260-269 points
B = 250-259 points
B- = 240-249 points
C+ = 230-239 points
C = 220-229 points
C- = 210-219 points
D+ = 200-209 points
D = 180-199 points
F = below 180 points

When final grades are posted at the end of the semester, they are **final**; they will not be changed no matter how close a student is to next higher grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

- (1) The lectures are designed to partially cover and expand on the material presented in the textbook. The material presented in lectures and covered in the textbook, however, may not always overlap. The order of the textbook readings parallels the order of the lecture topics each week. It is important that you read the textbook chapters *in parallel with* the lectures and class discussions each week. Keeping up with the reading is *essential* in order to learn and retain the material well.
- (2) Topics Covered:
 - Introduction to the science of relationships
 - The place of relationships within the social and behavioral sciences
 - The intimate relationship mind
 - The intimate relationship body

- Relationships and health
- Bonding from infancy through adulthood
- Selecting mates
- Attraction and love
- Inferential capacities (mind-reading) in relationships
- Communication and social interaction
- Sex and passion
- Violence in relationships
- Relationship dissolution
- Tying it all together

COURSE OVERVIEW

Part 1: Lectures: September 9 – October 21
 Readings: Chapters 1-6 (and associated weekly articles)
Exam 1: **Monday, October 26 (regular class time)**

Part 2: Lectures: October 28 – December 14
 Readings: Chapters 7-13 (and associated weekly articles)
Exam 2: **Wednesday, December 16 (regular class time)**
(Papers due Wednesday, December 9)

Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office (612-626-1333) and speak with the instructor as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty: Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis."

In this course, a student who engages in scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask Dr. Simpson or the teaching assistant (Chloe Huelsnitz).