

Spring 2017, Russell Sage College  
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Tu/F 9:30-10:50 in Gurley 301  
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Office Hours: Tu/F 11-12:00

## **PSY 365: Close Relationships**

**Prerequisite:** Psy 101

### **Course Description**

Why are some people more attractive as potential partners? How does commitment affect perceptions of partner intentions? How does relationship involvement affect responses to those outside the relationship? How is relationship research conducted? What is love? What role does communication play in successful relationships? How might stressful situations be understood and improved? How does interdependence affect the balance of power? What makes relationships work?

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to a wide range of social science research within the field of Close Relationships. Topics covered will include: initial attraction, development, social cognition, communication, interdependence, commitment and maintenance, love, conflict, power, loss, and repairing/improving relationships. The influence of an individual's personal experience, beliefs, expectations, and values will also be explored. Theoretical frameworks and research methodologies that have guided findings in these areas will be emphasized throughout the course.

### **Learning Outcomes**

After completing this class, students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast theoretical approaches to understanding close relationship dynamics
- Identify and describe research methods used to study relationships
- Demonstrate understanding of essential relationship elements, dynamics and processes as supported by classic and contemporary research
- Conduct a literature review addressing close relationship research questions
- Identify, analyze and discuss the main points of published studies and propose original research ideas to address unanswered questions.
- Demonstrate the ability to work effectively with others as you collaboratively develop a presentation to the class on a selected relationship issue.
- Recognize that what goes on in any relationship is a function of the individual partners, the unique nature of their interdependence, and the social environment that surrounds them.

### **Textbook and Technology Integration**

Text: Miller, R. S. (2015). *Intimate Relationships (7<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. New York: McGraw-Hill. The online interactive "Connect" version of this text is required for this course. Purchase an access code from the publisher or the bookstore. Once you have purchased your access code and registered for the course through Connect, you will have the opportunity to purchase a loose-leaf version of the text directly from the publisher at reduced price. This will be mailed directly to you. Check Moodle for

more information. Students who have used Connect interactive textbooks in past classes report increased engagement with and comprehension of course material. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. In addition to the interactive version of the textbook, you will have access to a more traditional e-book version for quick reference. Additional readings will be posted on Moodle.

Plan to complete the assigned readings and activities before class. Access the interactive Connect textbook through the McGraw-Hill Campus link on Moodle. At selected times while reading, you will be prompted to answer comprehension questions. Your scores for various quizzes and other activities will count towards the course preparation/homework portion of your grade. Additional weekly assignments will be posted on Moodle. These may include videos, activities, and audio interviews with experts in the field. I encourage you to make use of these resources for study and self-evaluation. The questions that accompany each reading assignment in Connect are designed to engage critical thinking skills and assess your understanding of chapter content.

## **Communication**

One way that I will communicate with you will be through class-wide emails. These will be sent through the Moodle News Forum. As part of the class, you will receive an email version of any information that I post in the News Forum, which is accessible from the course home page. If you need information from a class wide email, and you cannot find the email, you can access the information by going into the Moodle News Forum. This does not apply to personal emails sent only to your email address. I will use Moodle to direct you to online assignments, study tools, and activities for each chapter of the course, as outlined in the next section.

## **Contact Information**

Before you contact me, please consult your resources to look for answers to questions. Review the course syllabus, schedule, notes on Moodle, and check with your fellow classmates. If you need to contact me, e-mail is the best way to do so. Please include “PSY 365” or “Close Relationships” as the first thing in the subject line. Please treat email as professional correspondence, complete with a salutation, body, and signature. If you plan to come to office hours, an email in advance will help to insure that you get the time slot you need; however, it is not required. I try very hard to get to know students on an individual basis. Please stop by during office hours to introduce yourself ☺

## **Evaluation and Grading**

- **Exams** Three exams will be given throughout the semester. You are responsible for lecture content (which may or may not appear in your textbook), activities and class discussions, textbook material (which may or may not be covered in class), videos and/or podcasts, and material covered in any guest lectures. You will demonstrate knowledge of course content and application to specific situations. Exams consist of multiple-choice questions (similar to the online quizzes) and may include identification and short answer/essay questions. The final exam will not be cumulative. (60% total)

- **Presentation and Individual Papers** Students will work with partners to prepare and present a brief literature review of research in a selected area of study. Presentations will be aligned with the weekly topic throughout the semester, starting the third week of class. Individual papers will reflect the topic that was presented by the pair. (25% total)
- **Overall Attendance and Participation** Students are expected to attend every class and participate in all activities and class discussion. (5% total)
- **Course Preparation** Timely completion of interactive homework and other course preparation assignments is expected. Due dates for interactive homework will be posted in Connect. Other assignments will be posted on Moodle. (10% total)
- **Grading Policy:** Grades will be assigned according to the following distribution: 98-100%=A+; 93-97=A; 90-92=A-; 88-89%=B+; 83-87=B; 80-82=B-; 78-79=C+; 73-77%=C; 70-72=C-; 68-69=D+; 63-67=D; 60-62=D-; 0-59%=F.

## Class Policies

- **Exams** If you are late for an exam, you must complete the exam in the time left during the course period. If you arrive after a student has finished the exam, you may not take the exam. You must contact me at least 24 hours before the exam if you will be absent for an exam for any reason. If an emergency prevents this, you must contact me within 24 hours after the exam. Be prepared to provide documented evidence of why you were absent (for example, a note from the student health center or medical doctor, an obituary or bulletin for a funeral service held the day of the exam). If you are unable to come to class for one of the exam days for any other reason, you must provide me with evidence of a commitment that was made PRIOR to the first day of class which conflicts with the exam date. This might come in the form of a registration form for a conference, a receipt for travel arrangements paid for before January 17, a letter from the athletic or theater department if you are traveling for a required event, etc. Please see me individually if you have any questions about this. Make-ups are discouraged, but may be given at the instructor's discretion.
- **Classroom Conduct and Respect**
  - **Be prepared** to engage in class discussions and activities by completing the assigned readings and other course preparation assignments before class.
  - **Be present** and aware for each class period. Avoid distracting others and yourself with phones, tablets, etc.
    - Disengage all electronic devices unless otherwise instructed.
    - Do not text, email, check social media sites, surf online, or chat during class.
    - Failure to observe this request will result in reduced participation points.
  - **Be prompt.** Please show respect to everyone by coming to class on time. Consistent tardiness will affect the attendance portion of your grade.

- ***Be respectful.*** Please respect the ideas and questions expressed in this classroom. I want everyone to be comfortable participating in class discussions. You may not always agree with your classmates, but this should be a place where questions can be asked and issues discussed without judgment. If you are confused about something, often someone else is too. Do not be afraid to ask questions and share your thoughts!
- **Assignments** I do not accept emailed assignments. You will submit electronic assignments through forums or assignments in Moodle. Late work will be accepted, but will be penalized 10% for each day late. Do not slide papers under my door. If I require a hard copy of an assignment and I am not in my office, you may leave it in my mailbox. If the psychology office is closed, you will have to come back another time to turn it in.
- **Writing Style** All written assignments should be completed using APA format. They should be typed, using an APA Manual approved 12-point font, with 1 inch margins on all sides of the page, double-spaced, and carefully proofread for typographical spelling, and grammatical errors. You will be graded on the quality of your writing style as well as on the substance of your ideas. A citation and complete reference (in APA style) must be provided whenever you refer to the words, ideas, statistics, or other information provided by an author. Failure to do so counts as plagiarism. Multiple page assignments must be stapled. When not using a formal title page, your heading should include your name, the course name, my name, the date, and the name of the assignment.
- **Using Resources** You are responsible for using all the resources available to you, including the syllabus, the course schedule, the Moodle site with associated online resources, the textbook, the university calendars, and your classmates. For example, if you are not clear on the assignment submission policy, read that portion of the syllabus before asking me whether or not I accept late assignments. Or if you are unsure when an assignment is due, check the Moodle site before sending me an email. Thank you.

### **Extra Credit**

Extra credit will be available only to students who have successfully completed all assignments and attended all class sessions. Review the literature and write a 6-page paper analyzing theory, methods, and effectiveness of three specific martial therapy techniques. More details will be given near the end of the semester for students who have interest in doing this project.

***I reserve the right to change this syllabus and course schedule at any time during the semester.  
Changes in the schedule will be updated on Moodle and will be announced in class.***

### Psy 365 -Tentative Course Schedule

<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Textbook Chapters</b> <i>Note: Supplemental readings will be assigned throughout the semester</i>
1	Jan 17/20	The Science of Close Relationships	Syllabus Chapter 1
2	24/27	Research Methods in Relationship Research	Chapter 2 Supplemental readings
3	Jan 31/Feb 3	Attraction	Chapter 3
4	7/10	Social Cognition	Chapter 4
5	Feb14 Feb17	Communication	Chapter 5
6	21/24	<b>2/21 Exam 1</b> (Chapters 1-5) Interdependence	Chapter 6 (pp. 176-184)
7	Feb 28/Mar 3	Interdependence Commitment	Chapter 6 (pp. 184-205) Supplemental readings
8	<i>Mar 7/10</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>	
9	14/17	College closed – Snow Day Friendship & Love	Chapter 7 (pp. 313-222) Chapter 8
10	21/24	Love & Sexuality	Chapter 9
11	28/31	Conflict, Power, and Violence	Chapter 11 Chapter 12
12	Apr 4/7	<b>4/7 Exam 2</b> (Chapters 6-9)	Review
13	11/14	Stresses and Strains Dissolution and Loss	Chapter 10 Chapter 13
14	18/21	Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships	Chapter 14
15	25/28	Repairing Relationships	(Chapter 14)
Final		<b>Exam 3</b> (Ch. 10-14)	

*Subject to modification. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Moodle*

## PSY365 - Guidelines for Partner Research Presentations and Individual Critique Papers

Research is often collaborative in nature. Although scientists occasionally conduct research on their own, researchers typically work together to conceptualize hypotheses, review past scientific literature, design and conduct the research study, analyze data, discuss theoretical implications, and present findings to the scientific community.

The presentations in this class require you to work collaboratively with a partner in similar fashion. Together, you will create a 30-minute research presentation for your classmates on your focal area of interest. You will become the “expert” on your topic for the day you assigned to present. Presentations will align with lectures and readings for the day. You will begin by providing a brief review of the research context for your topic. You will then present the theory, hypotheses, procedure, (method), and overall results for your “anchor” empirical article (the one that is cited in the text). Next, students will describe the research outlined in their individual related article. The individual articles that you choose should cite the anchor article and be recently published (2014-present). They should be empirical in nature and published in peer-reviewed psychology journals. Class members will earn participation points for their feedback to the pair. You will write an individual paper describing and critiquing the merits (and potential drawbacks) of the research article you presented and discuss how it extends knowledge from the “anchor” article. This written article critique will be turned in on the day of the presentation.

### Preparation

You will begin to develop your ideas by reviewing empirical, peer-reviewed, psychology research in your specific topic area. Each partner will focus on one empirical article, but you will also explore the context of that article by reading related research. As you are planning your presentation, you will need to read each other’s article so you can develop a smooth transition between them in your presentation. The title that you create for your presentation should include reference to the specific areas of both of your research articles. You will receive an overall presentation grade, so be sure to stay connected and know what each other will be presenting.

You will turn in a list of selected references, in APA format, that includes the anchor article (cited in your text, the individual articles that extend this research, and any other sources that you consulted in preparing your talk. You will also provide a **handout outline** for the class and create a **visual presentation** (e.g., Power Point). Include the entire APA reference for your article at the top of the page. Keep in mind that your audience has not read the article you are presenting.

You will each write a paper describing and critiquing your article. You will discuss how it extends the findings, methodology, and/or theory from the “anchor” article and generally how it fits into the literature context.

### Presentation Requirements

You will set the context for the specific empirical articles you will be describing. You will then teach the class about the anchor article and the two specific research articles within this area of research. (30 min.) While listening to the presentation, audience members will write down at least two questions they would like to ask. You will have the opportunity to address these

questions as they apply to the topics you have presented.

Be sure to include the following points of information in your presentation:

- What research question drove your literature search?
- What were the main findings of the research on your specific topic?
- Why were the authors you've reviewed interested in this theory?
- How did they expand understanding in this area?
- What did you find to be most surprising and/or interesting about the development of research?
- What questions remain unanswered?
- How might you go about answering one or more of these questions?

With your partner, you will create a visual presentation (e.g., PowerPoint) and handout outline to support your talk. Your presentation should flow seamlessly from one person to the next.

Most of your work for this project will take place outside of the classroom, so take time to set up a time to meet that works for both of you.

### Individual Critique Papers

Each pair of students will begin with a common "anchor" article: the empirical article in their area of interest that is cited in the text. Each member will then describe and critique their recent and related empirical article (preferably 2014-2017) that cites the anchor article. Each student will write an individual 4-6 page paper (excluding title and reference pages) reflecting the work that contributed to the group presentation. Questions that should be addressed in the paper include:

- ***Setting the Context and Describing Anchor Article*** (1-2 pages) – What was the research question/ topic that sparked your interest? What theory and hypotheses drove the "anchor" article research? What methods were used? What were the main findings?
- ***Describe New (Recent) Individual Article*** (2-3 pages) - Why were the authors in the recent article interested in the original research? What were the hypotheses, methods, and main findings of the new research? How did the recent article expand understanding?
- ***Critique*** (1 page) Describe the strengths of the new study. What did you find to be most surprising and/or interesting about the development of research? Did you have any concerns? What questions remain unanswered?

Thus, each paper should open with a contextual description about the research question of interest and briefly describe the anchor article (guiding theory, hypotheses, methodology, main findings, and implications). The primary focus of the paper will be in describing and critiquing the individual article that extends the anchor article in some way. How did the new article extend the findings, methodology, and/or theory from the "anchor" article? Was the methodology sound? How do the results fit into the literature context?

Papers should be written in APA style. Be sure to include appropriate in-text citations, a title page, and a reference page. Papers are due on the same day presentations are given.

## **College Policy Statements (updated 8-28-16)**

### **THE SPIRIT OF LEARNING: STATEMENT ON APPROPRIATE CONDUCT ON CAMPUS**

All members of The Sage Colleges community are expected to conduct themselves in a way which respects the learning environment. Thus, Sage has the right to remove any student from a classroom, other academic area, or program at any time if the student's behavior is contrary to the spirit of learning or hinders the operation of the program in any way. Violent, disruptive, harassing or intimidating behavior is not tolerated in the classroom or any other place on campus. Any student whose conduct disrupts a class or other learning environment may be required to leave the premises immediately and subjected to disciplinary and/or legal action.

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The Sage Colleges is committed to providing equal access and responding to the needs of students with disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student seeking academic adjustments under the Americans with Disabilities Act must register and provide documentation to the Director of Disabilities Services. Any student in need of classroom assistance or modification under the Americans with Disabilities Act must inform the instructor of the needed adjustment by first obtaining the necessary accommodation letters from the Director of Disabilities Services in order for reasonable accommodations to be provided. It is recommended that students do so at the onset of classes as reasonable prior notice needs to be given. The Director of Disabilities Services can be contacted in Troy at 65 First Street Troy NY 12180 (518) 244-6874 or in Albany at 140 New Scotland Avenue, Albany NY 12208 (518) 292-8624.

### **POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic dishonesty in any of its forms, including cheating, plagiarism, misuse of SageNet, and failure to comply with guidelines for the conduct of human research, will not be tolerated at The Sage Colleges. A full statement of the policy on Academic Honesty can be found as an appendix to the Student Conduct Code on The Sage Colleges web site. A hard copy can be requested from the Dean of Students in Albany Kahl Campus Center 145 (518) 292-1753 or in Troy McKinstry Student Center 244-2207.

For guidance in proper referencing of sources, as well as how to avoid plagiarism, consult the most recent editions of the following works, which are available in the reference section of the libraries on the Troy and Albany campus.

- Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, New York, Modern Language Association.
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.  
<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocChicago.html>
- American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association*, Washington, D.C., American Psychological Association.  
<http://apastyle.apa.org/>



## **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE**

The Sage Colleges recognize the value of participation in and observance of religious obligations and practices by individual students. No student will be penalized because a religious observance prevents participation in any course requirement. An opportunity will be provided for each student to make any requirement missed for an absence due to religious observance. A student who intends to be absent from classes for a religious observance must notify each instructor in advance and make arrangements to cover missed course materials and to complete the course requirement(s) missed. The College reserves the right to confirm the existence of the observance through an interfaith calendar.

## **E-MAIL POLICY FOR THE SAGE COLLEGES**

Sage considers Sage Gmail ([username@sage.edu](mailto:username@sage.edu)) the exclusive vehicle for official college e-mail communication. As such, [username@sage.edu](mailto:username@sage.edu) will be considered the official e-mail address for writing and forwarding electronic correspondence. All users are expected to regularly check their Sage e-mail account (on Gmail) and to acknowledge messages in a timely manner. In addition to general College notices, faculty members frequently use the College's e-mail system to notify and correspond with members of their classes. It is recommended that students frequently access their College assigned e-mail account for information. Any electronic business conducted with the College must be done via a [sage.edu](mailto:sage.edu) account.