

# **PSYCHOLOGY SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS (FALL 2019)**

## **PSY 420F – Identity and Relationships in the Digital Age**

Selfies and snaps. Swiping and Skype-ing. Technology now plays a massive role in our social lives, from identity formation and expression, to relationship initiation and maintenance. In this course, we will ask questions such as: how does social media influence self-esteem? When do dating apps facilitate vs. undermine romance? And what are the pros and cons of being in perpetual connection with loved ones? Through weekly readings and discussion, we will review the latest findings and draw connections with classic issues and theory. **Dr. Claire Midgley, Mondays 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

## **PSY 420F – Evolutionary Perspectives on Social Psychology**

In this course we will explore evolutionary approaches to predicting and explaining human social behavior. We will critically consider these perspectives' strengths and weaknesses, examining their assumptions, methods, and theoretical tools. What are better and worse ways to adopt an evolutionary perspective? How do evolutionary perspectives generate hypotheses about human social behavior, and how are these hypotheses tested? We will discuss readings that apply evolutionary approaches to understanding motivation, relationships, prejudice, intergroup relations, social learning, cultural evolution, and other topics. **Dr. Rebecca Neel, Tuesdays 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

## **PSY 490F – Temporal Biology and Psychology**

In this course we will examine how timing and timekeeping are essential features of human biology from metabolism and development to behaviour and the human ability to learn, remember, and predict events and conditions. The ubiquity of biological rhythms among living organisms has become well accepted, both within scientific circles and in the general populace. However, the ways in which clocks and other timing mechanisms are adaptive, and sometimes critical for living organisms, are diverse and not well understood. Some aspects of timing are innate while others are learned. Various determinants of performance, such as sensory processing, memory formation, motivation, or emotionality, may be influenced by internal timekeeping in different ways. In this course, we will examine the broad variety of timing mechanisms, their adaptive value to human beings and other organisms, and the consequences of their dysfunction for human mental and physical health. **Dr. Martin Ralph, Fridays 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

## **PSY 490F – Optogenetic Tools for Studying Neural Circuits Underlying Behaviours**

The course will survey a variety of genetic neuron manipulation methods being used in the systems neuroscience field, with a particular focus on light-induced neuron manipulation methods and applications. **Dr. Junchul Kim, Fridays 12 – 2 p.m.**