



PSY420H1S: Social Psychology Seminar (Winter 2022) Identity and Relationships in the Digital Age

Wednesdays 1pm-3pm

In-person location: BA2179; **Until Jan. 31st, class will be held online at**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84664389056?pwd=ZnhhaW1ZQ21VOEJ6TUV1a0VhNG1GQT09>

Instructor Information

Claire Midgley, PhD; claire.midgley@mail.utoronto.ca

Drop-in student hours (virtual): Mondays, 1-3pm; sign up via Quercus calendar

Course Description & Goals

Selfies and snaps. Swiping and Zoom-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 examine 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 discussions, we will review the latest findings and draw connections with classic issues and theory.

By the end of the course, my hope is you will have improved in the following areas:

- 1) **Knowledge** about the concepts, considerations, and challenges unique to social psychology research in this subfield of social psychology.
- 2) **Critical thinking** in evaluating ideas, writing, and research decisions.
- 3) **Oral and written communication** in an academic environment.
- 4) **Providing and receiving constructive feedback** from peers.
- 5) **Professional development** in working collaboratively with others.

Readings

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, we will be reading a selection of peer-reviewed journal articles. Weekly readings are listed at the end of this document.

Assessment

Discussion Questions (6%; 2% each, lowest of 4 dropped): Before classes for which we have a class discussion and you are not submitting a thought paper (see schedule on page 4), you will submit one discussion question based on the reading(s) for that week. Discussion questions will be graded out of 2 (see Quercus for grading rubric), and, at the end of term, your lowest discussion question grade will be dropped. Thus, if you are satisfied with your grades on your first 3 discussion questions, you may choose to not submit a 4th (which will receive a grade of zero and be dropped).

Thought Papers (30%; 10% each, lowest of 4 dropped): Before classes for which we have a class discussion and you are not submitting a discussion question (see schedule on page 4), you will submit a thought paper based on the reading(s) for that week. Thought papers will be graded out of 10 (see Quercus for grading rubric and formatting details), and, at the end of term, your lowest thought paper grade will be dropped. Thus, if you are satisfied with your grades on

your first 3 thought papers, you may choose to not submit a 4th (which will receive a grade of zero and be dropped).

Discussion Participation (14%; 2% each, lowest of 8 dropped): After classes for which we have a class discussion (see schedule on page 4), I will assign everyone a participation grade out of 2 (see Quercus for grading rubric). At the end of term, your lowest participation grade will be dropped from your final Discussion Participation grade.

Ideas for participation:

- Were you confused about any aspect of a reading (e.g., the justification of the research question, the study methodology, the analytical techniques)?
- Do you take issue with any assumptions/conclusions arrived at in one of the readings?
- Do you have ideas for a follow-up research question for one of the readings?
- Do you have ideas for practical applications of a study finding from one of the readings?
- Have you recently read/listened to anything that relates to today's topic?

Term Paper (35%): For your term paper in this course, you will examine a topic of your choice related to either identity or relationships (see note below) in the digital age and write a paper that includes a detailed literature review and next steps for research in this area. Your final paper will be graded out of 35 (see Quercus for grading rubric and formatting details).

NOTE: After the first class, you will submit a **Beginning of Semester Survey (1% of final grade)** in which you will indicate the following:

- What you are hoping to get out of the course
- What concerns, if any, you have about the course
- Whether you would like to examine an identity or relationships topic and thus present your topic to the class on Mar. 2nd or 23rd (and what weeks you will submit a thought paper vs. discussion questions; see schedule on page 4).

Then, halfway through the semester, you will complete a **Midterm Survey (1% of final grade)** in which you will have the opportunity to:

- Get feedback on your term paper topic (and keywords for your literature search)
- Reflect on your approach towards one or more aspects of the course
- Indicate any concerns about the course and/or suggestions for improvement

Presentation (10%): On either Mar. 2nd or 23rd (see note above), you will give a to the class that outlines the topic you have chosen for your term paper, summarizing what is known about your topic so far and your ideas for future directions for research. Your presentation will be graded out of 10 (see Quercus for grading rubric and formatting details).

Additionally, on the day you are not presenting, you will submit **Feedback on Others' Presentations (3% of final grade)** for three of your peers.

Course Policies

Emails:

Emails must come from a utoronto.ca account and include PSY420 in the subject. You can expect a response within 24 hours, not including weekends. If you do not receive a reply in this time period, please re-send your message. Whenever possible, ask questions that could benefit others in class.

Missed Classes & Late Submissions:

Late thought papers and discussion questions will not be accepted, and any missed discussion will result in a participation grade of zero for that week.

For all other submissions/assessments, extension requests must be made via email (claire.midgley@mail.utoronto.ca), WITHIN 48 HOURS of the original deadline, and be accompanied by either an accessibility services letter OR a screenshot of your declaration of absence on ACORN.

Written work submitted late will be penalized 5% per 24hrs (or part thereof) after the due date and time (including weekends). If an extension has been granted, late penalties begin to accrue in the same way after the extended due date.

Presentations given late (either in class or submitted as a recording) will be penalized 10% per week (or part thereof) after the week in which the presentation was scheduled to be given.

Academic Resources**Accessibility Needs:**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS; accessibility.utoronto.ca) at the beginning of the semester. Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will then assess your situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

Academic Integrity:

All students, faculty and staff are expected to follow the University's guidelines and policies on academic integrity. For students, this means following the standards of academic honesty when writing assignments, collaborating with fellow students, and writing tests and exams. Ensure that the work you submit for grading represents your own honest efforts. Plagiarism (i.e., representing someone else's work as your own or submitting work that you have previously submitted for marks in another class or program) is a serious offence that can result in sanctions. To learn more about how to cite and use source material appropriately and for other writing support, see the U of T writing support website at www.writing.utoronto.ca/. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more information, see <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai> and <http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/>

Mental Health: Everyone feels stressed or overwhelmed now and then – it's a normal part of university life. If, however, you feel that the amount of stress or anxiety you have is preventing you from succeeding and/or enjoying your university experience, I encourage you to talk to someone about it. To find the right resource for you, visit UofT's mental health wayfinder, Navi: <https://prod.virtualagent.utoronto.ca/>. If you are experiencing more acute distress, please visit: <http://safety.utoronto.ca/>.

Schedule

Date	Topic (& Readings, if applicable)	Submission/Assessment		
		All	Group A	Group B
Jan. 12 th	Introductions (Course syllabus; (Jordan & Zanna, 1999)	Beginning of Semester Survey		
Jan. 19 th	Identity I: Topic TBD (Readings TBD)	Discussion Participation	Discussion Question	Thought Paper
Jan. 26 th	Identity II: Topic TBD (Readings TBD)	Discussion Participation	Thought Paper	Discussion Question
Feb. 2 nd	Identity III: Topic TBD (Readings TBD)	Discussion Participation	Discussion Question	Thought Paper
Feb. 9 th	Identity IV: Topic TBD (Readings TBD)	Discussion Participation	Thought Paper	Discussion Question
Feb. 16 th	Relationships I: Topic TBD (Readings TBD)	Discussion Participation	Discussion Question AND Midterm Survey	Thought Paper
Feb. 23 rd : NO CLASS (Study Break)				
Mar. 2 nd	Identity Presentations (Group A)		Presentation	Feedback on Group A Presentations
Mar. 9 th	Relationships II: Topic TBD (Readings TBD)	Discussion Participation	Thought Paper	Discussion Question AND Midterm Survey
Mar. 16 th	Relationships III: Topic TBD (Readings TBD)	Discussion Participation	Discussion Question*	Thought Paper*
Mar. 23 rd	Relationships Presentations (Group B)		Feedback on Group B Presentations	Presentation
Mar. 30 th	Relationships IV: Topic TBD (Readings TBD)	Discussion Participation*	Thought Paper*	Discussion Question*
Apr. 6 th	Optional Class: Grad School FAQs/Q&A Session	Term Paper		

*If needed/desired, as the lowest grade is dropped for Discussion Participation, Discussion Questions, and Thought Papers

READINGS:

Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (1999). How to read a journal article in social psychology. In *The self in social psychology* (pp. 461–470). Psychology Press. https://www.uni-muenster.de/imperia/md/content/psyifp/aeechterhoff/jordan_zanna.pdf

[Note: This is currently an incomplete list of the readings for this course and, along with the schedule on the previous page, will be updated before the first class on Jan. 12th]