



PSY424H1-F: Social Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships (Fall 2023, LEC5101)

Wednesday, 6:00pm-9:00pm, SS2105; Course website: q.utoronto.ca

Contact Information

Instructor:

Liza Igoshina
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Teaching Assistant:

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Office hours:

Tuesday, 3:45pm to 4:45pm
Zoom link:
<https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/81744068318>
Password: psychology

Questions?

Whenever possible, please ask questions during class so others can benefit from the answer. Of course, some questions are best asked in a one-to-one setting. For these types of questions, you have 2 options:

1. Attend my office hours.
2. Send an email to me (liza.igoshina@mail.utoronto.ca) to request an alternative meeting time or with your questions, adhering to the following guidelines:
 - Send your email from your utoronto.ca account
 - Include PSY424 in the subject line (for context & to make sure I see it!)
 - Include a salutation such as "Dear Liza"
 - Clearly outline your concern or question and, if applicable, the steps you have taken so far to try to solve the problem or find the answer
 - Include a polite sign-off with your name
 - If appropriate (i.e., your question concerns an assignment graded by the TA - see pgs. 3-4 of this document), cc the course TA.

*If you do not receive a reply within **24 business hours**, please send a polite follow-up email.*

Prerequisites: It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met **all** prerequisite and exclusion criteria listed in the Psychology section of the A&S Calendar for this course: <https://artsci.calendar.utoronto.ca/course/psy424h1> If you lack any prerequisites, you will be removed. No waivers will be granted.

Prerequisite

[PSY201H1/](#) [ECO220Y1/](#) [EEB225H1/](#) [GGR270H1/](#) [IRW220H1/](#) [POL222H1/](#) [SOC202H1/](#) [S](#)
[TA220H1/](#) [STA238H1/](#) [STA248H1/](#) [STA288H1/](#) [PSY201H5/](#) [STA215H5/](#) [STA220H5/](#) [PSY](#)
[B07H3/](#) [STAB22H3/](#) [STAB23H3/](#) [STAB57H3,](#) [PSY220H1/](#) [PSY220H5/](#) [PSYB10H3/](#) [SOC2](#)
[13H1](#)

Exclusion

[PSY327H5/](#) [PSYD11H3](#)

Course Description & Goals

This lecture course focuses on the social psychology of interpersonal relationships between individuals, especially romantic or close relationships and friendships. It surveys what social psychologists have learned about the development, maintenance, disruption or dissolution of personal relationships and current social psychological theories of interpersonal relationships.

The **objective** of this course is to review what relationship science can tell us about close relationships. We will explore questions such as: Why are relationships so important to us? What informs our choice of friends and romantic partners? What predicts satisfaction and stability in relationships? And how can we become better romantic partners? These and other questions will be examined from a variety of theoretical perspectives, with an emphasis on where our scientific understanding of these topics currently stands and how it can be improved.

Readings & Course Materials

All course materials will be posted on Quercus. There is no textbook. Instead, readings are an assortment of both academic and non-academic articles (see page 7 of this document).

Assessment

Overview:

Participation

Beginning of Semester Survey	.5%
Midterm Reflection	.5%
End of Semester Reflection	.5%

Written Assignments

Term paper topic and rationale	3.5%
Term paper outline and annotated bibliography	15%
Term paper	35%

Tests

Midterm	20%
Final	25%

Optional Participation

Peer-Review Process for Term Paper	5%
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Beginning of Semester Survey:

At the beginning of the semester, you will complete a survey that will help me learn a little bit more about you, your comfort with the course content, writing skill, and learning goals. This will allow me to gauge how I communicate concepts to facilitate engagement and discussion.

Midterm and End of Semester Reflections:

Mid-way through the semester and at the end of the semester, you will submit a journal asking you to reflect both on the content and skills you have learned and what is working (and/or not working) for you in the course. This type of guided journaling can be beneficial for the consolidation of material and for gaining insights into one's own learning processes (e.g., Stevens & Cooper, 2009). Furthermore, they can help me correct any issues with the course material or structure to improve the quality of learning.

Term Paper:

The objective of this larger assignment is to conduct a literature review that examines one or more aspects of intimate relationships (romantic or otherwise), from a perspective that is not your own. For example, if you are a woman, you could examine men's friendships. Or if you happen to be in a relationship with someone of the same ethnicity, you could examine experiences of interracial couples. Your final paper will be 8-10 pages (not including the title

page or references), double-spaced, and adhere to APA guidelines (7th edition). More information about expectations, grading rubrics, and suggested topics will be posted on Quercus and reviewed in class. **Short exercises and drafts designed to support the development of this paper (Term paper topic and rationale & Term paper outline and annotated bibliography) will be worth 18.5% of your final grade.**

Optional Peer-Review Process (for the Term Paper):

If you wish to participate, you may submit a draft of your term paper for peer-review 3 weeks before the final due date, with reviews returned one week later and after you submit 2 of your own reviews of other papers. See below for dates. Completion of this entire peer-review process will gain you 5% towards your final grade in the course, making the grade you receive on your final paper worth 30% (rather than 35%) of your final grade. NOTE: To ensure peer-reviews are returned on time, **all deadlines for the peer-review process are firm and cannot be extended for any reason (even in the case of an excused absence).**

Tests:

Twice during the semester, you will complete an in-class test assessing your comprehension of the material covered in the lectures and readings before that date. Both tests will consist of short and long-answer written questions. More information about the format and expectations for these tests will be posted on Quercus and reviewed in class.

General notes about assessments and grades:

As with your other courses, grades are based on the UofT grading policy, which you can review here: <http://writing.utoronto.ca/advice/general/grading-policy>.

Please note that we (i.e., your TA and I) understand that grades are important to you, and we do our very best to grade everything fairly and provide as much feedback as possible about what you have done well and how you could improve. However, if you ever want or need clarification on this feedback, please do not hesitate to request a meeting with the person who graded your work (see page 3-4 of this document). Finally, all grades will be posted within 2 weeks of the date the assignment or test was submitted or taken, except late work and final term paper and test. If you wish to contest a particular grade, students have a maximum of two weeks from the time they received the grade to contact the course instructor or the TA and ask for a re-grade. The re-grade can result in the grade being increased, remaining the same, or even being lowered after the reassessment.

Course Schedule

Assessments are bolded. All online submissions are made via Quercus and due by 11:59pm on the date listed. *Due dates are subject to change by course instructor if needed. All changes will be announced in-class and/or on Quercus.*

Tasks (in Suggested Order of Completion)		Dates
Attend (in person)	L1. Social Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships: Importance of Intimate Relationships & Course Overview	September 13
Read	L1 Reading(s): (Brown & Sacco, 2017; Cohen & Janicki-Deverts, 2009)	September 13
Submit	Beginning of Semester Survey (.5%)	September 13 Graded by Instructor
	L2. The Scientific Study of Relationships: Tools of Relationship Science & Theoretical Frameworks	September 20
Read	L2 Reading(s): (Finkel et al., 2017)	September 20
Submit	Term paper topic and rationale (3.5%)	September 20 Graded by TA

Attend (in person)	L3. Distinctions with Some Differences: Sex, Gender, & Sexual Orientation	September 27
Read	L3 Reading(s): (Burén & Lunde, 2018; Manley et al., 2015)	September 27
Attend (in person)	L4. Relationship Initiation: Attraction & Courtship	October 4
Read	L4 Reading(s): (Dion et al., 1972; McIntosh et al., 2011)	October 4
Submit	Term paper outline and annotated bibliography (15%)	October 4 Graded by TA
TBD	L5. Relationship Development: Self-Disclosure & Intimacy	October 11
Read	L5 Reading(s): (Algoe, 2012; Trepte & Scharkow, 2017)	October 11
Attend (Zoom)	L6. What We Bring to the Table: Personality & Personal Histories	October 18
Read	L6 Reading(s): (Segal & Fraley, 2016)	October 18
Attend (in-person)	Midterm Test (20%; L1 – L5)	October 25 Graded by TA
Submit	Midterm Reflection (.5%)	October 25 Graded by Instructor
Attend (in person)	L7. Managing Differences: Conflict, Power, & Violence	November 1
Read	L7 Reading(s): (Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Overall, 2019)	November 1
Submit	Term paper draft for peer review*	November 1 Participation optional Graded by TA
	READING WEEK – NO CLASS	November 8
Attend (in person)	L8. Thinking About Our Relationships: Beliefs, Standards, & Cognitive Maintenance Processes	November 15
Read	L8 Reading(s): (Knee et al., 2001; Lydon & Karremans, 2015)	November 15
Submit	Two Reviews for Peer Review Process* (5%, if complete entire peer review process)	November 22 Graded by TA
Attend (in person)	L9. The Broader Context: Stress, Resources, and Social Networks	November 22
Read	L9 Reading(s): (Muise et al., 2009; Randall & Bodenmann, 2009)	November 22
Attend (in person)	L10. Improving Relationships: Identifying Distress, Seeking Help, & The Role of Public Policy	November 29
Read	L10 Reading(s): TBD	November 29
	Final Test (25%; L1 – L10)	December 6 Graded by TA
Submit	End of Semester Reflection (.5%)	December 6 Graded by Instructor
Submit	Term Paper (35%; 30% if complete entire peer review process)	December 11 Graded by TA

* Indicates due dates are FIRM and cannot be extended for any reason.

Course Policies

Late Work Policy:

You must use the [Absence Declaration tool on ACORN](#) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form (see section titled *Specific Medical Circumstances*) to declare an absence if you require consideration for missed or late academic work (recording each day of your absence as soon as it begins, up until the day before you return to classes or other academic activities). After doing so, contact your instructor(s) to request the academic consideration you are seeking. If no extension has been granted, all **late submissions will be penalized 10% (of the assignment grade) per 24hrs (or part thereof) after the due date and time (excluding weekends).**

Note: The ACORN absence declaration tool can only be used once per student, per course, per semester.

Specific Medical Circumstances:

If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. You can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI. For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. For information on Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

“Life Happens” Insurance:

However, sometimes life happens. As such, you will have access to use **ONE** late ticket, good for a 48-hour extension period for any assignment during the term, no questions asked. To use this late ticket, email the instructor and your TA in advance of the time of the original deadline to indicate your intent, and then submit the assignment (in the usual way) at most 48 hours later.

Missed Test Policy:

If you miss a midterm assessment, you must submit documentation that demonstrates your inability to complete that assessment (i.e., the ACORN illness self-declaration tool or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury form) and let the instructor know within 7 calendar days of the due date of the missed assessment. In these cases, the weight of the midterm assessment will be added to the final assessment. If you miss the final assessment, the weight of the midterm will be added to the final literature review assessment.

Grade Dispute Policy:

The 24/14 Policy. You must wait for at least 24 hours following the return of an assignment/assessment before bringing a grade concern to your instructor. Use that time to reflect upon your performance and grade. If, after review, you are still concerned about the grading of a particular item or assignment, you may submit a Regrade Request Form detailing your concern. This form will be made available on Quercus and will be due within 14 business days of the return of the assignment/assessment (the specific date will be specified for each returned submission). Grade disputes are not to be directed to your TA. Only reasonable and well-justified concerns will be considered, and all decisions are final. Note that in agreeing to resubmit your work for remarking, you are agreeing to a re-evaluation of the entirety of your work; your grade may go up, go down, or stay the same.

Academic Resources

Accessibility Needs:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an ongoing 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 coursework. Remember that the accommodation process 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. *Note: The AS registration process can take some time, so start the process as soon as possible!*

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:

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. Speak to me or your TA for advice on anything that you find unclear. 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/>

Students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Artificial intelligence (AI):

I emphasize the importance of honing your writing skills independently for your success in this course and beyond it. It is crucial to understand that AI engines cannot replace the essential skill development that comes with writing practice. By practicing writing independently, you will refine your critical thinking abilities, enhance your communication skills, and develop a unique voice that reflects your understanding of psychological concepts. If you choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools to assist you in the assignments in this course, this use **MUST** be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used (e.g., include your prompts), and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work.

Mental Health:

Everyone feels stressed or anxious now and then – it's a normal part of university life. In a recent [National College Health Assessment \(published in 2017\)](#), however, 64% of UofT students surveyed reported experiencing overwhelming anxiety in the past 12 months and 45% reported feeling so depressed it was hard to function. If you are ever experiencing anxiety, depression, or any other symptoms that are preventing you from completing your work and/or benefiting from your university experience, I encourage you to investigate U of T's various resources: <https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca>. If you are experiencing more acute distress, please visit: <https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca/get-urgent-help/>.

Required Reading List

- Algoe, S. B. (2012). Find, remind, and bind: The functions of gratitude in everyday relationships: Gratitude in relationships. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 6(6), 455–469. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2012.00439.x>
- Brown, M., & Sacco, D. F. (2017). Greater need to belong predicts a stronger preference for extraverted faces. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 104, 220–223. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.08.012>
- Burén, J., & Lunde, C. (2018). Sexting among adolescents: A nuanced and gendered online challenge for young people. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 85, 210–217. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.02.003>
- Cohen, S., & Janicki-Deverts, D. (2009). Can we improve our physical health by altering our social networks? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4(4), 375–378. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6924.2009.01141.x>
- Dion, K., Berscheid, Ellen, & Walster, Elaine. (1972). What is beautiful is good? *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 24(3), 285–290.
- Finkel, E. J., Simpson, J. A., & Eastwick, P. W. (2017). The psychology of close relationships: Fourteen core principles. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 68(1), 383–411. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010416-044038>
- Gottman, J. M., & Levenson, R. W. (1992). Marital processes predictive of later dissolution: Behavior, physiology, and health. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 63(2), 221–233.
- Knee, C. R., Nanayakkara, A., Vietor, N. A., Neighbors, C., & Patrick, H. (2001). Implicit theories of relationships: Who cares if romantic partners are less than ideal? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27(7), 808–819. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167201277004>
- Lydon, J., & Karremans, J. C. (2015). Relationship regulation in the face of eye candy: A motivated cognition framework for understanding responses to attractive alternatives. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 1, 76–80. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.01.011>
- Manley, M. H., Diamond, L. M., & van Anders, S. M. (2015). Polyamory, monoamory, and sexual fluidity: A longitudinal study of identity and sexual trajectories. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 2(2), 168–180. <https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000098>
- McIntosh, W. D., Dawson, B. L., Scott, A. J., & Locker, L. (2011). Willingness to Date across Race: Differences among Gay and Heterosexual Men and Women. *Psychological Reports*, 108(3), 711–716. <https://doi.org/10.2466/07.PR0.108.3.711-716>
- Muise, A., Christofides, E., & Desmarais, S. (2009). More information than you ever wanted: Does Facebook bring out the green-eyed monster of jealousy? *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 12(4), 441–444. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.2008.0263>
- Overall, N. C. (2019). Attachment insecurity and power regulation in intimate relationships. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 25, 53–58. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2018.03.004>
- Randall, A. K., & Bodenmann, G. (2009). The role of stress on close relationships and marital satisfaction. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 29(2), 105–115. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2008.10.004>
- Segal, N., & Fraley, R. C. (2016). Broadening the investment model: An intensive longitudinal study on attachment and perceived partner responsiveness in commitment dynamics. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 33(5), 581–599. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407515584493>
- Trepte, S., & Scharnow, M. (2017). How social capital and social support received in media environments contribute to well-being. In L. Reinecke & M. B. Oliver (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of media use and well-being: International perspectives on theory and research on positive media effects* (pp. 304–316). Taylor & Francis Group.