Psychology
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

PSY424H1F: Social Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships (Fall 2021, LEC0101)

Tuesdays, 11am-2pm (WI1017); Course website: https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/236783

Contact Information	
Instructor: Claire Midgley, PhD claire.midgley@mail.utoronto.ca	**Teaching Assistant:** Liza Igoshina liza.igoshina@mail.utoronto.ca

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. Sign up for an individual zoom meeting via the Quercus calendar. All individual meetings will use this zoom link (different from the link for the first 2 online classes; p: Fall2022)
2. Send an email to me (claire.midgley@mail.utoronto.ca) 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 Dr. Midgley"
   - 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. 5-6 of this document), cc the course TA

   If you do not received a reply within 24 hours (not including weekends), please send a polite follow-up email.

Prerequisites: PSY201H1 (or equivalent) and PSY220H1. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met **all** prerequisites listed in the Psychology section of the A&S Calendar for this course. If you lack any prerequisites you WILL BE REMOVED. No waivers will be granted.

Course Description & Goals

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 pages 5-8 of this document).

Assessment

Overview:

Participation

Beginning of Semester Survey	1%	
Midterm Reflection	1%	
Lecture Attendance/Participation	10%	(1% per lecture)

Written Assignments

Mini-Assignment #1	8%
Mini-Assignment #2	10%
Final term paper	25%

Tests

Midterm Test (Lectures 1-5)	20%
Final Test (Cumulative, but with focus on Lectures 6-10)	25%

Beginning of Semester Survey:
The two purposes of this survey are to draw your attention to important details in the syllabus, and for me to get to know a bit more about you (e.g., how comfortable you are conducting a literature review).

Midterm Reflection:
Mid-way through the semester, you will submit a reflection journal asking you to reflect both on the content you have learned and what is working (and/or not working) for you in the course so far. Research shows that this type of guided journaling can be beneficial for 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.

Lecture Attendance/Participation:
During each lecture there will be at least one attendance/participation activity – completion of which counts towards 1% of your final grade (up to a maximum of 9%). For any missed lectures/activities, a makeup worksheet will be available on Quercus and can be submitted any time before the end of the semester; however, as these makeup worksheets will require a bit more effort to complete.

Mini-Assignments:
Twice during the semester, you will complete a mini-assignment designed to allow for a deep dive into a relationships theory that interests you (e.g., the Evolutionary Perspective, Attachment Theory; Mini-Assignment #1) and application of relationships research to a real-world question or challenge (e.g., how to get the most out of online dating apps; Mini-Assignment #2). More information about expectations, formatting options, grading rubrics, and suggested topics will be posted on Quercus and reviewed in class.

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 10-12 pages (not including 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.

Peer-Review Process (for the Term Paper):
If you wish to participate, you may submit a draft of your term paper for peer-review 2 weeks before the final due date, with reviews returned one week later (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 3% towards your final grade in the course, making the grade you receive on your final paper worth 22% (rather than 25%) 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)**. Thus, if you wish to participate in this process, begin work on your paper early, and plan to submit your draft well before the due date and time.

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 5-6 of this document). Finally, all grades will be posted within 2 weeks of the date the assignment [test] was submitted [taken], with the exception of late work and the final term paper and test.

Course Policies

Late Work Policy:
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the University has suspended the need for a doctor's note or medical certificate for absences from academic participation. You must, however, use the Absence Declaration tool on ACORN 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 5% (of the assignment grade) per 24hrs (or part thereof) after the due date and time (including weekends).**

Missed Test Policy:
If you miss the midterm or final test, register your absence (see above) and notify the instructor within 48 hours. Failure to do so will result in a zero for the missed test. Once your absence has been documented, we will arrange a time for you write a make-up test.

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.

NOTE: The AS registration process can take some time, so start the process as soon as possible!

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. 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/

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 having felt 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/.

Course Schedule

Assessments are bolded. All online submissions are made via Quercus and due by 11:59pm on the date listed.

Tasks (in Suggested Order of Completion)		Dates
Attend ([online](#))	L1. Social Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships: Importance of Intimate Relationships & Course Overview	Sept. 14th
Read (8 pgs)	L1 Reading(s): (Brown & Sacco, 2017; Cohen & Janicki-Deverts, 2009)	
Attend ([online](#))	L2. The Scientific Study of Relationships: Tools of Relationship Science & Theoretical Frameworks	Sept. 21st
Read (31 pgs)	L2 Reading(s): (Finkel et al., 2017)	
Review (7 pgs)	Syllabus	
Submit	**Beginning of Semester Survey** (1%)	**Sept. 21st** Graded by Instructor
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	L3. Distinctions with Some Differences: Sex, Gender, & Sexual Orientation	Sept. 28th
Read (22 pgs)	L3 Reading(s): (Burén & Lunde, 2018; Manley et al., 2015)	
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	L4. Relationship Initiation: Attraction & Courtship	Oct. 5th
Read (12 pgs)	L4 Reading(s): (Dion et al., 1972; McIntosh et al., 2011)	
Submit	**Mini-Assignment #1** (8%)	**Oct. 5th** Graded by TA
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	L5. Relationship Development: Self-Disclosure & Intimacy	Oct. 12th
Read (28 pgs)	L5 Reading(s): (Algoe, 2012; Trepte & Scharkow, 2017)	
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	**Midterm Test** (20%)	**Oct. 19th** Graded by Instructor
Submit	**Midterm Reflection** (1%)	**Oct. 26th** Graded by Instructor

Tasks (in Suggested Order of Completion)		Dates
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	L6. What We Bring to the Table: Personality & Personal Histories	Oct. 26th
Read (19 pgs)	L6 Reading(s): (Segal & Fraley, 2016)	
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	L7. Managing Differences: Conflict, Power, & Violence	Nov. 2nd
Read (19 pgs)	L7 Reading(s): (Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Overall, 2019)	
Submit	**Mini-Assignment #2** (10%)	**Nov. 2nd** Graded by TA
READING WEEK (No lectures)		Nov. 8th – 12th
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	L8. Thinking About Our Relationships: Beliefs, Standards, & Cognitive Maintenance Processes	Nov. 16th
Read (17 pgs)	L8 Reading(s): (Knee et al., 2001; Lydon & Karremans, 2015)	
Submit*	**Draft of Term Paper for Peer Review** (1%, if complete entire peer review process)	**Nov. 16th** Draft reviewed by 2 peers; Participation in process graded by TA
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	L9. The Broader Context: Stress, Resources, and Social Networks	Nov. 23rd
Read 15 pgs)	L9 Reading(s): (Muise et al., 2009; Randall & Bodenmann, 2009)	
Submit*	**Two Reviews for Peer Review Process** (2%, if complete entire peer review process)	**Nov. 23rd** Participation in process graded by TA
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	L10. Improving Relationships: Identifying Distress, Seeking Help, & The Role of Public Policy	Nov. 30th
Read __ pgs)	L10 Reading(s): TBD	
Submit	**Term Paper** (25%; 23% if complete entire peer review process)	**Nov. 30th** Graded by TA
Attend (in-person, WI 1017)	**Final Test (25%)**	**Dec. 7th** Graded by Instructor

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

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., & Scharkow, 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.