

PSY 468/568, Psychology of Intimate Relationships
Spring, 2017 -- TTh 12:30 – 1:45 PM; 223 Saguaro Hall
Updated: 1-17-17

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Course Description, Course Objectives, and Expected Learning Outcomes

The scientific study of intimate relationships has grown dramatically over the last several decades, and is one of the few truly interdisciplinary sciences. The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the rich and diverse field of relationship research. You will learn the guiding theories framing this literature, the unique research methods employed in the scientific study of relationships, and the seminal and often surprising findings that have emerged from this research.

My goal is not for you to simply read about research studies and interesting case examples, but for you to be able to think critically and thoughtfully about the topics we discuss. My hope is that you will truly enjoy the material we discuss in class, and that you will come to appreciate that “the study of intimate relationships is now a fully-fledged topic of profound importance in the social sciences” (Karney & Bradbury, 2010, p. xvi).

In terms of skill development, my goals are for you to: (a) learn to think critically about research and theories of intimate relationships; (b) be able to place specific articles and ideas within the broader context of a body of literature; and (c) be able to express those ideas orally and in written form.

The course will be structured in the following way:

- Weeks 1-4: Foundations of intimate relationship research
- Weeks 5-6: Key domains of intimate relationship functioning
- Weeks 7-8: Emerging directions in relationship research
- Weeks 9-14: Couple therapy
- Weeks 15-16: Ethics and diversity

Course Web Page

This course web page is hosted through d2L. You can access d2L at <https://d2L.arizona.edu>. From there you will have access to all of the materials for this course. Lecture slides, reading assignments other than those in the textbook, class assignments and handouts will all be posted on d2L. Announcements will be posted on d2L as well.

Readings

The required texts are:

- Sullivan, K.T., & Lawrence, E. (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Relationship Science and Couple Interventions*. *Oxford Library of Psychology Series*. NY: Oxford University Press. ISBN# 9780199783267 or ISBN # 9780199783274 (eBook).
- Sbarra, D.A. (2016). *Love, loss, and the space between: The relationship expert essays*. This is an Amazon Kindle eBook that costs only \$3.20: <https://goo.gl/xJG5KI> (This book should take approximately two hours to read.)

The Sullivan & Lawrence book should be available at the UA bookstore. You do not need it for the first few weeks of class. I also have several copies of the text in my office if you wish to borrow a copy. A series of other book chapters and journal articles will also be assigned. All chapters and articles that are NOT in the course text will be posted on

d2L for you to download.

The reading material and lectures will be used to convey the substantive matter of the study of relationships. The readings will provide the basic overview; the lectures will highlight certain topics and provide supplementary material; class assignments and class discussions will provide illustrations of different interpersonal phenomena. Lectures will often include material not found in the readings and vice versa. **Some topics in the readings will not be covered in lectures, and some topics covered in lectures will not be in the readings; however, any materials that are in the readings or covered in lecture may be included on exams.**

Class periods will consist of lectures, class activities and class discussions. In order for the material covered in class to be meaningful, students must attend class and complete the assigned readings **in advance** of the relevant class.

Grading Policies

Grades will be based on two exams, weekly comments on the readings, attendance and participation, and one 8-10-page paper assignment.

Exams (60 points)

- The first exam will be held on **Thursday, February 16th** in class
- The second exam will be held on **Thursday, April 20th** in class

Exam 1 will cover all of the material since the beginning of the semester. It will comprise 25 multiple-choice and short-answer questions. You will be able to earn a maximum of 25 points (1 point per question).

Exam 2 will cover all of the material since the previous exam. Because there are more readings and classes to be covered on Exam 2, it will comprise 35 multiple-choice and short-answer questions. You will be able to earn a maximum of 35 points (1 point per question).

Both lectures and readings will be covered on each exam, with more items based on the readings than the lectures (approximately 40% lecture, 60% readings). This means that you need to read all of the assigned readings carefully. The goal is to emphasize important concepts and information on the exams, not nitpicky details. Sample test questions will be presented in class prior to the first exam.

None of these exams will be cumulative. There will not be a cumulative final exam. On exam days, you will not be permitted to bring anything to your seat other than your pencils. If you bring any bags, notebooks, cell phones, etc. you will be asked to leave them at the front of the room. Grades will be posted on d2L as soon as possible after the examination.

Weekly Questions and Reactions from the Readings (10 points)

Prior to each new topic you will be expected to submit questions about, comments about, or reactions to some aspect of the assigned readings for that topic. Although there are 20 readings for which you could submit comments and questions, you are responsible for submitting questions or comments in reaction to at least 10 of them. Late submissions will not be counted. Please submit them through d2L.

The purpose of these weekly comments and questions is to encourage you to think critically and actively about the assigned readings and to formulate reactions to the material as you read it. Your questions or comments must be substantive enough to potentially contribute to the class discussions in order to receive the point. You will receive 1 point per class submission and may obtain a total of 10 points toward your final grade.

Final Paper Assignments (25 points)

Some students feel that exams do not accurately reflect their knowledge of the material. For this reason, undergraduate students will write an 8-10-page paper, and graduate students will write a 12-15-page paper. There

are three deadlines associated with this paper:

- Your paper topic and its source must be submitted on d2l by **Thursday, March 2nd, 11:00 PM**
- You must submit the 3 articles you will review by **Thursday, April 13th, 11:00 PM**
- The final paper is due **Monday, May 8th, 11:00 PM**

There are many purported “relationship experts” who give advice that sounds reasonable intuitively, but lacks empirical support or is even contraindicated based on research. Choose a recent popular book, an article you see in a non-scientific newspaper or magazine, or a statement you hear on television.

Some examples of sources you can pull from:

- TV shows: Dr. Phil; Oprah, reality TV dating shows
- Magazines: Cosmopolitan; Glamour; Men’s Health
- Books: *The Rules*; *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*
- Newspapers: A recent NY Times editorial on whether couple therapy “works”; articles in the local paper on relationships
- A non-scientific Internet site purporting to share relationship advice

Some examples of popular myths that are often stated as fact:

- When men have a problem, they want you to help them solve it. When women have a problem, they want you to listen and be empathic.
- When it comes to infidelity, men get more upset if the woman has sex with another man. Women get more upset if the man has an emotional connection to another woman.
- Women are naturally maternal. Men are not.
- More support is always better.
- Never go to bed angry.
- It is better to stay together for the sake of the children.

Once you’ve chosen your statement, advice, or myth you want to investigate, do some research using PsycInfo or another database to determine whether the statement or advice is scientifically accurate. You must review 3 journal articles that are directly relevant to the statement. Articles must be empirical (data-driven) and published in peer-reviewed journals. You may use book chapters and/or your class readings as additional resources, but these resources do not count toward the three articles.

Your paper should include the following sections:

- A discussion of the myth you chose to investigate. If you choose a written article to investigate, make sure to turn in that article along with your own paper. If you choose a book, submit copies of the relevant pages from that book. If you choose something you saw on television, state what show it was on, who made the statement, and the date it aired. You may also come up with a popular belief or myth that you cannot link to a specific source.
- Detailed discussions of **3 empirical articles**. Summarize the Methods (describe the sample and how it was recruited, describe the measures and procedures they used to examine the question) and Results (what the authors found that is directly relevant to your paper).
- Critique the articles you have reviewed on methodological or conceptual grounds. Do you trust the findings? Was the study methodologically sound? Does the study truly test the hypotheses it purports to test?
- Draw a conclusion as to whether the statement or advice is scientifically accurate. Choose one of the following options: (a) empirically supported, (b) the evidence is inconsistent or (c) contraindicated.

You do not need to use APA style, but writing quality will definitely factor into your grade. You are strongly encouraged to meet with Professor Lawrence prior to submitting each assignment related to this paper.

Graduate students: You will also be asked to propose a novel study in which you could test the myth or belief.

You can just list your hypotheses, describe your sample and how you will recruit them, and describe the measures and methods you will use. Your final paper should be 12-15 pages in length.

Attendance and Participation (5 points)

I expect you to attend class, be on time, and participate in all classes. If you do miss a class, you are still responsible for any information covered in class that day.

In class, I will show short film clips, present case examples, and lead class discussions and group activities in order to illustrate course material. Because there will be questions on the exams about these film clips, case examples, and class discussions, you should attend class regularly. Do not assume that you can do well in the course simply by reading the assignments and studying someone's notes from class.

In the unfortunate event that you should miss a class, you will need to borrow notes from another class member. You will also be held responsible for any changes or additions to the syllabus that are announced in class. All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion. Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean's designee) will be honored (e.g., for university-sponsored events/activities for academic, non-academic, and recognized student organizations).

Workload

This course fulfills 3 semester hours. Thus you should expect to spend approximately 6 hours per week outside of class reading the assigned readings or on other course assignments (papers, studying for exams).

How Final Grades Will Be Calculated

Your final grade will be based on the total accumulated points (a possible 100 points) as follows:

- Exam 1: 25 points
- Exam 2: 35 points
- Final Paper: 25 points
- Weekly Submitted Questions and Reactions to the Readings: 10 points
- Attendance and Participation: 5 points

The following scale will be applied:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	65-79
D	50-64
F	below 50

This is not grading "by a curve"; with this approach, it is possible that everyone could receive a letter grade of A.

Warning: In this class we will discuss a variety of relationship topics including sexuality relevant to the Psychology of Intimate Relationships. There may be course content that some of you find distressing, uncomfortable or upsetting. Please feel free to contact me along the way if you have any questions or concerns.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week	Dates	Unit	Topic	Readings
1	Th, 1/12	Unit 1: Foundations of Relationship Science	Orientation	N/A
2	T, 1/17		History of the field	Fletcher et al., Ch 1 (pp. 3-10 only)
	Th, 1/19		Theories of Intimate Relationships	Bradbury & Karney, 2 nd Ed., Ch 3 (pp. 82-130)
3	T, 1/24		TBD	Fletcher et al., Ch 2 (pp. 14-19 only)
	Th, 1/26		Q & A with Prof. Sbarra	Sbarra (2016) eBook
4	T, 1/31		Theories; Methods	Bradbury & Karney, 2 nd Ed., Ch 2 (pp. 33-81)
	Th, 2/2		Methods	Eldridge et al., Ch 27 (pp. 681-699)
5	T, 2/7		Unit 2: Relationship Domains	Conflict
	Th, 2/9	Conflict; Support		Brock & Lawrence (2010), pp. 31-54
6	T, 2/14	Support; Intimacy		N/A
1 st Exam: Thursday, February 16 th , 12:30 – 1:45 PM; 223 Saguaro Hall				
7	T, 2/21	Unit 3: Emerging Areas of Basic Research	Psychopathology	Text, Ch 6 (69-82)
	Th, 2/23		Psychopathology; Physical health	Text, Ch 5 (51-68)
8	T, 2/28		Physical health; genetics	Text, Ch 4 (pp. 39-50)
	Th, 3/2		DSM	Text, Ch 2 (7-18)
Paper Topic and Source Material Due: Thursday, March 2 nd , 11:00 PM; upload onto d2L				
9	T, 3/7	Unit 4: Couple Therapy	Assessment	Text, Ch 10 (pp. 131-147)
	Th, 3/9		Assessment	N/A
Week 10 -- Spring Break: No classes				
11	T, 3/21		Couple therapy	N/A
	Th, 3/23		Couple Therapy	N/A
12	T, 3/28	Unit 4: Couple Therapy	Couple therapy	Text, Ch 13 (177-192)
	Th, 3/30		Couple therapy	Text, Ch 15 (210-224)
13	T, 4/4		Prevention-primary & secondary	Text, Ch 14 (193-209)
	Th, 4/6		Sex	Text, Ch 7 (pp. 83-95)
14	T, 4/11		Infidelity	Text, Ch 9 (pp. 113-130)
	Th, 4/13		Aggression-controversies	Text, Ch 8 (pp. 96-112)
3 Journal Articles for Paper Due: Thursday, April 13 th , 11:00 PM; upload onto d2L				
15	T, 4/18	Unit 4: Couple Therapy	Aggression treatment	N/A
2 nd Exam: Thursday, April 20 th , 12:30 – 1:45 PM; 223 Saguaro Hall				
16	T, 4/25	Unit 5: Ethics and Diversity	Ethics in couple therapy	N/A
	Th, 4/27		Multiculturalism	Text, Ch 16 (pp. 225-240)
17	T, 5/2		LGBTQ	Text, Ch 17 (pp. 241-258)
	Th, 5/4		Synthesis & integration	N/A

Final Paper Due: Monday, May 8th, 11:00 PM; submit through d2L

Policies

Accessibility and Accommodations

It is the University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. You are also welcome to contact Disability Resources (520-621-3268) to establish reasonable accommodations. Please be aware that the accessible table and chairs in this room should remain available for students who find that standard classroom seating is not usable. I would like to hear from anyone who has a disability that may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Please see me after class or during office hours.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and Cheating

The University of Arizona expects all students to do their own work, as stated in the UA Student Code of Academic Integrity: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies-and-codes/code-academic-integrity>. Students enrolled in academic credit bearing courses are subject to this Code. Conduct prohibited by this Code consists of all forms of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to:

1. Cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism as set out and defined in the Student Code of Conduct, ABOR Policy 5-308-E.10, and F.1
2. Submitting an item of academic work that has previously been submitted or simultaneously submitted without fair citation of the original work or authorization by the faculty member supervising the work.
3. Violating required disciplinary and professional ethics rules contained or referenced in the student handbooks (hardcopy or online) of undergraduate or graduate programs, or professional colleges.
4. Violating discipline specific health, safety or ethical requirements to gain any unfair advantage in lab(s) or clinical assignments.
5. Failing to observe rules of academic integrity established by a faculty member for a particular course.
6. Attempting to commit an act prohibited by this Code. Any attempt to commit an act prohibited by these rules shall be subject to sanctions to the same extent as completed acts.
7. Assisting or attempting to assist another to violate this Code.

Any student who is detected of cheating on an exam or committing plagiarism in a paper in this course will be given a grade of F for the course and procedures will be followed as outlined in the Code of Academic Integrity.

Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

The University of Arizona is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free of discrimination. In support of this commitment, the University prohibits discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, based on a protected classification, including race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information. The University encourages anyone who believes he or she has been the subject of discrimination to report the matter immediately as described in the section below, "Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, or Retaliation." All members of the University community are responsible for participating in creating a campus environment free from all forms of prohibited discrimination and for cooperating with University officials who investigate allegations of policy violations. For more information on this policy and its enforcement please see <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy>.

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment (and other forms of sexual misconduct such as sexual exploitation, intimidation and assault) subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty and staff. All members of the UA community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. If you feel as if you have been the victim of sexual harassment or of a sexually hostile work environment in any aspect of the university, or you know someone who was a victim, you are encouraged to speak to me.

Policies against Threatening Behavior by Students

The University seeks to promote a safe environment where students and employees may participate in the educational process without compromising their health, safety, or welfare. The Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) Student Code of

Conduct, ABOR Policy 5-308, prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community, including to one's self. Threatening behavior can harm and disrupt the University, its community, and its families.

"Threatening behavior" means any statement, communication, conduct, or gesture, including those in written form, directed toward any member of the University community that causes a reasonable apprehension of physical harm to a person or property. A student can be guilty of threatening behavior even if the person who is the object of the threat does not observe or receive it, so long as a reasonable person would interpret the maker's statement, communication, conduct, or gesture as a serious expression of intent to physically harm. **Threatening Behavior is prohibited.**

Procedures for Mandatory Reporting of Threatening Behavior: If threatened by any student's conduct to the point of reasonable fear of immediate physical harm to self, others, or property:

1. Leave the area immediately.
2. Call the University Police by dialing 9-1-1 to request that an officer come to the location. Inform the Police if this is a repeat occurrence.
3. Anyone who observes what appears to be threatening behavior must report it to the Dean of Students Office and, in the appropriate case, file a Student Code of Conduct Complaint (see ABOR 5-403).
4. University employees who observe what appears to be threatening behavior must also report it to their supervisor or Department Head, who should report it to the Dean.

Please see <http://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/threatening-behavior-students> for more information and for disciplinary procedures.

Policies against Disruptive Behavior in an Instructional Setting

The University seeks to promote a teaching and learning environment free from material and substantial classroom disruptions. This policy is not intended to discourage appropriate classroom expression, discussion, or disagreement, but to promote respectful interactions. This policy applies to all enrolled students at the University of Arizona. Please see <http://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/disruptive-behavior-instructional-setting> for more information and for disciplinary procedures.

"Disruptive behavior" means conduct that materially and substantially interferes with or obstructs the teaching or learning process in the context of a classroom or educational setting. Disruptive behavior includes conduct that distracts or intimidates others in a manner that interferes with instructional activities, fails to adhere to an instructor's appropriate classroom rules or instructions, or interferes with the normal operations of the University. "Disruptive behavior" is prohibited. Students who engage in disruptive behavior may be directed by the instructor to leave the class for the remainder of the class period. If the student refuses to leave after being requested to do so, the instructor may summon the University Police. For involuntary removal for more than one class period, involuntary withdrawal from class, or more serious sanctions, the disciplinary procedures set forth in <http://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/disruptive-behavior-instructional-setting> will be utilized.

Respect for Fellow Students; Class Policies Regarding Cell Phones, Tables, and Laptops

As a courtesy to fellow students, please conduct yourself in a courteous and considerate manner during class. Remember that there are 300 students and only one instructor in this class. Use of cell phones is strictly prohibited in the classroom. Use of other electronic devices, such as electronic tablets/pads, or computers, is allowed for relevant class purposes (note taking). IF you are observed using a computer/tablet/pad for non-class purposes, you will be asked to put it away. A subsequent infraction on that same day will require you to leave class and forfeit the attendance points for that day. IF these infractions are repeated, the instructor reserves the right to ban computer/tablet/pad usage in the classroom altogether.

Cell phones, bags and other personal items are NOT allowed in class during exams. Any items you bring must be left at the front of the classroom during the exam. If a student is found to have a cell phone or other materials with them during an exam, procedures for academic fraud may be followed.

In order to foster a good learning environment for all 300 students in this class, please follow these rules of etiquette:

1. Do not eat or drink anything that makes any noise.
2. Do not read the Arizona Daily Wildcat or any other newspapers or magazines while class is in session.
3. Turn **off** your cell phone, music player, or other mobile devices while class is in session. (If you are a parent or

are in an emergency situation, let Professor Lawrence know prior to the start of class and set your cell phone to VIBRATE.)

4. Do not disrupt class by talking to your classmates about non-course-related subjects while the Professor or her TAs are speaking to the class.
5. Do not use your laptop/tablet/pad to play movies or games or surf the Internet for non-course related subjects while class is in session. Do not use these devices to send texts or messages of any kind. Do not use them to access social media sites or tools.
6. Make every effort to arrive in class on time and not leave until class is over. If you must arrive late or leave early, do not disrupt class.
7. Do not bring any pets or animals into the classroom (seeing-eye/therapy dogs exempted).
8. If you break any of these rules of etiquette, Professor Lawrence and her Teaching Assistants may eject you from the classroom.