

Psychology 323 • Thursdays 4:00-6:40 • Fall 2009  
Interpersonal Relations

Instructor: Dr. Jody Davis  
Office hours: Thursday 2:00-3:00, and by appt.  
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This course offers an overview of the means by which individuals develop and maintain close relationships. The course will examine various orientations to the study of close relationships, including interdependence, attachment, evolutionary-biological, and cognitive. In addition, the course will explore issues such as physical attraction, trust, intimacy, love, and commitment. The course may also address processes in distressed relationships.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Understand different theories about the development and maintenance of close relationships
2. Learn specific methods and results of research studies and what they tell us about relationships
3. Become acquainted with types of methodology used to study close relationships
4. Apply course concepts to your everyday life
5. Read a journal article and write a coherent and thoughtful response
6. Learn APA style source citation and referencing

**Blackboard:**

Course materials and elaborated information about course requirements will be available for download from Blackboard. Students are expected to check Blackboard regularly for announcements.

**Textbook:**

Berscheid, E., & Regan, P. (2005). *The psychology of interpersonal relationships*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

**University Policies and Deadlines (see course web site for elaborated information, including safety information):**

Sep. 4<sup>th</sup> is the last day to provide advance written notification to instructors with intent to observe religious holidays. Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> is the last day to withdraw with a grade of "W." If you have a physical or mental limitation that requires an academic adjustment or an accommodation, please contact me at your earliest convenience. If you will be taking exams at Disability Support Services, it is your responsibility to remind me of that a week prior to each exam.

**Attendance & Participation:**

Attending class will be necessary for good test performance – please come to class prepared to engage in discussion and focus on psychology. Because we meet only once a week, we will often cover more than one chapter a class. I will administer random unannounced attendance checks that will affect your grade (see Grading Policy, below). I strongly encourage class participation.

**Outlines:**

I will provide outlines on Blackboard for all the material you are responsible for learning in this class. These outlines are designed to help you organize your note taking and studying – they are not a substitute for taking notes!

**Exams:**

Questions primarily will be multiple choice with some short answer. Bring a pencil on exam days. The final exam will be cumulative. Any person who must delay taking an exam must consult with the instructor prior to test day (unless a true emergency arises, in which case you should contact the instructor as soon as possible). Exams will be given on days indicated on the syllabus – the dates will not change. However, exams will only consist of the information we have had time to cover.

**Papers:**

Two paper assignments will be posted on Blackboard (one journal article reflection paper and one idea paper). *No late papers accepted, where "late" is defined as the end of the class period.*

**Cheating (see University Honors Policy, [www.provost.vcu.edu/pdfs/Honor\\_system\\_policy.pdf](http://www.provost.vcu.edu/pdfs/Honor_system_policy.pdf))**

Any form of cheating or plagiarism will be dealt with severely. When you write papers, you should (a) use your own words to express your own ideas; (b) use your own words to express someone else's ideas and cite the source; and/or (c) put quotes around someone else's words and cite the source. If you violate any of these rules, your work will be submitted to the Academic Integrity Office (Honor Council). Possible sanctions include receiving a zero on the assignment or failing the class, depending on the severity of the infraction. I encourage you to ask for help before turning in a paper (the Writing Center would be a good resource, [www.vcu.edu/uc/writingcenter](http://www.vcu.edu/uc/writingcenter)).

**Grading Policy:****Possible Points    Your Points****Grading Scale**

Divide your points by the possible points:

Quiz	50	_____
Papers (2 x 25)	50	_____
Midterm Exams (2 x 100)	200	_____
Final Exam	150	_____
Attendance	25	_____
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>475</b>	_____

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

**Note: No extra credit will be offered. Attendance points will be calculated by the instructor assigning points to each day on which attendance was taken; the total of the points will be 25.**

**Course Outline****Dates****Topic****Reading**

August 20, August 27

Development of Relationship Science

Chapter 3

**September 3****Quiz on Chapter 3**

September 3, September 10

The Concept of Relationship

Chapter 4

September 17

First Relationships

Chapter 1

**September 17\***

Relationships and Health

Chapter 2

September 24

Varieties of Relationship

Chapter 5

September 24

Birth of a Relationship

Chapter 6

**October 1****Exam on Chapters 1-6**

October 1, 8

Relationship Growth and Maintenance

Chapter 7

October 22

Cognitive Processes

Chapter 8

**October 29\*\***

Affective Processes

Chapter 9

November 5

Dispositional Influences

Chapter 10

November 5

Love

Chapter 11

**November 12****Exam on Chapters 7-11**

November 12

Mate Selection and Sex

Chapter 12

November 19

Satisfaction and Stability

Chapter 13

December 3

Intervention and Dissolution

Chapter 14

**Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 4:00-6:50****Cumulative Final Exam****\* Journal Article Reflection Paper Due****\*\* Idea Paper Due**

This is the intended schedule, although we might sometimes get ahead or behind. Exam dates are firm.  
 Note: No class will be held during Fall Break Readings Days (Oct. 15-16) or Thanksgiving Break (Nov. 25-27).