Psychology 323 • Section 001 • Thursday 2:00-3:15 • Spring 2012

Interpersonal Relations

Instructor: Dr. Jody Davis
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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 summary and response
6. Learn APA style source citation and referencing

Blackboard:
University policies and deadlines (e.g., withdrawal deadline, safety information, disability support services information) as well as course materials and elaborated information about course requirements are available for download from Blackboard. You are expected to check Blackboard regularly for announcements.

Textbooks:

Attendance & Participation:
Attending class will be necessary for good test performance. Please come to class prepared to engage in discussion. I will administer random unannounced attendance checks that will affect your grade; leaving early or arriving late counts as an absence. If you miss class because you are sick or some other emergency situation (not your work schedule), then please contact me to request approval for an excused absence. 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) and will cover content from the textbooks as well as content from class. Bring a pencil on exam days. The final exam will be cumulative. If you must delay taking an exam for a valid reason, you need to contact me to request approval prior to test day (unless a true emergency arises, in which case you should contact me as soon as possible). Exams will be given on days indicated on the syllabus – the dates will not change. However, exams will consist only of the information we have had time to cover.

Papers:
Two paper assignments will be posted on Blackboard. Unless you have a documented excuse like you would for missing an exam, no late papers will be 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):
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).
### Grading Policy:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading-scale</th>
<th>Possible points</th>
<th>Your points</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>A 90-100%</td>
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<td>Papers (2 x 25)</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>B 80-89%</td>
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<td>Midterm Exams (2 x 100)</td>
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<td>C 70-79%</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>D 60-69%</td>
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<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>TOTAL POINTS</td>
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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.

### Date | Topic | Reading* |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31</td>
<td>Quiz on Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 2, 7</td>
<td>Introduction: What do We Want to Know about Intimate Relationships?</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Feb. 9</td>
<td>Men and Women, Gay and Straight</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
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| Feb. 14, 16-Paper 1 | Attraction and Mate Selection  
What Makes Someone Hot and Others Not?  
How Can I Tell if Someone is Interested in Me? | Chapter 5 |
| Feb. 21, 23 | Individuals in Relationships: Personality and Personal History  
Are Some People More Ready for Relationships than Others? | Chapter 6 |
| Feb. 28 | Exam on this section |  |
| Mar. 1, 6, 8 | Communicating Closeness: How Intimate Relationships are Maintained  
Should I Really Forgive & Forget When My Partner isn’t Perfect or Messes Up? | Chapter 7 |
| Mar. 20, 22 | Managing Differences: Conflict and Aggression  
What is Cheating, and What are its Consequences?  
Is Fighting with My Partner a Bad Sign?  
Why do People Stay in Bad or Abusive Relationships? | Chapter 8 |
| Mar. 27, 29-Paper 2 | Beliefs and Values: Thinking about Relationships  
Does Love Last Forever?  
For a Relationship to Work, Partners Must be Soul Mates. Am I Right?  
I Have High Expectations for my Relationship. Is that Bad? | Chapter 9 |
| Apr. 3, 5 | Explanations and Justifications: Making Meaning in Intimate Relationships  
Is Love Really Blind? | Chapter 10 |
| Apr. 10 | Exam on this section |  |
| Apr. 12, 17 | Stress and Social Support: Intimate Relationships in Context  
My Friends and Family Don’t Like my Partner. Should I Listen to Them? | Chapter 11 |
| Apr. 19, 24 | Interventions: Making Intimate Relationships Better  
Is Relationship Counseling Useful? | Chapter 12 |
| Apr. 26, May 1 | Intimate Relationships across the Lifespan  
Should I Live with my Partner Before I Get Married?  
Will Having Kids Ruin our Relationship?  
How Will my Breakup Affect Me? | Chapter 13 |

Thur May 10 at 8 AM  Cumulative Final Exam

*Chapters refer to the Intimate Relationships book and Questions refer to the Science of Relationships book

This is the intended schedule, although we might sometimes get ahead or behind. Exam dates are firm.

Note: No class will be held Mar. 13, 15 (Spring Break).