

SOP6409: Psychology of Close Relationships
Spring 2026

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Office hours: By appointment

Section LR26

CRN 26193

Thursdays 12:50-3:50PM

Room: PSY 0129

Course Description + Learning Objectives

The primary purpose of this course is to provide a graduate-level introduction to current psychological theory and research in the field of close relationships, with an emphasis on *intimate* (i.e., dating and marital or marriage-like) relationships. The major theories of close relationships will be emphasized, including attachment, interdependence, evolutionary, and cognitive approaches. In addition, research related to topics such as attraction, relationship development, communication, conflict, and relationship dissolution will be explored, with methodological concerns discussed within the context of each topic.

Additionally, you will find that the literature contains unexpected findings that can change the way you look at relationships, both from academic and applied, "real-life" perspectives, and I look forward to joining you on that exploration. Thus, the readings, assignments, exams, and activities are all designed to introduce you to the material in an engaging fashion. Close relationships are one of the most significant experiences in our lives, the quality of which is the strongest determinant of our overall life satisfaction. For this reason, a major goal of the class is to help you gain a better understanding of yourself and your close relationships.

This course provides the opportunity to achieve the following goals:

1. Students will gain knowledge about major theories about the development and maintenance of close relationships. Students will analyze a variety of perspectives to understand how intimate relationships are cultivated, what makes them flourish, and why they may deteriorate over time.
2. Students will become familiar with the science of relationships and identify tools for managing and improving intimate relationships. Students will discover how to effectively apply, both theoretically and realistically, their knowledge and demonstrate this through weekly discussions and homework assignments.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of research and theory in the area of close relationships, gain knowledge of various research methods used in studying close relationships, and critically apply these ideas through the development of a research proposal.

4. Students will learn how to write a scientific research proposal with an iterative feedback process.
5. Students will expand their relationship schemas by interviewing individuals they know who have been together for a long time. Students will also write an essay wherein they apply course content to these individuals' responses.
6. Students will delve into the process of reading and critically analyzing research and will demonstrate this through submission of discussion questions that are coherent, thoughtful, and reflective of understanding of the material.

Textbook

There is no required textbook for this course.

Critical Thinking in This Course:

Critical thinking is the process of thinking on your own, not just memorizing or stating what someone else has written or said about a topic. It is the process of going more deeply than just "reporting." Critical thinking means evaluating, synthesizing, and critiquing information, and figuring out how different ideas fit together. Exercise your critical thinking skills while taking this course!

Classroom Policies:

Here are some guidelines set in place to help you succeed in this course:

Show up. This one is pretty simple. It basically means that if you don't attend class, or if you arrive late repeatedly, you're going to miss a lot of relevant material. You'll also miss in-class participation activities that directly contribute to your grade. Thus, please attend every class. That said, I also understand that illness and various life events will happen. If you are ill, it's probably healthy for you and your fellow classmates to care for yourself and excuse yourself from class. If you need to miss a class for illness or for any other reason, you are still responsible for obtaining the notes from a classmate (or two).

Participate. The quality of this course depends in large part upon your level of engagement in the class with your fellow students. Classes will include group discussion, as well as interactive exercises and debates. Thus, your participation in class enhances the experience not only for yourself, but for your fellow students as well (and for me, as I am genuinely interested in what you have to say!).

Complete each assignment and turn it in on time. This course includes various assignments intended to facilitate your exploration and application of social psychology to the field of addictive behaviors. All assignments are due either in class or at 5pm

(Canvas). Written assignment grades will be reduced by a letter grade for each day late. Extensions will not be permitted except in unusual extenuating circumstances (e.g., loss of a loved one).

Ask questions and ask for assistance if you need it. This is important. Teaching is my passion, and it is extremely important to me to make concepts clear and accessible. Therefore, please do not wait or hesitate to ask questions or ask for help. Whenever you ask questions, you give me a rich opportunity to do my job. It's a win-win!

Assignments and Evaluation Method:

Grading

Grades will be based on performance on the following:

- (1) Presence + Engagement
- (2) Written critiques of peer-reviewed articles
- (3) Leading discussion
- (4) Choose Your Own Adventure presentation + Final paper

1. Presence + Engagement (50 points)

One of the objectives of this course is to help you build and improve your professional communication skills and ability to intelligently and conscientiously articulate your thoughts among your colleagues. You are expected to contribute to class discussions. This will require your presence and engagement. Every week, you are expected to have read all of the assigned readings prior to class and actively contribute to the class discussion. There are many ways of participating in this class. Active participation involves being fully present, asking thoughtful questions, building on others' comments, actively listening, raising interesting observations or issues about the material, and drawing links between the material and real-world or personal events. The key is to have everyone on board; we are all here to learn from each other, so view class participation as a way to enhance your learning and understanding of the material to make the most of this class. Your participation will be evaluated on a 3-point scale (1 = poor; 2 = mediocre; 3 = excellent). Those with unexcused absences will receive a 0. Those with excused absences will be exempted from the participation grade for that day.

2. Peer-Reviewed Written Article Critiques (100 points)

You will have the opportunity to write written critiques of class readings when you are not leading discussion. Reviews are intended to a) Help you recall content during

discussion; b) serve as a resource for you in the future; c) provide practice in manuscript reviewing; and d) provide concrete thoughts, concerns, or suggestions about the readings which require a careful processing and thoughtful consideration of the assigned articles.

The expected length of your critique is approximately 1 page double-spaced per reading. Please note that the expectation is not to simply summarize the articles. Do not spend more than two sentences detailing what the authors did or found. Instead, write reviews as if you were reviewing the article or chapter for publication in a scientific journal or an edited book. Feel free to jump right into any issues you identify as particular strengths of the approach; problems with the research and/or theory; possible extensions; comparisons with other approaches; etc. For example, if two articles for a given week provide divergent findings, you might consider highlighting the divergence and speculating on possible reasons for divergence. As another example, if you disagree with the basic premises behind an approach, construct arguments for the holes in their thinking and how it might be improved. As other examples, you might consider limitations of the research, areas where claims made in the discussion are not supported by the results, or logical extensions to other domains or populations.

It is best to always try to be constructive (e.g., if you find a flaw in a study's research design, propose a solution) and scientific (e.g., is there evidence for your argument? If not, how might you collect it?). In addition to responding to issues raised in class, it is good to come to class with your own ideas. This way, you can be sure we spend some time talking about what interests you.

Critiques are to be turned in electronically by each Tuesday at 5pm before class.

These are due on *Tuesday* so that Discussion Facilitators can incorporate your questions into their discussions (which you will also appreciate when you lead discussions!). These should be submitted for readings for which you are not serving as a Discussion Facilitator.

3. Discussion Facilitator (200 points)

Independent of being an active participator in class, students will take turns as a Discussion Facilitator during the semester. Dates and topics will be assigned on the first day of class.

We will have 3 readings each week. Depending on the class size, we will either have a different Discussion Facilitator assigned to each reading (i.e., we will have three discussion leaders each week), or the weeks will be split amongst the students (i.e., we will have 1-2 discussion leaders each week). This will be clarified on the first day of class depending on the final number of students.

We will spend an average of 45 minutes focused on each reading; be sure to prepare your presentation to last approximately this long including discussion. The number of times you will be a Discussion Facilitator depends on the number of students in the class. You will be responsible for providing an outline or Powerpoint/Slides and discussion questions for the readings for which you are leading the discussion.

Importantly, you can incorporate questions from your colleagues into the presentation. The structure of the outline is up to you and can be based on whatever you think will be most helpful in facilitating discussion. It might consist of a brief bulleted summary of content followed by several discussion issues or a more detailed narrative of points and issues to discuss.

Leading discussions will directly support learning objectives #1-3. Beyond that, your ability to lead discussions is essential for effective teaching, project management, and leadership in general. You will know that you are doing a good job leading the discussion if you are not doing most of the talking, but merely facilitating discussion and contributing on a relatively equal basis for any given point. It is also your responsibility to steer the discussion if it gets too far off track. Grades will be based on your preparation (i.e., outline/discussion points) and facilitation of discussion.

Some helpful tips:

- **Let people ask questions and share their reactions.** Give people a chance to bring up any concerns or interesting thoughts they had while reading the article. Encourage them to share the ideas they wrote about in their thought papers.
- **Ask us questions!** Generate some interesting discussion questions related to the articles. Give us time to think them through and discuss them.
- **Overarching presentation goals:** I have found over time that giving students opportunities to talk about questions in 5-7 minute intervals results in interesting class discussion.
- **Don't let us lose sight of the big picture.** There is always something the researchers could have done differently, so the challenge is to figure out how particular choices affect the interpretation of the results.
- **Keep things constructive;** often a limitation of one article is the starting point for another set of studies – how might you do those studies?
- **Keep things interactive and interesting.** Get people talking and thinking. You may use mixed media (e.g., videos) to keep the class engaged.
- **Keep things scientific.** If someone offers an opinion, ask how they would test it empirically.

- **Try to tie things together.** How do the different readings fit together? Do the ideas or findings from one article have interesting implications for the research described in the other articles?

4. Choose Your Own Adventure! Research Paper (100 points) + Presentation (50 points)

In direct support of objectives #5-7, you will be asked to write a publication-quality paper or proposal which includes being able to identify areas in which the current state of theory and research leaves important issues unresolved. Your paper can focus on a topic of your choice within the realm of social psychology and addictive behaviors. Please choose a topic that may be helpful to you for multiple purposes (e.g., potential publication; research area you want to pursue; etc.) Papers must be written in APA (7th edition) format and should be 10-12 pages (not including title, abstract, or references) in length.

To find ideas for your proposal, think of unanswered questions in the literature, conflicting findings, limiting conditions, competing predictions, or new areas of application. Lay the groundwork by reviewing the relevant research and present your idea. Make sure you always support your claims with relevant theory and research. In addition, try to clearly emphasize what your study will add to the literature and field of social psychology and addictive behaviors.

Please identify a topic no later than mid-October. We will devote a little bit of class time in mid October identifying topics, so you will want to know what you are planning to do before then. You are encouraged to talk with me at any point about your topic.

If you write a review paper, the objective should include integration of the literature and conclusions and take-home points about what we know, what we don't, and what we need to know. *If you write a proposal*, it should include an integrative review which suggests the need to do the proposed study and then pages outlining the methods of your proposed study, anticipated results, and discussion of how your findings add to the current research landscape.

Presentation of review or proposal: You will present your research proposal or review to your colleagues near the end of the semester. Your presentation should be a 10-15 minute presentation with PowerPoint, as if you were presenting it at a conference. The presentation should cover the content of your paper. You will receive up to 50 points for your presentation. The grade will reflect the organization of your presentation, time management, effective delivery, and engagement.

Review paper or proposal: You will receive up to 100 points for your paper. Papers are due to be uploaded on Canvas by April 21st at 5pm. Grades will be based on the quality of the paper. Late papers will receive one full letter grade reduction per day late.

See **Research Proposal Guidelines** at the end of this syllabus for more detail.

Grades and Grading Policy:

Your grade in this course comprises grades from article critiques, leading discussion, and your research proposal or review. The number of total points you can receive is 500. Your grade will be determined by the number of points you receive. Here is a link to University grades and grading policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Component	Points
Presence/Engagement	50
Written Critiques	100
Discussion Facilitator	200
Review or Proposal Presentation	50
Review Paper or Proposal	100
Total	500

Final grades will be based on the following percentages:

97%-100%	A+	74% - 76%	C
94% - 96%	A	70% - 73%	C-
90% - 93%	A-	67% - 69%	D+
87% - 89%	B+	64% - 66%	D
84% - 86%	B	60% - 63%	D-
80% - 83%	B-	< 60%	F
77% - 79%	C+		

Drop Policy:

If you are unable to complete a course or courses for which you have registered, it is **your responsibility** to withdraw formally from the course.

The last day to drop a course with no fee liability = January 16

The last day to drop a course or withdraw with a "W" and 25% refund = February 6

The last day to drop a course or withdraw with a "W" = April 10

Course Policies

This course complies with all UF academic policies.

For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see this link:

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

This webpage provides information on:

- Attendance and make-up policies
- Students with disabilities
- Assigning grade points
- Gator Evals
- Honesty and plagiarism policy
- In-class recording
- Academic and wellness resources

Counseling and Well-Being

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.

Here are some of those resources:

- **The Counseling and Wellness Center** 352-392-1575 offers a variety of support services such as psychological assessment and intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit their website for more information: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>. Online and in-person assistance is available.
- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit the [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- **GatorWell Health Promotion Services:** For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-2734450.
- **University Police Department:** Visit the [UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **Crisis intervention** is always available 24/7 from:
 - Alachua County Crisis Center: (352) 264-6789

- <http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx>

Please do not wait until you reach a crisis to ask for help! UF's counselors have helped many students through all kinds of situations. You are not alone. Please do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

Academic Resources

- **E-learning technical support:** Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- **Career Connections Center:** Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-3921601. Career assistance and counseling services. [Website](#).
- **Library Support:** Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information. [Website](#).
- **Teaching Center:** 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. [Website](#).
- **Writing Studio:** Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. [Website](#).
- **Academic Complaints:** Office of the Ombuds; Visit the [Complaint Portal webpage](#) for more information.
- **Enrollment Management Complaints** (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): View the [Student Complaint Procedure webpage](#) for more information.

Makeup Assignments

Students who must miss an assignment or deadline because of conflicting professional or personal commitments must make prior arrangements with the instructor. If an assignment is missed because of illness, please contact me to discuss.

Please note: Any requests for late submissions due to technical issues must be accompanied by the UF Computing help desk (<http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>) correspondence. You must e-mail me within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to submit an assignment late due to this.

Computer/Cell Phone Use in Class

If students are expected to send or receive urgent e-mails, texts, or calls during class, their unanticipated and urgent needs should be communicated to and approved by the

instructor prior to class. All cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode. All computing devices should be used only for the purpose of class-related activities.

Required Class Attendance

Attendance is expected as a part of the student's professional training. Students are expected to arrive for class on time and to remain for the full class period. Students needing to miss class should make prior arrangements with the instructor. Please note all faculty are bound by the UF policy for excused absences. Excused absences must be consistent with university policies in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog. Additional information can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Academic Integrity

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states:

"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code."

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

Online Faculty Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from

GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under 1 GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

COURSE SCHEDULE*

- *Dates are tentative and will be adjusted according to the semester calendar.*
- *Readings for a given week will be discussed in class that week, therefore students should plan to read them prior to coming to class. Due to the dynamic nature of research, course readings may be added/dropped throughout the course but no later than the class prior to reading is assigned. Please download readings from Canvas weekly to ensure you are accessing the most updated readings.*

Week	Discussion Topics
1 – 1/15	Organization + Overview
2 – 1/22	Close Relationships: Definitions + History
3 – 1/29	Attachment
4 – 2/5	Liking + Attraction
5 – 2/12	Love + Intimacy + Responsiveness
6 – 2/19	Interdependence + Commitment + Thriving
7 – 2/26	No Class – SPSP
8 – 3/5	Other Types of Relationships (Loneliness + Friends)
9 – 3/12	Conflict + Communication
10 – 3/19	No class – Spring Break
11 – 3/26	Evolutionary Approaches
12 – 4/2	Stress + Health + Context
13 – 4/9	Relationship Dissolution and Moving On
14 – 4/16	Student Research Presentations

Meeting Schedule

Week 1 First day of class: Organization + Overview

Organizational meeting. Syllabus. General introduction. Overview of the course.

Week 2 Close Relationships: Definitions + History

1. *[Historical perspective on the development of relationship science]* Reis, H.T., Aron, A., Clark, M.S., & Finkel, E.J. (2013). Ellen Berscheid, Elaine Hatfield, and the emergence of relationship science. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8, 558-572. doi: 10.1177/1745691613497966
2. *[important methodological considerations]* Kenny, D. A., & Cook, W. (1999). Partner effects in relationship research: Conceptual issues, analytic difficulties, and illustrations. *Personal Relationships*, 6, 433-448.

3. [primary content] Finkel, E. J., Simpson, J. A., Eastwick, P. W. (2017). The psychology of close relationships: Fourteen core principles. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 68, 383-411. doi: 10.1146/annurev-psych-010416-044038

Optional:

1. Berscheid, E. (1999). The greening of relationship science. *American Psychologist*, 54, 260-266.
2. Reis, H. T. (2007). Steps toward the ripening of relationship science. *Personal Relationships*, 14(1), 1-23.
3. Reis, H. & Collins, A. (2004). Relationships, human behavior and psychological science. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 233-237.

Week 3 Attachment

1. [seminal article on attachment theory] Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 511-524.
2. [solid comprehensive overview of attachment theory through 2015] Overall, N. C., & Simpson, J. A. (2015). Attachment and dyadic regulation processes. *Current Opinions in Psychology*, 1, 61-66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2014.11.008>
3. [new model describing nuances in attachment theory] Arriaga, X. B., Kumashiro, M., Simpson, J. A., & Overall, N. C. (2018). Revising working models across time: Relationship situations that enhance attachment security. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 22(1), 71-96. DOI: 10.1177/1088868317705257

Optional:

1. Thompson, R. A., Simpson, J. A., & Berlin, L. J. (2022). Taking perspective on attachment theory and research: Nine fundamental questions. *Attachment & Human Development*, 24(5), 543-560.
2. Zhang, X., Li, J., Xie, F., Chen, X., Xu, W., & Hudson, N. W. (2022). The relationship between adult attachment and mental health: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 123(5), 1089. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000437>
3. Fraley, R. C., & Shaver, P. R. (1998) Airport separations: A naturalistic study of adult attachment dynamics in separating couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 1198-1212
4. Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2013). The role of attachment security in adolescent and adult close relationships. In J. A. Simpson & L. Campbell (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of close relationships* (pp. 66-89). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
5. Brumbaugh, C. C., & Fraley, R. C. (2006). Transference and attachment: How do attachment patterns get carried forward from one relationship to the next? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32, 552-560.

6. Szepeswol, O., & Simpson, J. A. (2019). Attachment within life history theory: An evolutionary perspective on individual differences in attachment. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 25, 65-70.

Week 4 Liking + Attraction

1. [overview] Finkel, E. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (2019). Attraction and rejection. In E. J. Finkel, and R. F. Baumeister (Eds.), *Advanced social psychology: The state of the science* (pp. 201-226). New York: Oxford University Press.
2. [impressive work on first impressions] Baxter, A., Maxwell, J. A., Bales, K. L., Finkel, E. J., Impett, E. A., & Eastwick, P. W. (2022). Initial impressions of compatibility and mate value predict later dating and romantic interest. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 119(45), e2206925119. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2206925119>
3. [nice example of identifying research gaps] Stinson, D. A., Cameron, J. J., & Hoplock, L. B. (2021). The Friends-to-Lovers pathway to romance: Prevalent, preferred, and overlooked by science. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 13(2), 562-571. DOI: 10.1177/19485506211026992

Optional:

1. Imamoglu, E.O., Ads, M.M., & Weisfeld, C.C. (2019). What is the impact of choosing one's spouse on marital satisfaction of wives and husbands? The case of arranged and self-choice Turkish marriages. *Journal of Family Issues*, 40, 1270 - 1298.
2. Dai, X., Dong, P., & Jia, J.S. (2014). When does playing hard to get increase romantic attraction? *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology: General*, 143, 521-526.
3. Joel, S., Teper, R., & MacDonald, G. (2014). People overestimate their willingness to reject potential romantic partners by overlooking their concern for other people. *Psychological Science*, 1-8.
4. Eastwick, P. W., Finkel, E. J., Mochon, D., & Ariely, D. (2007). Selective versus unselective romantic desire: Not all reciprocity is created equal. *Psychological Science*, 18, 317-319.
5. Vacharkulksemsuk, V., Reit, E., Khambatta, P., Eastwick, P. W., Finkel, E. J., & Carney, D. R. (2016). Dominant, open nonverbal displays are attractive at zero-acquaintance. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, 113, 4009-4014.
6. Huang, K., Yeomans, M., Brooks, A. W., Minson, J., & Gino, F. (2017). It doesn't hurt to ask: Question-asking increases liking. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 113(3), 430-452.
7. Pennebaker, J. W., Dyer, M. A., Caulkins, R. S., Litowitz, D. L., Ackreman, P. L., Anderson, D. B., & McGraw, K. M. (1979). Don't the girls get prettier at closing time: A country and western application to psychology. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 5, 122-125.

Week 5 Love + Intimacy + Responsiveness

1. Reis, H. T. (2012). Perceived partner responsiveness as an organizing theme for the study of relationships and well-being. In L. Campbell & T. J. Loving (Eds.), *Interdisciplinary research on close relationships: The case for integration* (pp. 27-52).
2. Reis, H. T., & Aron, A. (2008). Love: What is it, why does it matter, and how does it operate? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3, 80-86.
3. Gordon, A. M., & Chen, S. (2016). Do you get where I'm coming from?: Perceived understanding buffers against the negative impact of conflict on relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 110(2), 239-260.
4. [touch on this one briefly] Morse, K. A., & Neuberg, S. L. (2004). How do holidays influence relationship processes and outcomes? Examining the instigating and catalytic effects of Valentine's Day. *Personal Relationships*, 11, 509-527.

Optional:

1. [anyone interested in pursuing relationship science should read this seminal article] Rusbult, C. E., & Buunk, B. P. (1993). Commitment processes in close relationships: An interdependence analysis. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 10, 175-204.
2. Birnbaum, G. E., Mizrahi, M., Hoffman, G., Reis, H. T., Finkel, E. J., & Sass, O. (2016). What robots can teach us about intimacy: The reassuring effects of robot responsiveness to human disclosure. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 63, 416-423.
3. Nikitin, J., & Freund, A. M. (2019). Who cares? Effects of social approach and avoidance motivation on responsiveness to others. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 45(2), 182-195.
4. Gunaydin, G., Selcuk, E., Urganci, B., & Yalcintas, S. (2021). Today you care, tomorrow you don't: Differential roles of responsiveness variability and average responsiveness in romantic attachment. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 12(5), 839-849.
5. Acevedo, B.P., & Aron, A. (2009). Does a long-term relationship kill romantic love? *Review of General Psychology*, 13, 59-65.
6. Otto, A., Laurenceau, J.P., & Siegel, S. (2019). Capitalizing on everyday positive events uniquely predicts daily intimacy and well-being in couples coping with breast cancer. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 29, 60-79.
7. Slepian, M. L., & Greenaway, K. H. (2018). The benefits and burdens of keeping others' secrets. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 78, 220-232.

Week 6 Interdependence + Commitment + Thriving

1. Murray, S. L., & Holmes, J. G. (2015). Maintaining mutual commitment in the face of risk. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 1, 57-60.

2. Impett, E. A., Park, H. G., & Muise, A. (2024). Popular psychology through a scientific lens: Evaluating love languages from a relationship science perspective. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 33(2), 87-92.

Optional:

3. Lemay, E.P., Ryan, J.E., & Teneva, N. (2020). Pursuing interpersonal value: An interdependence perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 120, 716-744.
4. Rusbult, C. E., & Van Lange, P. A. (2008). Why we need interdependence theory. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2(5), 2049-2070.
5. Kane, H. S., Slatcher, R. B., Reynolds, B. M., Repetti, R. L., & Robles, T. F. (2014). Daily self-disclosure and sleep in couples. *Health Psychology*, 33(8), 813.
6. Linardatos, L., & Lydon, J.E. (2011). Relationship-specific identification and spontaneous relationship maintenance processes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 104, 737-753.
7. van Steenbergen, E.F., Kluwer, E.S., & Karney, B.R. (2011). Workload and the trajectory of marital satisfaction in newlyweds: Job satisfaction, gender, and parental status as moderators. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 25, 345-355.
8. Clark, M.S., Lemay, E.P., Jr. (2010). Ways of giving benefits in marriage: Norm use, relationship satisfaction, and attachment-related variability. *Psychological Science*, 21, 944-951.
9. Etcheverry, P. E., & Le, B. (2005). Thinking about commitment: Accessibility of commitment and prediction of relationship persistence, accommodation, and willingness to sacrifice. *Personal Relationships*, 12, 103-123.
10. 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, 581-599.
11. Lemay, E. P., Jr. (2016). The forecast model of relationship commitment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 111, 34-52.

Week 7

No Class – SPSP

Week 8

Other Types of Close Relationships

1. Girme, Y. U., Park, Y., & MacDonald, G. (2022). Coping or thriving? Reviewing intrapersonal, interpersonal, and societal factors associated with well-being in singlehood from a within-group perspective. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 18(5), 1097-1120.
 - a. *[with a little of this added]* Park, Y., Impett, E. A., & MacDonald, G. (2021). Singles' sexual satisfaction is associated with more satisfaction with singlehood and less interest in marriage. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 47(5), 741-752.

2. Van Lange, P. A., & Columbus, S. (2021). Vitamin S: Why is social contact, even with strangers, so important to well-being? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 30(3), 267-273.
3. Conley, T. D., Matsick, J. L., Moors, A. C., & Ziegler, A. (2017). Investigation of consensually nonmonogamous relationships: Theories, methods, and new directions. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 12(2), 205-232.

Optional:

4. Ng, Y.T., Huo, M., Gleason, M.E., Neff, L.A., Charles, S.T., & Fingerman, K.L. (2021). Friendships in old age: Daily encounters and emotional well-being. *Journal of Gerontology*, 76, 551-562.
5. Boothby, E. J., Smith, L. K., Clark, M. S., & Bargh, J. A. (2017). The world looks better together: How close others enhance our visual experiences. *Personal Relationships*, 24(3), 694-714.
6. Epley, N., & Schroeder, J. (2014). Mistakenly seeking solitude. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 143(5), 1980.

Week 9

Conflict + Communication

1. Fincham, F.D. (2003). Marital conflict: Correlates, structure, and context. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12, 23-27.
2. Parsons, J.A., Prager, K.J., Wu, Sining, Poucher, J.W., Hansen, M.P., & Shirvani, F. (2020). How to kiss and make up (or not): Post-conflict behavior and affective recovery from conflict. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 34, 35-45.
3. Richardson, D.S. (2014). Everyday aggression takes many forms. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23, 220-224.

Optional:

1. Salvatore, J.E., Kuo, S.I., Steele, R.D., Simpson, J.A., Collins, W.A. (2011). Recovering from conflict in romantic relationships: A developmental perspective. *Psychological Science*, 22, 376-383.
2. Ellison, J.K., Kouros, C.D., Papp, L.M., & Cummings, E.M. (2016). Interplay between marital attributions and conflict behavior in predicting depressive symptoms. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 30, 286-295.
3. Gottman, J. M., Coan, J., Carrere, S., & Swanson, C. (1998). Predicting marital happiness and stability from newlywed interactions. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60, 5-22.
4. Gottman, J., & Levenson, R. (2000). The timing of divorce: Predicting when a couple will divorce over a 14-year period. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 737-745.
5. Johnson, M.D., Horne, R.M., Hardy, N.R., & Anderson, J.R. (2018). Temporality of couple conflict and relationship perceptions. *Journal of Family Psychology*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/fam0000398>
6. Balderrama-Durbin, C.M., Allen, E.S., & Rhoades, G.K. (2012). Demand and withdraw behaviors in couples with a history of infidelity. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 26, 11-17.

* *Discuss project proposals*

Week 10 No Class – Spring Break

Week 11 Evolutionary Approaches

1. Maner, J. K., & Ackerman, J. M. (2013). Love is a battlefield: Romantic attraction, intrasexual competition, and conflict between the sexes. In J. A. Simpson & L. Campbell (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of close relationships* (pp. 137-160). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
2. Gildersleeve, K., Haselton, M. G., & Fales, M. R. (2014). Do women's mate preferences change across the ovulatory cycle? A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 140, 1205-1259
3. Moss, J. H., & Maner, J. K. (2016). Biased sex ratios influence fundamental aspects of human mating. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 42, 72-80.
4. Eastwick, P.W. (2016). The emerging integration of close relationships research and evolutionary psychology. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 25, 183-190.
5. Pazda, A. D., Prokop, P., & Elliot, A. J. (2014). Red and romantic rivalry: Viewing another woman in red increases perceptions of sexual receptivity, derogation, and intentions to mate-guard. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 40, 1260-1269.
6. Jonason, P. K., Garcia, J. R., Webster, G. D., Li, N. P., & Fisher, H. E. (2015). Relationship dealbreakers: Traits people avoid in potential mates. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41, 1697-1711.
7. Buss, D. M., & Schmitt, D. P. (1993). Sexual strategies theory: An evolutionary perspective on human mating. *Psychological Review*, 100, 204-232.
8. Fisher, H., Aron, A., & Brown, L. L. (2005). Romantic love: an fMRI study of a neural mechanism for mate choice. *Journal of Comparative Neurology*, 493, 58-62.
9. Wood, D. O., & Brumbaugh, C. C. (2009). Using revealed mate preferences to evaluate market force and differential preference explanations for mate selection. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 6, 1226-1244.
10. DelPriore, D. J., Proffitt Leyva, R., Ellis, B. J., & Hill, S. E. (2018). The effects of paternal disengagement on women's perceptions of male mating intent. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 114(2), 286-302.
11. Gul, P., & Kupfer, T. R. (in press). Benevolent Sexism and Mate Preferences: Why Do Women prefer benevolent men despite recognizing that they can be undermining? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.
12. Krems, J. A., Neel, R., Neuberg, S. L., Puts, D. A., & Kenrick, D. T. (2016). Women selectively guard their (desirable) mates from ovulating women. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 110, 551-573.
13. Netchaeva, E., & Rees, M. (2016). Strategically stunning: The professional motivations behind the lipstick effect. *Psychological science*, 27(8), 1157-1168.

14. Jones, B. C., Hahn, A. C., Fisher, C. I., Wang, H., Kandrik, M., Han, C., ... & O'Shea, K. J. (2018). No compelling evidence that preferences for facial masculinity track changes in women's hormonal status. *Psychological Science*, 29(6), 996-1005.
15. Durante, Kristina M., Eastwick, P. W., Finkel, E. J., Gangestad, S. W., & Simpson, J. A. (2016). Pair-Bonded Relationships and Romantic Alternatives: Toward an Integration of Evolutionary and Relationship Science Perspectives. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 53, 1-74.
16. Young, E. S., & Simpson, J. A. (2019). An evolutionary, life history theory perspective on relationship maintenance. In *Relationship Maintenance: Theory, Process, and Context* (pp. 29-46). Cambridge University Press.

Optional:

Week 12 Stress + Health

1. Pietromonaco, P. R., & Collins, N. L. (2017). Interpersonal mechanisms linking close relationships to health. *American Psychologist*, 72(6), 531.
 - a. *[With a brief element of this]* Slatcher, R. B., & Selcuk, E. (2017). A social psychological perspective on the links between close relationships and health. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 26, 16-21.
2. Stanton, S. C., Selcuk, E., Farrell, A. K., Slatcher, R. B., & Ong, A. D. (2019). Perceived partner responsiveness, daily negative affect reactivity, and all-cause mortality: A 20-year longitudinal study. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 81(1), 7-15.
3. *[very briefly cover this]* Cohen, S., Doyle, W. J., Skoner, D. P., Rabin, B. S., & Gwaltney, J. M. (1997). Social ties and susceptibility to the common cold. *JAMA*, 277, 1940-1944.

Optional:

1. Holt-Lunstad, J. (2018). Why social relationships are important for physical health: A systems approach to understanding and modifying risk and protection. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 69, 437-458.
2. Slatcher, R. B., Selcuk, E., & Ong, A. D. (2015). Perceived partner responsiveness predicts diurnal cortisol profiles 10 years later. *Psychological Science*, 26, 972-982.
3. Stadler, G., Snyder, K.A., Horn, A.B., Shrout, P.E., Bolger, N.P. (2012). Close relationships and health in daily life: A review and empirical data on intimacy and somatic symptoms. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 74, 398-409.
4. Keneski, E., Neff, L. A., & Loving, T. J. (2017). The importance of a few good friends: Perceived network support moderates the association between daily marital conflict and diurnal cortisol. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 1948550617731499.
5. Sbarra, D. A., & Coan, J. A. (2018). Relationships and health: The critical role of affective science. *Emotion Review*, 10(1), 40-54.
6. Bolger, N., Zuckerman, A., & Kessler, R. C. (2000). Invisible support and adjustment to stress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 953-961.

7. Jaremka, L. M., Glaser, R., Loving, T. J., Malarkey, W. B., Stowell, J. R., & Kiecolt-Glaser, J. K. (2013). Attachment anxiety is linked to alterations in cortisol production and cellular immunity. *Psychological Science, 24*, 272-279.
8. Brooks, K.P., Gruenewald, T., Karlamangla, A., Hu, P, Koretz, B, & Seeman, T.E. (2014). Social relationships and allostatic load in the MIDUS study. *Health Psychology*. doi: 10.1037/a0034528
9. Kiecolt-Glaser, J. K., Loving, T. J., Stowell, J. R., Malarkey, W. B., Lemeshow, S., Dickinson, S. L., & Glaser, R. (2005). Hostile marital interactions, proinflammatory cytokine production, and wound healing. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 62*, 1377-1384.

Week 13 Relationship Dissolution and Moving On

1. McNulty, J. K., Olson, M. A., Meltzer, A. L., & Shaffer, M. J. (2013). Though they may be unaware, newlyweds implicitly know whether their marriage will be satisfying. *Science, 342*, 1119-1120.
2. Sbarra, D. A., & Beck, C. J. A. (2013). Divorce and close relationships: Findings, themes, and future directions. In J. A. Simpson & L. Campbell (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of close relationships* (pp. 795-822). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
3. Brumbaugh, C.C., & Fraley, R. C. (2015). Too fast, too soon? An empirical investigation into rebound relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 32*, 99-118.

Optional:

1. Rhoades, G.K., Kamp Dush, C.M., Atkins, D.C., Stanley, S.M., Markman, H.J. (2011). Breaking up is hard to do: The impact of unmarried relationship dissolution on mental health and life satisfaction. *Journal of Family Psychology, 25*, 366-374.
2. Davis, D., Shaver, P.R., & Vernon, M.L. (2003). Physical, emotional, and behavioral reactions to breaking up: The roles of gender, age, emotional involvement, and attachment style. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29*, 871-884.
3. Lavner, J.A., Bradbury, T.N., & Karney, B.R. (2012). Incremental change or initial differences? Testing two models of marital deterioration. *Journal of Family Psychology, 26*, 606-616.
4. Markman, H.J. et al. (2010). The premarital communication roots of marital distress and divorce: The first five years of marriage. *Journal of Family Psychology, 24*, 289-298.
5. Lewandowski, G. W., Aron, A., Bassis, S. & Kunak, J. (2006). Losing a self-expanding relationship: Implications for the self-concept. *Personal Relationships, 13*, 317-331.

* *Discuss project proposals*

Week 14 Student Research Paper/Project Presentations

SOP6409 Research Proposal Guidelines

The research review paper or proposal should be publication quality, 10-20 pages, and include: (1) detailed background/theoretical rationale section, drawing upon ideas and topics covered this semester; it should also include specific hypotheses logically following from your theoretical background section; (2) detailed method section (including who the participants would be, materials to be used, procedure); (3) brief description of the data analysis strategy and expected pattern of results; and (4) conclusion (what your results would suggest if they were consistent with your hypotheses vs. if they were inconsistent). The research proposal should be written in APA (7th edition) format. Your proposal will be graded on how deeply, thoughtfully, and convincingly you can position your own research ideas in the context of the readings and topics covered this semester, and your ability to link various ideas together to propose a compelling and coherent set of studies.

If you decide to do a review paper, it should still be publication quality and of the same length. The focus, however, will be on integrating a large literature on some topic within social psychology and addictive behaviors. The guidelines here apply to either type of paper submitted.

Overview

To get ideas for your paper, think of unanswered questions in the literature, conflicting findings, limiting conditions, competing hypotheses, or new areas of application. Lay the groundwork by reviewing the relevant research and present your idea. Make sure that you always back up your claims with relevant theory and research. In addition, try to clearly emphasize what will be gained by running your proposed study. If you write a literature review, try to clearly emphasize how the pieces fit together, potentially creating a larger model to be tested by later research.

Format

Sections should include: Title page, abstract, introduction, method, anticipated results and conclusion, and references. Papers must be written in APA (7th edition) format and should be 10-20 pages (not including title, abstract, or references) in length.

Title page: Title, name, running head

Abstract: In 150 words or less, summarize your proposal. Don't forget keywords!

Introduction: The heading for the introduction section should be the title of your paper. You may use subheadings within the introduction to help organize things, but you will still need to include narrative transitions. Start by introducing the topic in a compelling way. Using previous research, build a case for your proposed study. Describe what is already

known, what is lacking, and how your study will contribute to the literature. End with a lead-in to your study and your specific hypotheses.

Method (proposal only): Describe your study using future tense. Include detail on participants (e.g., number, sample), design, procedure, manipulations, and measures. Provide enough detail so I can evaluate the quality of your design and procedures. For measures, give the wording of questions and response scales. For established measures, describe conceptually what they assess, include sample items, give the number of items and response scales (number and labels), and describe any special instructions. Consider including lengthy or detailed materials in an Appendix. For manipulations, make it clear what each participant will be exposed to.

Anticipated results and conclusions (proposal only): It is not necessary to detail the statistical tests that will be performed, but it should be clear how you will test your hypotheses (i.e., which comparisons are critical). If your study works out perfectly, what will you see on your dependent measures? In what ways will your results extend our knowledge? What are the implications of your findings (for theory and/or in the real world)?

References: Include references for everything you cite in your paper. The number of references you have will depend on your topic. Anywhere from 1-5 pages of references may be appropriate. Do seek outside articles, do read what you cite. Use APA (7th edition) style throughout.

Presenting Your Ideas

You will present your research idea to your peers in class. Think about the presentation as a real-life conference presentation, where you walk through the background, your idea and hypotheses, method, results, and discussion. Be prepared to answer questions about how you manipulated and measured your variables of interest, what you expected to find, and what the implications of these findings are (in other words, why is this study interesting or important?). Try to minimize potential alternative explanations for your findings with careful attention to design and choice of measures.

Due Date and Grading Guidelines

Papers are due (uploaded on Canvas) by 5PM on April 21.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. You have designed a decent theory-based study that would make a contribution to the social or clinical psychological fields by introducing a social psychological framework or approach and application to addictive behaviors.
2. Your review of the relevant literature is accurate, thorough, concise, and focused.
3. It is clear how the different theoretical components fit together.
4. Your logic is clear throughout the paper.

5. Your methods allow a test of your research question.
6. Mapping between conceptual and operational variables is clear and appropriate.
7. Method is well thought out and careful attention was paid to internal and external validity.
8. All required elements are present (e.g., abstract, conclusions, adequate detail on theory and method).

Review papers will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. You have found an area of social psychology that has components which may be integrated into a review paper on addictive behaviors.
2. You define and clarify the problem or gap that the current paper addresses.
3. You summarize previous investigations in order to inform the reader of the state of the current research.
4. There is a theory underlying at least one of the components, ideally that can permeate throughout the entire paper.
5. You identify relations, contradictions, gaps, and inconsistencies in the literature.
6. Your review of the relevant literature is accurate, thorough, concise, and focused.
7. It is clear how the different theoretical components fit together.
8. Your logic is clear throughout the paper.
9. You suggest next steps in solving the problem.

Style Guidelines

- Write as if you are writing for a professional outlet, not as if you are writing a paper for a class. Do not explicitly refer to assignment guidelines or introduce personal commentary.
- Imagine your target audience as an educated person, familiar with psychology, but not with any of the specific theories or concepts you mention. When you introduce something new (i.e., a theory, concept, methodology, measure), explain it in general terms.
- Keep your paper focused. If you read an article, but it isn't relevant to your final idea, don't include it. Longer is not better. If several different lines of research are relevant, decide on a logical order and use transitions between ideas.
- If you find you don't have room to explain things in sufficient detail, your topic might be too broad. You may go beyond the page limit only if it makes your paper substantially better.
- Limit your use of jargon and acronyms. Overusing jargon when plain language can easily be substituted can hurt the clarity of your paper. Similarly, if you use too many acronyms, readers will forget what they stand for and understanding will likely be compromised.
- Limit use of direct quotes. These can interfere with the flow of the paper by introducing a different writing style or phrasing that is not consistent with the rest of the paragraph. I recommend using quotations only in the following cases:

- You want to introduce the reader to your topic by opening with a famous or clever quote
 - The precise wording of a definition or argument is important because you are going to take issue with the specifics.
- Revisions are essential to good writing. Once you have a complete draft, go back and fine-tune your logic and ideas. Cut, add, and reorganize where necessary. Look for missing gaps in your logic and descriptions by adopting the perspective of an outside reader. Keep an eye out for repetition. Sometimes it helps to come back to your paper after a few days to get a fresh perspective. Even if you are describing something very complicated, there is always a way to make it clear. It is your responsibility as a writer to make things understandable to your audience.
- Once you are confident in *what* you are saying, make sure readers won't get confused by *how* you are saying it. Read through your paper and clean up your writing. Look for awkward sentence structure, incomplete sentences, agreement errors, etc. Keep paragraphs focused to a single idea; split up paragraphs that are long (>1 page). Make sure everything flows smoothly – if you notice a sudden jump, add a transition sentence.

Tips on Literature Searches

- Use PsycINFO to find relevant articles
- Finding the right terms – try synonyms and variations of terms; read relevant papers and see what language they use
- Once you have a relevant article, determine what the authors cite in the introduction section and find those papers (be sure to read them!)
- See who has cited an earlier work (click on "Times cited in this database")

Understanding Appropriate Sources for Citations:

The following are considered appropriate and valid sources for references:

- Published journal articles, both in online and paper formats.
- Professional handbook chapters and reviews (i.e., edited volumes with chapters written by psychological researchers).
- Academic books (i.e., books written by psychological researchers).

The following are *not* to be used as citations in your work:

- Information found on the internet, unless it is the online version of a scientific journal (e.g., accessing an electronic version of a journal online is fine). This includes Wikipedia and/or any other web pages.
- Any undergraduate-level textbook.

In short, you should always be working with the primary literature written by psychological researchers. If you have questions about a particular source, please ask.