

PSYC 3470 Dyadic Relations Syllabus

Welcome to Dyadic Relations. I hope you end up enjoying this course as much as I enjoy teaching it. For me, one of the best things about teaching is having a chance to make a difference in people's lives, and this course can have a real impact if you want it to.

Contacting your instructor

For information on contacting your instructor as well as other important information from your instructor see the Instructor Letter link in your course website.

Course description

The University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar describes this course as follows:

This course covers friendship formation and dyadic relations-linking, liking, loving, and leaving from an empirically oriented psychological perspective.

I think that you will find this course especially interesting because the study of dyadic (two person) relationships has so many personal applications to our own lives. Close relationships are one of the most important sources of meaning **and** they are one of life's most difficult things to do well. In this introduction, I want to welcome you and to give you some idea of the formal structure of the course requirements.

Course objectives

Upon completion of this course you should be able to do the following:

1. Describe the major findings from research on the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of human relationships.
2. Apply knowledge from many sources (the literature on human relationships, your own experience, outside reading and other media) to practical situations that may have personal relevance.
3. Compare and contrast different theories on the causes of attraction in mate selection.
4. Describe, explain and apply specific exercises for improving intimate relationships.
5. Integrate evidence on gender roles with knowledge of effective relationships.
6. Describe and explain methods for repairing damaged relationships.
7. Both describe and demonstrate improved communication skills that include:
 - listening to others in a way that results in the listener articulating what the other person has implied and has stated explicitly.
 - stating disagreements and confrontations in ways that focus on behaviour and events rather than on criticisms of the other person's characteristics, personality, and intentions.
 - resolving conflicts in ways that take into account the needs of both parties in the conflict.

Course materials

Required

Bookstore

The following required materials are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

Miller, R. S. (2015) *Intimate relationships*. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hendrix, H. (2008) *Getting the love you want: A guide for couples*. Twentieth Anniversary Edition. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Recorded lecture material is included online throughout the course.

Course overview

First, you should be aware that the main focus of this course is on the **science of relationships**. Your text, *Intimate Relationships*, will teach you a great deal of personally interesting material about relationships, but its main purpose is to examine relationships empirically. Running parallel with this scientific emphasis, however, we will also look at relationships from a more clinical perspective which will hopefully give you new skills and knowledge that will improve your own relationships. The book, *Getting the Love You Want*, contains many exercises and examples designed to help you expand your self-awareness, communicate more clearly, be a better listener, and the like.

Dr. Martin has a strong interest in helping couples improve their relationships and communication skills, and often conducts workshops on communication skills. In the lectures, he will be giving you an emphasis on the practical and applied aspects. In most of the lectures, he will comment on the text material and then go off into some additional material.

Topics

- Unit 1 The Study of Relationships: What is intimacy? What is your philosophy of relationships?
- Unit 2 Attraction: What brings people together? What are the two basic skills needed for relationships?
- Unit 3 Social Cognition: How do we perceive our partners?
- Unit 4 Communication: The foundation of relationships. Using our skills to resolve our inevitable conflicts.
- Unit 5 Interdependency: Relationships as social exchanges. Is there something beyond social exchange theory in intimate relationships?
- Unit 6 Friendship: What is special about friendship?
- Unit 7 Love: What is good and bad about romantic love? Does love last? Is consummate love possible (intimacy, passion, and commitment)?
- Unit 8 Sexuality: Attitudes and behaviours about passion.
- Unit 9 Stresses and Strains: Nothing hurts more than relationship pain.
- Unit 10 Power and Conflict: Conflict is inevitable; war is optional (but all too common).
- Unit 11 Dissolution, Loss, and Loneliness: Divorce and being alone.
- Unit 12 Maintaining and Repairing Relationships: How can we help ourselves? How can professionals help us?

Learning activities

Reading

Most of the content of the course involves reading and being tested on the material in *Intimate Relationships*.

You will also read and be tested on our supplemental book, *Getting the Love You Want*.

Audio lectures

Recorded "sound files" occur throughout the course. These range in length from a few minutes to 25 minutes. You will listen to these and take notes, just as if you were in a lecture theatre.

Videos

There are also some online resources such as videos indicated at appropriate places.

Self-testing questions

At the end of each Unit there is a self-test that will help you judge the level of your mastery of the material and to prepare for your graded assignments and the final exam. These self-tests are not to be handed in. These have the same format as the assignments and the exam; just over half of the points are based on multiple-choice questions, and there are several short answer questions. At the end of each Unit you will find an answer key to the self-test questions. The answers to multiple-choice questions from the text will be accompanied by page numbers from the texts, to help you review the information. A brief sample answer will be provided for the short answer questions.

Evaluation and grading

Distribution of marks

Evaluation	Percentage
Discussion Forum #1 (Introducing yourself)	1%
Discussion Forum #2 (Technology and communication)	1%
Discussion Forum #3 (Computer matching, arranged marriages, or meeting face-to-face)	1%
Discussion Forum #4 (How this course was relevant to your life)	1%
Assignment 1	16%
Assignment 2	16%
Assignment 3	16%
Thought piece 1	2%
Thought piece 2	2%
Final examination	<u>44%</u>
Total	100%

Grading scale

Because the assignments are open-book take-home assignments, the average grade on them is high—usually about 93%. Thus, grade standards are correspondingly high. Usually, about 15-20% of the class normally receive an A or A+.

Letter grade	Percentage range	Description
A+	93 – 100	Exceptional
A	86 – 92.5	Excellent
B+	79 – 85.5	Very good
B	72 – 78.5	Good
C+	65 – 71.5	Satisfactory
C	59.5 – 64.5	Adequate
D	50 – 59	Marginal
F	less than 50	Failure

Note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

Assignments

Discussion forums

There will be four discussion sessions spread throughout the course. In the first forum, you will introduce yourself to the class. In the second, you will provide your opinion on computer mediated communication and relationships. In the third, you will indicate the pros and cons of different ways of meeting a romantic partner: computer matching, arranged marriages, or face-to-face. Finally, in the fourth forum, you will indicate two ways in which you could use the information in this course in your own relationships. Each discussion forum is worth 1% of your grade. Each of these discussion forums are in the assignments section. Discussion Forums must be completed by midnight on the day assigned, otherwise 25% will be deducted for **each** day the assignment is late.

Online assignments

You will complete the three assignments consisting of two parts. Part A consists of multiple-choice questions to be completed online, evaluated at 7%. Part B consists of definitions and short answer questions, which will be written in a document to be submitted using an assignment drop box, and will be evaluated at 9%, to total 16%. Note each assignment is worth 16% of your grade. Assignment 1 covers Units 1, 2, and 3. Assignment 2 covers Units 4, 5, and 6. Finally, Assignment 3 covers Units 7, 8, and 9. You are to answer the assignment questions by using your texts and the recorded lectures. We will grade and comment on your answers, to give you some idea of your level of understanding of the material. There is no assignment to be submitted for units 10, 11 and 12, but you will be responsible for the material on the final exam.

Note: Detailed instructions about the assignments are found in your course website.

Online assignments policy

Should a student encounter technical difficulties while writing an online assignment that results in the student not being able to submit the assignment, or in loss of data that was part of the student submission, the student should immediately leave a message, outlining the problem, for Distance and Online Education, either by email or by telephone, should email not be available. Note: this message must be left within the assignment time frame (i.e., if the assignment is open for 24 hours the message must be left within that 24 hour period). See Contact Distance and Online Education staff in the course homepage.

If Distance and Online Education determines that the difficulty originated at the University, the student's online assignment will be reset, and the student will be permitted to rewrite during the closest 24 hour period that occurs within seven days, excluding weekends.

If Distance and Online Education determines that the difficulty did not originate at the University, and the student has contacted Distance and Online Education within the appropriate time frame, the student's online assignment will be reset, and the student will be permitted to rewrite during the closest 24 hour period that occurs within seven days, excluding weekends. Note: this policy may be subject to department or instructor approval.

If the student does not contact Distance and Online Education within the appropriate time frame, then the student will not be permitted to rewrite the assignment.

Thought pieces

You will write two brief "thought pieces" about your own personal experiences with the course material. These are to be based on your own thoughts and experiences and are not research papers. Each thought piece will be about 500–700 words long and will be graded on a pass/fail basis. You are free to say whatever is most meaningful for you, and, as long as you are writing thoughtfully about the assigned question, you will receive full credit, which is 2% added to your grade. The "thought pieces" will be submitted using a drop box. Thought pieces must be handed in by midnight on the day assigned, otherwise 25% will be deducted for **each** day the assignment is late.

Assignment due dates

Assignment	Sept.-Dec.	Jan.-Apr.	May-Aug.
Discussion Forum 1	September 20	January 21	May 13
Thought piece 1	September 27	January 28	May 20
Assignment 1	October 4	February 4	May 27
Discussion Forum 2	October 11	February 11	June 3
Assignment 2	November 1	February 25	June 24
Discussion Forum 3	November 8	March 11	July 1
Assignment 3	November 22	March 25	July 15
Thought piece 2	November 29	April 1	July 22
Discussion Forum 4	December 3	April 9	July 29

Note: If the assignment due date falls during the Mid-term Break in February, it will be due on the Monday following the Mid-term Break. If you are unable to submit an assignment on time, contact your instructor well in advance of the due date.

Review the guidelines on assignment due dates in the *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook*.

Examination

The final exam will be written at the University of Manitoba (UM), Fort Garry campus or at an approved off-campus location. Students needing to write at an off-campus location must declare a location by the specified deadline date (see off-campus declaration and policy under Student Resources on course homepage). Students writing at the UM Fort Garry campus do not need to declare an exam location.

The Registrar's Office is responsible for the [final exam schedules](#) which is available approximately one month after the start of the course.

Your final exam will consist of questions similar to those on the assignments. Of course, on the exam you will be required to answer without reference to your texts or audio-files. It is a closed book exam that will consist of 70 multiple choice questions (worth one point each), six definitions (worth two points each), and three short answer questions (worth six points each). Questions are drawn about equally from all of the units of the course. You are responsible for *all* the assigned material, including the recorded lectures.

The test is scheduled for three hours, but most people finish in less time.

Usually, just over half the questions are from *Intimate Relationships*, with the remainder from lectures and *Getting the Love You Want*.

You should focus first on material in headings, bold print or italics in the texts. This is especially helpful in preparing for the definition questions, but it helps for all questions if you go through and be sure you can explain the items in headings, bold print and italics. I'm not likely to ask about specific names of researchers, but I do ask about the famous people whose work is discussed in text and lecture. As you may have noticed from the assignments, we try to ask questions that require thinking about the material you have learned, rather than simple memorization.

A friendly warning: Because the assignments are "open book," students generally receive fairly high grades for them. While your grades on the assignments will give you some idea of how well you are mastering the material, they may not indicate how well you will do on the examination. Because of this, some students have underestimated the difficulty of the final exam. Not having access to your text and notes makes the final exam a much different proposition than the assignments. Take it seriously. Some students have told us that, based on the high marks they received on the assignments, they were overconfident and underestimated the time and effort needed to prepare for the final examination.

Study advice

For this course, follow the instructions in the online course content for each Unit. When reading the text chapters for each Unit, use the bold print headings to give yourself some idea of what the chapter says. This general approach is summarized best in the “SQ4R” study system: Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Reflect, and Review.

SQ4R tells you first to **survey** the whole chapter, getting as much as you can out of it without actually reading it. As you survey, **formulate questions** about the headings. In fact, many headings can be reformulated as questions. Then you start your **reading**, covering all the material but focusing mainly on the answers to the questions you formulated. Pretend you are explaining the material to someone—**recite** it—and it will become much clearer to you. In fact, the most important goal in teaching you this course will be to provide you with knowledge that you can use—in discussions, in understanding other things you read, and in sharing your knowledge with others. As you recite the main points, **reflect** on their meaning; think about them. Then **review** the material by skimming the chapters again or by reviewing any notes that you may have taken.

Students often wonder how much detailed knowledge will be required of them. The self-tests and assignments will give you a good idea of the depth of information expected. A general rule of thumb is that if you understand the meaning of the major headings and concepts that appear in italics and in quotation marks in the text you should do well. The only names you will be responsible for will be for famous persons whose work is discussed at length. Often in test and assignment questions, researchers will be referred to by name, but your most important clues to the question will come from the description of their research. For example, you might be asked “In a study of marital satisfaction in mid-life Smith (1980) found “You are not expected to remember Smith, but rather the general finding.

The recorded lectures, of course, require a somewhat different approach, since you can’t skim them ahead of time. What you can do is to study the list of topics that appear in this syllabus before you listen to the tape (and, you should read the textbook chapter over once before listening to the audio file). The lectures will follow the general outline of the topics list, so you will be able to organize your note taking around these topics. In the lectures, Dr. Martin will emphasize certain points that you should listen for, and you should also take notes as though you were in class. Your best feedback on whether you are taking notes adequately will be your performance on the self-tests, so you should take those tests “honestly” in order to give yourself accurate feedback.

Plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation

You should acquaint yourself with the University’s policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar*. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

Distance and Online Education (DE) Student Resources

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website

Acknowledgments

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Dr. David Martin is Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Manitoba, where he has been teaching for over thirty years. He is the author of numerous research papers and seven books in psychology, and he has won four teaching awards as a university teacher. In 1995, he was awarded the "Clifford J. Robson Distinguished Psychologist in Manitoba Award," and in 2007, he received the "Excellence in Professional Training Award" from the Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs. His great passion professionally is in the area of counselling and psychotherapy, especially as they relate to human relationship. He counsels clients himself and trains future clinical psychologists in counselling and therapy. Dr. Martin frequently gives workshops for the business and public service communities, in the areas of communication, conflict resolution, and stress management.

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Dr. Marian Morry is Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Manitoba, where she has been teaching for over thirteen years. She is the author of numerous research papers in the area of close relationship. Her research focuses on how individual differences influence your thoughts, feeling, and behaviors related to the relationships you have with your friends, dating partners, and spouses. She is currently examining (a) how individuals with anxious or avoidant attachment styles differ in their reactions to social comparisons of their dating relationships (b) how one's relational interdependent self-construal influences his or her behavior, cognition, and affect in new and ongoing friendships, and (c) how self-esteem influences temporal distancing (perceiving events as closer or further in time than they actually are) in romantic relationships. She is also interested in more general social cognitions within one's dating relationship where the individual enhances the partner relative to the self and to the general other.

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