



# PSY 350

## The Psychology of Human Relationships

S2 Day 2014

*Psychology*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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C3A520

by appointment

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By appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Human beings are fundamentally social creatures who depend on one another for their survival and well-being, both physical and psychological. Everyone is born with powerful needs for love, friendship and belonging; similarly, we fear and avoid rejection, loneliness and the disapproval of others. Despite the central role they play in our lives, however, developing and maintaining happy and healthy relationships with family members, spouses, friends and even workmates is not easy, and professional psychologists spend the bulk of their time dealing with clients' relationship problems. This unit examines a variety of relationship topics from a social psychological perspective including attraction, love- and mate selection; kinship, friendship and enemyship; jealousy, betrayal and forgiveness; communication, conflict and aggression; and the processes involved in relationship breakdown and repair. Throughout, there is a strong emphasis on critically examining so-called 'pop' psychological approaches to relationships, and students are encouraged to examine the complexities of relationship structures and processes from different cultural perspectives.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain contemporary issues in the psychology of human relationships literature and the theories from which they are derived
- analyse the strengths and weaknesses of competing explanations of issues in the field of human relationships
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#">Research Report</a>	20%	Tuesday 9th September
<a href="#">Essay</a>	30%	Tuesday 7th October
<a href="#">Exam</a>	40%	University examination period
<a href="#">Tutorial assessment</a>	10%	by end of semester

## Research Report

Due: **Tuesday 9th September**

Weighting: **20%**

The purpose of this report is to give students some experience of finding and critically reviewing relevant psychological literature on a relationship-related question of their own choosing. Markers will be looking for a well-structured, coherent and thoughtful critique of the chosen literature. Details will be available on the PSY350 iLearn Website.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- explain contemporary issues in the psychology of human relationships literature and the theories from which they are derived

- analyse the strengths and weaknesses of competing explanations of issues in the field of human relationships
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

## Essay

Due: **Tuesday 7th October**

Weighting: **30%**

The essay is designed to assess students' ability to critically evaluate scientific knowledge and formulate a coherent and intelligent discussion of the relevant issues of a topic within the psychology of human relationships. The essay questions will be available on the PSY350 iLearn web site.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- explain contemporary issues in the psychology of human relationships literature and the theories from which they are derived
- analyse the strengths and weaknesses of competing explanations of issues in the field of human relationships
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

## Exam

Due: **University examination period**

Weighting: **40%**

The multiple choice exam is designed to assess knowledge and understanding of material covered in the lectures, textbook, and readings. It will comprise 80 questions, each worth 0.5 marks

On successful completion you will be able to:

- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research

- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

## Tutorial assessment

Due: **by end of semester**

Weighting: **10%**

Details will be presented on the PSY350 Website and in tutorials. Note, tutorials are compulsory and run fortnightly for 2 hours.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- analyse the strengths and weaknesses of competing explanations of issues in the field of human relationships
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

## Delivery and Resources

### Teaching and Learning strategy

The unit is taught through lectures and prescribed readings covering the core material and tutorials. The tutorials comprise practical activities and class discussions which have been designed to develop graduate attributes, enhance student involvement, and provide focus on certain topics. Students are expected to (a) listen to lectures and attend tutorials, (b) complete all forms of assessment, (c) read the prescribed materials, and (d) contribute to tutorial exercises and discussions. Note that attendance in tutorials is compulsory.

### Webpage of unit

Login via the Online Teaching system: <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au>. Evening students will be able to listen to the recorded lectures online but must attend their assigned tutorial. Students enrolled in the iLecture mode can access the iLecture recording of the lecture, but must attend the compulsory tutorial/practical class.

### Changes since the last offering of this unit

A new tutorial program is being implemented that expands lecture content with practical exercises, presentations and discussions.

## Other material:

**Prescribed text:** Fletcher, G., Simpson, J., Campbell, L., & Overall, N. (2013). *The science of intimate relationships*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell.

### Recommended texts (on Special Reserve in the library):

Berscheid, E., & Regan, P. (2005). *The psychology of interpersonal relationships*. New York: Prentice-Hall.

Ciarrochi, J., Forgas, J., & Mayer, J. D. (Eds.) (2006), *Emotional intelligence in everyday life* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Psychology Press.

Duck, S. (Ed.) (1997). *Handbook of personal relationships*. UK: Wiley.

Fehr, B. (1996). *Friendship processes*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fletcher, G. J. O. (2002). *The new science of intimate relationships*. MA: Blackwell.

Fletcher, G. J. O., & Clark, M. (Eds.) (2001), *Blackwell handbook of social psychology (Volume 2): Interpersonal processes*. MA: Blackwell.

Forgas, J. P., & Fitness, J. (Eds.) (2008). *Social relationships: Cognitive, affective, and motivational processes*. NY: Psychology Press.

Hogg, M., & Cooper, J. (Eds.) (2003). *Handbook of social psychology*. CA: Sage.

Leary, M. (Ed.) (2000). *Interpersonal rejection*. NY: Oxford University Press.

Noller, P., & Feeney, J. (Eds.) (2006). *Close relationships: Functions, forms, and processes*. New York: Psychology Press.

Noller, P., & Karantzas (Eds.) (2012), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of couples and family relationships*. UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Reis, H., & Rusbult, C. (Eds.) (2004). *Close relationships: Key readings in social psychology*. New York: Psychology Press.

Spitzberg, B., & Cupach, W. (Eds.) (1998). *The dark side of close relationships*. New Jersey: Erlbaum.

Sprecher, S., Wenzel, A., & Harvey, J. (2008). *Handbook of relationship initiation*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Sternberg, R., & Weis, K. (2006). *The new psychology of love*. NH: Yale University Press.

Vangelisti, A. (Ed.) (2004). *Handbook of family communication*. NJ: Erlbaum.

Vangelisti, A., & Perlman, D. (Eds.) (2006). *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships*. NY: Cambridge University Press.

### Useful Journals:

*Cognition and Emotion; Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology; Journal of Family Psychology; Journal of Marriage and the Family; Journal of Personality and Social*

*Psychology; Journal of Social and Personal Relationships; Personal Relationships; Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin; Psychological Science*

## **Policies and Procedures**

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## **Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## **Learning Skills**

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## **Student Services and Support**

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcome

- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues

#### Assessment task

- Tutorial assessment

### Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcomes

- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

#### Assessment task

- Tutorial assessment



## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- explain contemporary issues in the psychology of human relationships literature and the theories from which they are derived
- analyse the strengths and weaknesses of competing explanations of issues in the field of human relationships
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

### Assessment tasks

- Research Report
- Essay
- Exam
- Tutorial assessment

## Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- explain contemporary issues in the psychology of human relationships literature and the theories from which they are derived
- analyse the strengths and weaknesses of competing explanations of issues in the field of

human relationships

- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

## **Assessment tasks**

- Research Report
- Essay
- Exam
- Tutorial assessment

## **Problem Solving and Research Capability**

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- explain contemporary issues in the psychology of human relationships literature and the theories from which they are derived
- analyse the strengths and weaknesses of competing explanations of issues in the field of human relationships
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

## **Assessment tasks**

- Research Report
- Essay
- Exam
- Tutorial assessment

## Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Assessment task

- Tutorial assessment

## Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- explain contemporary issues in the psychology of human relationships literature and the theories from which they are derived
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

### Assessment tasks

- Essay
- Tutorial assessment

## Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcome

- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues

## Assessment task

- Tutorial assessment

## Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- understand the strengths and weaknesses of research methods used in relationship research
- apply findings from empirical research on relationships to real-world relationship issues
- critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

## Assessment task

- Tutorial assessment