# PSY 350
## The Psychology of Human Relationships
### S2 Day 2013

*Psychology*

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### Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Julie Fitness
julie.fitness@mq.edu.au
Contact via julie.fitness@mq.edu.au
C3B614
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 enemys; 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 http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/
Learning Outcomes

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

Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Tuesday 3rd September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2nd October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>University examination period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial assessment</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>by end of semester</td>
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Research Report

Due: **Tuesday 3rd 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 Website.

This Assessment Task relates to the following 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

Essay
Due: 2nd 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 website.

This Assessment Task relates to the following 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

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

This Assessment Task relates to the following 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
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.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• 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 this session as part of a Government funded teaching grant exploring the development and assessment of psychology graduate attributes. Details will be available on the PSY350 Website.

Other material:

Recommended texts (on Special Reserve in the library):


Useful Journals:

# Unit Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1/8)</td>
<td>Human Relationships: Types, Structures, Functions &amp; Processes</td>
<td><em>Chapters 1 and 2</em></td>
<td>No tutorials this week</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(8/8)</td>
<td>Mate Selection and attachment: Lust and love</td>
<td><em>Chapters 5, 6, and 7</em></td>
<td>Tutorials begin this week</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(15/8)</td>
<td>Relationship cognition – perceiving, reasoning, judging, remembering</td>
<td><em>Chapters 3 and 8</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>(22/8)</td>
<td>Feelings and emotions in close relationships</td>
<td><em>Chapters 3 and 7</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(29/8)</td>
<td>Communication and conflict</td>
<td><em>Chapter 9</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>(5/9)</td>
<td>Sex and sexuality (hour 1)</td>
<td><em>Chapters 4 and 10</em></td>
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<td>Infidelity and romantic jealousy (hour 2)</td>
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[http://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/23152/unit_guide/print](http://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/23152/unit_guide/print)
### Relationship violence (hour 1)

**Text:** Chapter 11

Psychopathy and relationships (hour 2)


### Family relationships


Emotional intelligence in relationships


### Social support


### Friendship


### Relationship breakdown, loss and repair

**Text:** Chapter 12
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:

Special Consideration Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/special_consideration/policy.html]

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

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at: [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/]

UniWISE provides:

- Online learning resources and academic skills workshops [http://www.students.mq.edu.au/support/learning_skills/]
- Personal assistance with your learning & study related questions.
- The Learning Help Desk is located in the Library foyer (level 2).
- Online and on-campus orientation events run by Mentors@Macquarie.

Student Enquiry Service

Details of these services can be accessed at [http://www.student.mq.edu.au/ses/].

Equity 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.
IT Help

If you wish to receive IT help, we would be glad to assist you at 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 and it outlines what can be done.

Graduate Capabilities

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
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**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
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**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

**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