



PSY 350

The Psychology of Human Relationships

S2 Day 2017

Department of Psychology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Julie Fitness

julie.fitness@mq.edu.au

Tutor

Alessa Teunisse

alessa.teunisse@mq.edu.au

Tutor

Christine Leonards

christine.leonards@mq.edu.au

Tutor

Brad Skinner

brad.skinner@mq.edu.au

Tamara Paulin

tamara.paulin@mq.edu.au

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp at 100 level or above

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:

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

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Oral presentation	10%	No	During semester
Research Report	20%	No	4th September

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Essay</u>	30%	No	16th October
<u>Final examination</u>	40%	No	End of semester

Oral presentation

Due: **During semester**

Weighting: **10%**

Each student is to present a brief talk on the paper they wrote about for their Research Report.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- 5. critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

Research Report

Due: **4th 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.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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

Essay

Due: **16th October**

Weighting: **30%**

A 1200-word essay on one of the topics provided in the second week of semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 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
- 5. critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

Final examination

Due: **End of semester**

Weighting: **40%**

An 80-item, multiple-choice exam on material from lectures and lecture readings.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 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

Delivery and Resources

A 2-hour lecture is presented every Tuesday at 4-6pm in C5CT1. Lectures are also accessible via ECHO recordings. Tutorials are compulsory and comprise one, 2-hour class every fortnight, beginning in Week 2.

Unit Schedule

LECTURE OUTLINE

Week	Date	Topic	Lecturer
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1	(1/8)	<p>Human Relationships: Types, functions & processes</p> <p>Text: <i>Chapters 1 and 2</i></p> <p>No tutorials this week</p>	Professor Julie Fitness
2	(8/8)	<p>Attraction, attachment and pairbonding</p> <p>Text: <i>Chapters 5 and 7</i></p> <p>Tutorials begin this week</p>	Professor Julie Fitness
3	(15/8)	<p>Mate selection: The psychology of beauty</p> <p>Text: <i>Chapters 4 and 6</i></p>	Dr. Ian Stephen
4	(22/8)	<p>Relationship cognition – perceiving, thinking, judging and remembering in close relationships</p> <p>Text: <i>Chapters 3 and 8</i></p>	Professor Julie Fitness
5	(29/8)	<p>Feelings and emotions in close relationships</p> <p>Reading: Fitness, J. (2015). Emotions in relationships. In J.A. Simpson & J. Dovidio (Eds.), <i>APA Handbook of personality and social psychology, Vol. 3: Interpersonal relations</i> (pp. 297-318). American Psychological Association, Washington DC.</p>	Professor Julie Fitness
6	(5/9)	<p>Communication and conflict in relationships</p> <p>Text: <i>Chapters 9 and 11</i></p>	Professor Julie Fitness
7	(12/9)	<p>Families and family dynamics</p> <p>Reading: Fitness, J., & Duffield, J. (2004). Emotion communication in families. In A. Vangelisti (Ed.), <i>Handbook of family communication</i> (pp. 473-494). New Jersey: Erlbaum.</p>	Professor Julie Fitness
BREAK			
8	(3/10)	<p>Relationships and the internet</p> <p>Reading: Finkel, E., Eastwick, O., Karney, B., Reis, H., & Sprecher, S. (2012). Online dating: A critical analysis from the perspective of psychological science. <i>Psychological Science in the Public Interest</i> 13(1) 3–66.</p>	Ms. Alessa Teunisse

9	(10/ 10)	<p>Psychopathy and close relationships (hour 1)</p> <p>Reading: Kirkman, C. A. (2005). From soap opera to science: Towards gaining access to the psychopaths who live amongst us. <i>Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice</i>, 78, 379-396.</p> <p>Emotional intelligence in relationships (hour 2)</p> <p>Reading: Fitness, J. (2006). The emotionally intelligent marriage. In J. Ciarrochi, J. P. Forgas, & J Mayer (Eds.), <i>Emotional intelligence in everyday life</i> (2nd ed.), NY: Psychology Press.</p>	Dr Mem Mahmut Dr Alissa Beath
10	(17/ 10)	<p>Betrayal, punishment and forgiveness in close relationships</p> <p>Reading: Fitness, J. (2012). Betrayal and forgiveness in close relationships: Exploring the roles of pain and punishment in relationship repair. In P. Noller & G. Kerantzas (Eds.), <i>Couples and family relationships: A guide to contemporary research, theory, practice and policy</i> (pp. 259-270). UK: Wiley-Blackwell.</p>	Professor Julie Fitness
11	(24/ 10)	<p>Relationship loss and repair</p> <p>Text: <i>Chapter 12</i></p>	Professor Julie Fitness
12	(2/ 11)	<p>Friendship and social support</p> <p>Reading: Perlman, D., Stevens, & Carcedo, R. (2015). Friendship. In J.A. Simpson & J. Dovidio (Eds.), <i>APA Handbook of personality and social psychology, Vol. 3: Interpersonal relations</i> (pp. 463- 493). American Psychological Association, Washington DC</p>	Professor Julie Fitness
13	(9/ 11)	<p>Unit review: Relationships in an ethical context.</p> <p>Exam preparation</p>	Professor Julie Fitness

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

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html

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

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

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/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

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) 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

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

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

Graduate Capabilities

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:

Learning outcome

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

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

- 5. critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings

Assessment tasks

- Essay
- Final examination

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

- 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

- Oral presentation
- Research Report
- Essay
- Final examination

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

- 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
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Assessment tasks

- Oral presentation

- Research Report
- Essay
- Final examination

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

- 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

- Research Report
- Essay
- Final examination

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

- 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

- Oral presentation
- Research Report
- Essay

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 outcomes

- 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

- Essay
- Final examination

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 outcome

- 5. critique so-called pop-psychological approaches to relationships from an informed, scientific perspective and effectively communicate findings