

# PSYC 3365.02

## Close Relationships

*Spring, 2018, Online*  
3 Hours of Academic Credit  
CRN 23935

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**A Description of the Course:** The course provides a broad introduction to the topics and findings of relationship science. It examines the processes of interdependent intimacy using psychological theory and research, and it may strike closer to home, providing students more news they can use, than any other science course they ever take. There are no formal pre-requisites, but the course is aimed at junior and senior-level undergraduates who are already familiar with psychological science.

**TEXT:** Miller, R. S. (2015). *Intimate relationships* (7<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: McGraw-Hill.

We'll be using a *digital* version of the book that (a) is much cheaper than a bound hardcopy and that (b) contains interactive study questions that will be a part of your grade in the course. Loose-leaf printed hardcopy pages of the book that can be put in a notebook can also be purchased for a modest additional cost. The ISBN of our e-book is: **978-1-25-930322-7**.

**WEBCAM:** You'll need a microphone and a webcam in (or connected to) your computer that can stream live images of you to the Web in order to take this course.

### The Objectives of the Course:

- 1) You'll become a more discerning consumer of information regarding relationships.
- 2) You'll learn fundamental principles that govern and shape our relationships.
- 3) You'll gain factual information from, and be able to apply to your benefit, the knowledge of relationship science.
- 4) You'll develop more realistic perceptions of, and expectations regarding, relationship processes.

Specific goals for each week that will support your attainment of these broad objectives during the course are provided at the beginning of each week's materials.

**A Welcome and Some Advice from Your Instructor:** Howdy! Here are some things that come to mind as I look ahead to our spring together. First and foremost, there are assignments—sometimes *several* of them—that will be figured into your grade in the course *every single week*. There's **lots to do** and all these tasks have **due dates**, so it will be essential for you to **keep up** with the course all semester long. The deadline for submission of an assignment on a given day will always be **11:30 pm. Central Time**, and there will be *lots* of due dates. So, I'm sure that your organization, diligence, perseverance, and conscientiousness will be (even) more important to your success in this course than they are in a face-to-face course when all you do most of the time is show up for class twice a week.

That being said, I'm glad you're here. If you've made the right choice, you'll find it easy to plunge into this material and get your work done. The course is all about *us*, and fascinating discoveries await. Welcome!

**Assessing Your Mastery of the Material:** The grade you get from the course will be based on **three exams** and on a variety of other activities, all of which are *required* and that count toward your grade. Let's start with those.

### **Discussion Boards**

Several times during the course, you'll be asked to ponder and respond to a question that pertains to a current topic, and then to respond to at least two of the posts provided by fellow students. So, each discussion assignment has three parts.

First, when a discussion question becomes available, you'll craft a response and post it on the discussion board *before you'll be able to see what anyone else has said*. Only after you have made your first post will you be able to see others' responses. Except for the first discussion, which you should do right away, an excellent post will show that you have **read the material** in our text and have **watched the lecture modules** and applied the course material to the question at hand. You should not just spit back what the text says. (We'll all know that; we'll have read it, too!) Instead, the idea is to engage with the material by interpreting it, analyzing it, and reacting to it. When you express an opinion, you should explain why you hold that opinion and why you prefer it to other points of view, always connecting your discussion to things you're learning in the course. Justify your points of view by grounding them in relationship science.

Then, when you have read and considered your classmates' posts, respond to at least two of them with a thoughtful analysis that extends the discussion. Simply saying, "yeah, me too," or "I agree" is not a thoughtful analysis that extends the discussion. The idea is to *enrich* the discussion with a comment or observation that builds on the previous post in a meaningful way. You can do this by explaining—politely and reasonably—**why** you agree or disagree with your classmates' comments, but you can also fold your classmates's ideas into new insights and new connections to the course material.

Each of the discussion boards is worth 10 points; on each board, your first post can earn up to 6 points and your reactions to others, 2 points each. I will read all of the posts and will occasionally participate, but they will be graded by my fine teaching assistant, Carolyn Cobb, this way:

<i>Your Initial Post to a Discussion Topic</i>	
Points	Characteristics
6	Grasps key concepts Full of thought, insight, and analysis The topic's key issues are identified and answered

<i>Your Initial Post to a Discussion Topic</i>	
<b>Points</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
	New ideas are offered and new connections are made Ideas are expressed clearly and concisely with few stylistic errors
4 – 5	Lacks depth and detail Understands most major concepts Some answers to key issues are incomplete Some thought, insight, and analysis is evident Stylistic errors are present
2 – 3	Shallow grasp of the material Vague generalities are offered Takes a confused stand on the issues Stylistic errors interfere with content Cited information is thin and commonplace
1	A minimal post, rudimentary and superficial Shows no significant understanding of material Lots of grammatical and stylistic errors are present

Your reactions to others will be graded this way:

<i>Your Reactions to Others' Posts</i>	
<b>Points</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
2	Enriches and extends the discussion Displays thoughtful understanding of other's ideas Consistently respectful, supportive, encouraging, and polite
1	Reactions lack justification Does not encourage further interaction or A minimal post, rudimentary and superficial Shows no significant understanding of other's ideas Disrespectful or uncourteous

You'll encounter 7 discussion boards, one at the very beginning of the course and then six more at intervals throughout the semester. Altogether, they'll be worth a total of 70 points.

### **Quizzes**

You'll also encounter six quizzes during the course. Each will focus on a specific topic of particular importance, and the instructions for each quiz will leave no doubt as to what you should study. (The first quiz, for instance, will ask you about this syllabus!) The intent of these evaluations will be to encourage you to really get to understand a specific topic and to score a

bunch of points along the way. Most of the quizzes will be closed-book, short exams that you'll take using **ProctorFree** (see below), and each of them will be worth 10 points. Combined, the quizzes will be worth a total of 60 points.

### **LearnSmart™ Study Questions**

The publisher of our text provides a variety of questions with which you can assess your understanding of the material as you read. Throughout the course, you'll be invited to complete 29 short assignments in which you answer questions about our readings. The value of each assignment varies, but they add up to 112 points—and for each assignment, the more questions you answer correctly, the more points you earn. So, if you take your reading seriously, study thoughtfully, and answer the questions carefully, you can receive a total of **112** points that constitute *more than a fifth* of the points available in the course. And, because these assignments are intended to assist and reward your thoughtful mastery of the material, you **may** refer to your text as you answer these questions. (Wow. Open-book study questions that make up a big chunk of the course. It'd be a shame to miss even one.)

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Add all this up, and these various activities will offer you 242 points that will account for a major portion—**45%**—of your grade in the course. But every single one of these activities has a **due date** attached to it, and each of them must be completed **on time, by 11:30 pm Central Time on a given day**, in order to score any points. The good news here is that if you're organized, diligent, persevering, and conscientious, you can get a perfect grade on a substantial portion of the course. The bad news, though, is that if you're disorganized and don't keep up, you may leave some valuable points behind.

### **Exams**

You'll take three exams, or roughly one every four weeks. They'll include multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions, administered with the **Proctor-Free** software that will literally watch you as you take the exam and then alert me if you look at your notes, check your phone, ask someone a question, and so on. Please don't. That'll be messy, what with our University Code of Student Conduct and Discipline being at work, and all. (See the Smaller Print below.)

Please mark your calendar now. Each exam will be available to you for three days:

Exam One  
February 18-20

Exam Two  
April 1-3

Exam Three  
May 5-7

Once you log on and begin an exam, you'll have 60 minutes, and only one chance, to complete it.

Each exam will be worth 100 points, so a total of 300 points, or 55% of your grade in the course (but only 55%!) will come from your performance on the exams.

## **Course Grades**

When we're done, 542 points will have been available to you, and I'll assign grades for the course this way:

488 points or more: **A**

434 – 487 points: **B**

379 – 433 points: **C**

325 – 378 points: **D**

324 and below: **F**

The deadline for dropping the course with a “Q” mark is **April 6**.

The deadline for resigning from *all* of your courses with marks of “WP” or “WF” is May 4.

**Collaboration and Communication:** You can expect to hear from me every week. I'll strive to remind you of upcoming due dates—but they remain your responsibility—and I'll haunt the discussion boards, weighing in now and then. A primary goal of the discussions, though, is to provide opportunities for interaction and to develop a sense of community between you and your classmates, so I won't say much there.

When you have a general question about the course and do want to hear from me, please post your inquiry in my **Virtual Office**. Your questions will likely be of value to others, too, and the answers I provide there will be available to the entire class. On the other hand, if you wish to discuss a personal matter, e-mail me directly at [miller@shsu.edu](mailto:miller@shsu.edu). In all cases, I pledge to reply within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. I will also routinely—but not always—be available to you over a weekend, but my response times may vary on Saturdays and Sundays.

If you contact me in advance, I can also be available to you by appointment for conversations over the phone or via Skype. E-mail chat sessions are possible, too. Just let me know at [miller@shsu.edu](mailto:miller@shsu.edu) or (936) 294-1176 that you wish to speak with me.

Similar advice applies to questions you may have for my fine assistant, Carolyn Cobb, who will be grading your discussion posts. Send general questions to our **Virtual Office** and contact her directly for personal matters at [cobb6021@yahoo.com](mailto:cobb6021@yahoo.com).

**Technical Matters:** Blackboard and Internet Explorer do not play well together. You should use another browser, such as Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, or Apple's Safari to access our course. As you can see below, Firefox 13+ is preferred.

You also need appropriate hardware to take the course. Check out SHSU Online's technical requirements:

### **System Requirements (Updated 03-07-16)**

	<b>PC Users</b>	<b>Mac Users</b>
<b>Operating System</b>	Windows 7, 8 or 10 (prefer 8.1 for Windows 8)	OS X 10.8+ Snow Leopard, recommend OS X 10.9 Mavericks or higher.

<b>Installation Space</b>	2GB Hard Drive  1GB RAM	2GB Hard Drive  1GB RAM
<b>JAVA</b>  *Java will prompt for updates if your Java version is out of date.	<a href="#">JVM 1.8u71 or higher</a>	Open <a href="#">Java 1.8u71 or higher</a>
<b>Hardware</b>	Microphone, Keyboard, Mouse, Web Camera	Microphone, Keyboard, Mouse, Web Camera
<b>Web Browser*</b>	<a href="#">Firefox</a> 13+ (Recommended)	<a href="#">Firefox</a> 13+ (Recommended)
<b>Internet Speed**</b>	Upload: 1 Mbps ↑  Download: 2 Mbps ↓	Upload: 1 Mbps ↑  Download: 2 Mbps ↓
<b>Web Camera</b>	We suggest students use the embedded web camera in their laptop or any standard web cam purchased and manufactured within the last 5 years.  From our experience, any web camera that has drivers that meet or exceed Windows 7 standards will work just fine.  Any web camera that ONLY has drivers for Windows Vista or below will not work.	We suggest students use the embedded web camera in their laptop or any standard web cam purchased and manufactured within the last 5 years.  From our experience, any web camera that has drivers that meet or exceed Windows 7 standards will work just fine.  Any web camera that ONLY has drivers for Windows Vista or below will not work.

\***Note:** Firefox will enforce a requirement for the most up to date version of Java.

\*\*An active broadband Internet connection is assumed since the examinations are done online.

An excellent page at SHSU Online also describes the four most frequent bits of advice the Support Desk gives folks who are having problems. Check it out: <http://online.shsu.edu/campus/support-desk/shsu-online-support-desks-top-issues.html>.

I haven't used it yet, but the good folks at SHSU Online recommend the utility and convenience of a Blackboard app for your phone or tablet. Access our course when you're on the go! Check it out at [https://help.blackboard.com/Blackboard App/Student/Quick Start](https://help.blackboard.com/Blackboard_App/Student/Quick_Start).

In order to receive credit for completing the LearnSmart study questions, you'll need to CONNECT with our course at the "Connect" site maintained by our publisher, McGraw-Hill. Do that by clicking on the **CONNECT to McGraw-Hill** link in the "Course Information" menu for our course in Blackboard..

If you encounter technical problems with our videos, discussion boards, and other course tools, go straight to the wizards at the **SHSU Online Support Desk** at:

<http://distance.shsu.edu/home/support-desk/index.html>

**Email:** [blackboard@shsu.edu](mailto:blackboard@shsu.edu)

**Phone:** [936.294.2780](tel:936.294.2780)

**Toll-free:** [877.759.2232](tel:877.759.2232)

**Hours:** Monday - Friday: **24 hours**, *all* day, through Phone, Chat, and Email

Saturday: **7 a.m. – midnight**

Sunday: **1 p.m. – midnight**

The big blue **Technical Support** button on the left at the top of our course's Blackboard home page will also put you in touch with the Support Desk.

Finally, if this is your first online course, I heartily recommend that you inspect the **Getting Started with Blackboard** tutorials that are available to you at <http://shsu.blackboard.com>. Everything will seem less daunting after you check them out.

### The Smaller Print:

SHSU proudly adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, you should contact our Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office located in the Lee Drain North Annex building (next to the Farrington building), 936-294-3512, or TDD 936-294-3786, to apply for accommodations. Your disclosure of any disability will be kept strictly confidential, of course; however, no accommodation can be made until you register with SSD. All the information you need is here: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/disability/>

The University Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, Section 5.3, states that you are expected “to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity both in and out” of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any type of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action that will involve failure of, and expulsion from, our course. So, what is “dishonesty?” Check out our policies here:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/728eec25-f780-4dcf-932c-03d68cade002.pdf>

If you miss an exam in order to observe a religious holy day, I will happily arrange to provide you the exam at another time during that week. However, University policy requires you to notify me in writing of your wish to be absent due to religious holy days. Please plan ahead, starting here: <http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/0953c7d0-7c04-4b29-a3fc-3bf0738e87d8.pdf>

I retain the copyright to my lectures. They may not be transmitted or broadcast without permission.

Information about these policies and procedures is also available to you at <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>, which offers one-stop shopping.

**Course Calendar:** Our course will be divided into three Units, each lasting about four weeks. The length of time we'll spend on a particular topic will vary some from week to week during the semester, so your essential guide to specific assignments and their due dates is our omnibus Master Plan for our course.

Please inspect it closely.

The Master Plan reflects our plans as the semester begins, but all of our dates are open to modification as the course unfolds.

Now, there's just one more page!

## Getting Started!

Now that you've read the syllabus, here are the first things you should do as the course begins. In our course on Blackboard, click on the **Getting Started** link in the "Course Information" menu on the left side of the page. Then:

1. Respond to the Start-of-the-Semester Survey by January 20. It's worth 5 points of extra credit.
2. Introduce yourself to the rest of us. I encourage you to upload a thumbnail picture of yourself to your Blackboard profile; once you have, your picture will appear beside your posts to our Discussion boards. Then, tell us a little about yourself. At a minimum, say hello in the "Introduce Yourself" thread—or, even better, get creative and produce a video, and post it in the "Introduce Yourself" thread.
3. Re-read the syllabus, master the details, and then take the *Syllabus Quiz* by January 20. It is required, and it's worth 10 points.
4. Then, **before** you start your reading (or do any more than you already have), join Discussion One by January 20. It is required, and it's worth 10 points.
5. Then, click the **CONNECT to McGraw-Hill** link in the "Course Information" menu. Register for our course on the publisher's website and begin Week 1. Cheers!