

PSY 290: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Instructor: Michael Wiederman, Ph.D.
Telephone: 786-3630 (*office*), 446-6367 (*cell*)

E-Mail: mwiederman@columbiasc.edu
Office: 117 Wil Lou Gray

Office Hours: This semester I'm in class from 9:00-10:50 and 12:00-12:50 on M-W-F and 9:30-10:45 on T-Th. So, I should be in my office 11:00-11:45 and 1:00-3:00 M-W-F and 11:00-3:00 T-Th. We can always arrange a specific time to meet.

Text: All materials for class preparation are available at www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/Romance

Course Objectives and Format

The goal in this course is to reveal some of the ways research, theory, and application in psychology sheds light on peoples' experiences within romantic relationships. Rather than use a textbook, the outside materials will come from sources produced for a wider audience. We will use these materials as a jumping off point for considering key issues in romantic relationships. Frequently we will compare cultural beliefs and prescriptions regarding romantic relationships with what researchers and practicing psychologists advocate. Effective use of class time requires both preparation (having read and thought about the material assigned) and verbal participation in an appropriate atmosphere in which class members feel comfortable expressing their ideas. Successful of class discussion requires tolerance for differing viewpoints as well as taking turns talking. Romance is a topic that interests most people, and most have experiences and opinions to contribute. Given the large enrollment, please be selective in deciding what and when to contribute to class discussion. Listening is always an appropriate form of participation.

Expectations / Grading

To ensure that students follow the schedule and are actively engaged in class meetings, learning will be assessed through a series of brief electronic posts to Koala Connection (KC). Each post is limited to 300 words and will be in response to a hypothetical letter to an advice columnist. The post will be visible only to the instructor, although the best ones may be posted after the due date if the authors do not deny permission (when submitting each post, please include a note only if you do not want your post to be considered for publishing to the class as a whole).

Each post will be worth a possible 20 points, and will be graded according to 1) how accurately it includes the relevant psychology concepts and findings, and 2) how well it is written (grammar, punctuation, spelling, structure, style, etc.). There will be 5 opportunities to post (100 points total), and each posted after the due date/time will be penalized 2 points (10%). Monitor KC for assignments and due dates/times. The grading criteria for each post is as follows:

20 points = Virtually perfect. Not only is the post exceptionally well written, but it does an exceptional job of conveying the relevant psychological material in an accurate, interesting, and helpful way. Bravo.

18-19 points = Excellent, both in the way the post is written and in the coverage of the relevant psychological material. Accurate, interesting, and helpful to the reader. Good job.

16-17 points = Above average in the extent to which the relevant psychological material is covered, and the post is generally well-written. There may be some minor problems in the writing and/or content, but still a solid job overall.

14-15 points = Average in the extent to which the relevant psychological material is covered and the way the post is written. There may be some noticeable problems in writing or some minor problems with relevant material missing or not presented in the clearest way.

12-13 points = Below average in that there are substantial problems in the writing and/or important material is either missing or presented inaccurately. Not clear or helpful to the reader.

10-11 points = An honest attempt to complete the assignment, but major problems in writing and/or presentation of the material result in a post that is inaccurate, irrelevant to the assigned question, or difficult to understand.

Final Grade: The total number of possible points in the course equals 100, and your grade in the course is based on a straight scale: 90-100% = **A**, 88-89% = **B+**, 80-87% = **B**, 78-79% = **C+**, 70-77% = **C**, 60-69% = **D**, less than 60% = **F**.

In Case of an Emergency School Closing

If we have an unexpected evacuation or closing, continue to follow the assigned reading schedule. If the college closes for a substantial length of time, monitor Koala Connection and your college e-mail account for information and directions. You can contact the instructor via e-mail at Michael@mindingthemind.com and/or mwiederma@columbiasc.edu.

Special Individual Arrangements

Please notify the instructor if you need accommodations because of a disability or medical condition, or if you need special arrangements in the event the building must be evacuated.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
Nov. 5	Introduction to the course – What do we get from romantic relationships?
Nov. 7	Romantic Attraction
Nov. 9	Selecting Partners for Romantic Relationships
Nov. 12	Trust and Intimacy in Romantic Relationships
Nov. 14	Love, Attachment Styles, and Passion
Nov. 16	Gender, Roles, and Expectations in Romantic Relationships
Nov. 19	Gender issues continued
Nov. 21, 23	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday
Nov. 26	Communication and Meaning in Romantic Relationships
Nov. 28	Romantic Relationships . . . Children Included
Nov. 30	Equity and Power in Romantic Relationships
Dec. 3	Relationship Commitment
Dec. 5	Jealousy and Conflict in Romantic Relationships
Dec. 7	Breaking Up and Moving On
Dec. 12	Final Exam Period – 11:00 am – Film Screening