

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
LONDON CANADA
Department of Psychology
2026-2027

Psychology 3724F Section 001
The Science of Romantic Relationships

1.0 CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of the field of intimate relationships. Current empirical research is emphasized. Topics include theoretical perspectives on intimate relationships (e.g., social psychological theory, evolutionary and life histories theory, interpersonal attraction, love, sexuality, communication within relationships, and various relationship challenges (conflict, violence, power, loss, etc.).

Antirequisites: Psychology 3726F/G, 3790G if taken in 2012/13

Antirequisites are courses that overlap sufficiently in content that only one can be taken for credit. So if you take a course that is an antirequisite to a course previously taken, you will lose credit for the earlier course, regardless of the grade achieved in the most recent course.

Prerequisite(s): Both Psychology 2801F/G (or one of Health Sciences 2801A/B, Psychology 2840F/G, Psychology 2855F/G) and Psychology 2811A/B (or one of Biology 2244A/B, Economics 2122A/B, Economics 2222A/B, Geography 2210A/B, Health Sciences 3801A/B, MOS 2242A/B, Psychology 2830A/B, Psychology 2850A/B, Sociology 2205A/B, Statistical Sciences 2035, Statistical Sciences 2141A/B, Statistical Sciences 2143A/B, Statistical Sciences 2244A/B, Statistical Sciences 2858A/B, the former Social Work 2207A/B), or the former Psychology 2820E, or both the former Psychology 2800E and the former Psychology 2810.

2 lecture hours, 1 tutorial hour, 0.5 course.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

2.0 COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Lorne Campbell
Office: SSC 6328
Group Office Hours: Mondays, 11am – 12pm

Email: lcampb23@uwo.ca

Teaching Assistants:

- Sara Moazami (smoazam4@uwo.ca)
- Mackenzie Smith (mswit642@uwo.ca)

Time and Location of Classes and Labs:

Lecture/class: Tuesdays from 12:30 – 2:30pm in SEB — 2202

Tutorials:

Section 002, Thursdays from 12:30 – 1:30pm in UC — 3225

Section 003, Thursdays from 1:30pm – 2:30pm in UC — 3225

Section 004, Wednesdays from 10:30am – 11:30am in SSC — 3028

Section 005, Wednesdays from 11:30am – 12:30pm in SSC — 3028

3.0 TEXTBOOK

There is no textbook for this class. I have assigned readings for each week/topic that are available online.

Optional textbook: Fletcher, G.J.O., Simpson, J.A., Campbell, L., & Overall, N. (2019). *The science of intimate relationships (2nd ed.)*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
ISBN: 978-1-119-43004-9

4.0 COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

The purpose of this course is to develop a thorough understanding of the psychology of romantic, intimate relationships. The topics include interpersonal attraction, relationship maintenance, and relationship dissolution. The objectives are to be aware of current theory and research regarding different facets of intimate relationships and critically evaluate this literature.

Lectures are intended to complement and elaborate upon the readings. Given that weekly readings are focused more narrowly on a particular research topic material that is not in the readings will be presented each week during lecture. Weekly slides presented at lectures will be posted in advance on the course website. If you wish, you can print copies of the slides, bring them to class, and use them as a framework for taking notes.

Discussion during lecture time is encouraged, so please feel free to ask questions at any point and to offer your thoughts about issues raised in the lectures.

Tutorial/laboratory meetings will focus on specific aspects of the week's topic. Sometimes the lab will involve watching a video and discussing it afterwards, sometimes the lab will expose students to concrete elements of a research topic (e.g., different perspectives on gender differences in interpersonal attraction), and sometimes the lab will involve discussion of a pertinent topic. Tutorial/lab sections are limited to 25 students per section.

Learning Outcome	Learning Activity	Assessment
<i>Depth and Breadth of Knowledge</i> Describe , identify and explain the evolutionary, personal, interpersonal, and developmental factors that influence thoughts, feelings and behaviors of partners in romantic relationships	Lecture; Class discussions; Textbook/Readings	Exams, Tutorial participation
<i>Application of Knowledge</i> Articulate the above concepts when critically evaluating	Lecture; Class discussions; Textbook/Readings	Exams, Tutorial participation

research and building persuasive arguments in this area		
<i>Application of Methodologies</i> Explain how personal, situational, and relationship factors apply to the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of partners in romantic relationships	Lecture; Class discussions; Textbook/Readings	Exams, Tutorial participation
<i>Communication Skills</i> Communicate ideas clearly and concisely, in language accessible to intelligent non-experts (oral and written formats)	Lecture; Class discussions; Textbook/Readings, paper	Exams, Tutorial participation, paper
<i>Awareness of Limits of Knowledge</i> Describe and explain the limits of research conclusions in the context of methodological practices within the field	Lecture; Class discussions; Textbook/Readings	Exams, Tutorial participation
<i>Autonomy and Professional Capacity</i> Develop the ability to critique others' writing politely and professionally	Lecture; Class discussions	Exams, Tutorial participation

5.0 EVALUATION

The evaluation and testing formats for this course were created to assess the learning objectives as listed in section 4.0 and are considered necessary for meeting these learning objectives.

Because this is an essay course, as per Senate Regulations, you must pass the essay component to pass the course. That is, the average mark for your written assignments must be at least 50%.

This course is exempt from the Senate requirement that students receive assessment of their work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade at least three full days before the date of the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty.

The expectation for course grades within the Psychology Department is that they will be distributed around the following averages:

- 70% 1000-level to 2099-level courses
- 72% 2100-2999-level courses
- 75% 3000-level courses
- 80% 4000-level courses

In the event that course grades are significantly higher or lower than these averages, instructors may be required to make adjustments to course grades. Such adjustment might include the normalization of one or more course components and/or the re-weighting of various course components.

Policy on Grade Rounding

Please note that although course grades within the Psychology Department are rounded to the nearest whole number, no further grade rounding will be done. No additional assignments will be offered to enhance a final grade; nor will requests to change a grade because it is needed for a future program be considered.

6.0 ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION SCHEDULE

The two exams (Midterm Exam and Final Exam) will contain both multiple choice and essay questions. Material for the exams will be taken from weekly lectures AS WELL as weekly tutorials. The final exam is NOT cumulative. You will have a maximum of 2 hours to complete each exam. Each exam is worth 40% of the final grade.

MIDTERM TEST: November 3 (in class during class time)

FINAL EXAM: **TBA (during exam schedule)**

Make-Up Exams: Tests must be written during the scheduled timeframe unless you have a legitimate excuse recognized by the university administration. Valid reasons include medical or compassionate reasons, and must be substantiated by proper documentation (e.g., a medical certificate, which will be verified by the Office of the Dean). A student who misses a regularly scheduled exam for other reasons, or who cannot justify a claim, will be assigned a 0 for the exam.

Paper:

The paper (worth 20%) will be a 8-page double-spaced paper of text (*minimum* 2000 words of text, *maximum* 3000 of text), plus title page, references, and tables (if any). Please use Times New Roman font, size 12, with margins of 1 inch (2.54 cm) on all four sides (left, right, top, bottom).

The paper is due on by 11:55pm on the Friday of the final week of classes via the assignment tab on OWL. Essays that are late will be penalized 1 mark (out of 30) every 2 days. Further instructions regarding electronic submission will be provided.

The nature of the paper will be discussed in class as well as tutorials. For the paper you will first be asked to identify a topic related to relationship science that you find interesting/would like to learn more. You will develop a particular question regarding that topic. You will be provided with language to use to submit your research question to an AI generative writing tool. You will read what was generated for you and then follow instructions (to be provided) for writing a paper, without the use in any way of any other AI generative writing platform that evaluates the accuracy of arguments/statements/citations therein.

7.0 CLASS SCHEDULE

****No Lab/Tutorial the week of September 7th****

Week of September 14

Lecture 1 Organizational lecture; Introduction to the study of intimate relationships

Readings: The Greening of Relationship Science by Ellen Berscheid (DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.4.260>)

Lab/Tutorial topic: Introductory session

Week of September 21

Lecture 2 Relationship Science—Key theories and concepts, single-hood, and why humans may gravitate toward developing long-term romantic relationships

Readings: Steps Toward the Ripening of Relationship Science by Harry Reis

(DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6811.2006.00139.x>)

Lab/Tutorial topic: The study of relationships from a scientific perspective; Levels of explanation for human behaviour

Week of September 28

Lecture 3 Mate Preferences 1: Classic Social Psychology

Readings: Byrne et al. (1970). Continuity between the experimental study of attraction and real-life computer dating. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 16, 157-165.

Lab/Tutorial topic: Implicit and explicit processes in relationships

Week of October 5

Lecture 4 Mate Preferences 2: An evolutionary psychology approach

Readings: Fletcher et al. (1999). Ideals in intimate relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76, 72-89.

Lab/Tutorial topic: No tutorials this week as September 30 is the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation.

Week of October 12

Lecture 5 No Class—Fall reading week

Week of October 19

Lecture 6 Relationship Initiation

Readings: Clark et al. (1999). Strategic behaviors in romantic relationship initiation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25, 709-722.

Apostolou & Christoforou (2020). The art of flirting: What are the traits that make it effective? *Personality and Individual Differences*. DOI: 10.1016/j.paid.2020.109866

Lab/Tutorial topic: Culture and attraction

Week of October 26

Lecture 7 What are the links between preferences and actual mate choice?

Readings: Campbell & Stanton (2014). The predictive validity of ideal partner preferences in relationship formation: What we know, what we don't know, and why it matters. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 8, 485-494.

Lab/Tutorial topic: "Mixed" Relationships

Week of November 2

Lecture 8 Midterm Test (in class, during class time)

Lab/Tutorial topic: No lab/tutorial this week

Week of November 9

Lecture 9 Love and commitment

Readings: Love and the Commitment Problem in Romantic Relations and Friendship by Gian Gonzaga et al. (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.81.2.247>)

Lab/Tutorial topic: Same-sex relationships

Week of November 16

Lecture 10 Attachment Theory and adult romantic relationships

Readings: Working Models of Attachment and Attribution Processes in Intimate Relationships by Nancy Collins et al. (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167205280907>)

Lab/Tutorial topic: Assessing empathic accuracy

Week of November 23

Lecture 11 Stages of Relationship Development

Readings: Murstein (1970). Stimulus, value, role: A theory of marital choice. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 32, 465-481.

Lab/Tutorial topic: Body language

Week of November 30

Lecture 12 Sex and passion

Readings: Sexual Frequency Predicts Greater Well-Being, But More is Not Always Better, by Amy Muise et al. (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550615616462>)

Lab/Tutorial topic: Sexual and relationship satisfaction

Week of December 7

Lecture 13 The Dark side of relationships: Relationship Violence; Relationship Dissolution

Readings: Using I3 Theory to Clarify when Dispositional Aggressiveness Predicts Intimate Partner Violence Perpetration, by Eli Finkel et al. (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025651>)

Lab/Tutorial topic: NO LAB TUTORIAL THIS WEEK AS CLASSES END ON
DECEMBER 9

TBA Final Exam (During final exam period)

8.0 Academic Integrity

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Possible penalties for a scholastic offence include failure of the assignment/exam, failure of the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Lectures are not to be recorded via video and/or audio devices. No electronic devices allowed to be used

in any way during exams.

Plagiarism Detection Software

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western and Turnitin.com.

Use of AI

The use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT to produce written work is not permitted unless permission is granted by the instructor for specific circumstances. Any work submitted must be the work of the student in its entirety unless otherwise disclosed. When used, AI tools should be used ethically and responsibly, and students must cite or credit the tools used in line with the expectation to use AI as a tool to learn, not to produce content.

AI Policy for Psychology:

Responsible use of AI is allowed in Psychology. This includes using AI for brainstorming, improving grammar, or doing preliminary/background research on a topic.

AI is **not** to be used in place of critical thinking.

The misuse of AI undermines the academic values of this course. Relying on AI to create full drafts or fabricate sources is prohibited. You are ultimately responsible for any work submitted, so it is highly advised that you critically review your Generative AI output before incorporating this information into your assignments.

If you use AI, you must clearly explain its role in your work. All written assignments will require an AI Usage Statement, in which you will indicate what tools you have used, what you have used them for, and (broadly) how you have modified this information. Assignments without an AI Usage Statement will not be accepted.

Violations of this policy will be handled according to Western's scholastic offense policies.

Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Exam Proctoring Software

Tests and examinations for online courses may be conducted using a remote proctoring service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote

Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")

In classes that involve the use of a personal response system, data collected will only be used in a manner consistent to that described in this outline. It is the instructor's responsibility to make every effort

to ensure that data remain confidential. However, students should be aware that as with all forms of electronic communication, privacy is not guaranteed.

9.0 Academic Accommodations and Accessible Education

View Western's policy on academic accommodations for student with disabilities at this [link](#).

Accessible Education provides supports and services to students with disabilities at Western.

If you think you may qualify for ongoing accommodation that will be recognized in all your courses, visit [Accessible Education](#) for more information. Email: aew@uwo.ca Phone: 519 661-2147

10.0 Absence & Academic Consideration

View Western's policy on academic consideration for medical illnesses this [link](#)

Find your academic counsellor here: https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain academic considerations. Students **must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence.

Medical Absences

Submit a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner to Academic Counselling in your Faculty of registration to be eligible for Academic Consideration.

Nonmedical Absences

Submit appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to Academic Counselling in your Faculty of registration to be eligible for academic consideration. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Counselling unit to clarify what documentation is appropriate.

Religious Consideration

Students seeking accommodation for religious purposes are advised to contact Academic Counselling at least three weeks prior to the religious event and as soon as possible after the start of the term.

11.0 Other Information

- Office of the Registrar: <https://registrar.uwo.ca>
- Student Development Services: www.sdc.uwo.ca
- Psychology Undergraduate Program: <https://www.psychology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/index.html>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness@Western <https://www.uwo.ca/health/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you.

If you wish to appeal a grade, please read the policy documentation at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf. Please first contact the course instructor. If your issue is not resolved, you may make your appeal in writing to the Undergraduate Chair in Psychology (psyugrd@uwo.ca).

Copyright Statement

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, videos and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute any course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without the instructor's written consent.

12.0 Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton. Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.