Course Syllabus—Fall 2014

Course information:

When: Fall Semester, 2014
Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30pm – 4:00pm

Where: Sharpless 410

Instructor: Prof. Benjamin Le, Ph.D.

Office: Sharpless 411B
Office hours: Wednesdays 4:15-5pm, Fridays 10-11am, and by appointment
email: ble@haverford.edu

Required Texts & Readings:

A supplemental list of journal articles and book chapters are included as required readings and are available electronically. See pages 7-10 of this syllabus for a complete listing.

NOTE: readings are available via the course website; the password for all readings is “325”

Web Page & Course Schedule:
http://www.benjaminle.com/325

Course description and objectives:

This course is designed as an overview to the field of close relationships. The major theories of close relationships will be emphasized, including examinations of evolutionary, attachment, interdependence, and cognitive approaches. In addition, research related to topics such as attraction, relationship development and maintenance, relationships and health, infidelity, violence in intimate relationships, and jealousy will be explored, with methodological concerns discussed within the context of each topic.

Schedule and Topics:

The course schedule, including the topics, readings, and timing of assignments is available on the course website: http://www.benjaminle.com/325
Grading & Assignment Information:

Grades will be determined from the following factors:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Total Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discussion Questions</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Hypotheses</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Article Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Theory Paper / Midterm</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Research Proposal / Final</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Student Topics</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Participation &amp; Contributions</td>
<td>15%</td>
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TOTAL 100%

1. **Discussion Questions**: Once during the semester each student will be responsible for providing ~3-5 discussion questions pertaining to the readings for that week. Discussion questions are thoughts, clarifications, or questions you may have regarding a particular reading, an idea presented in a reading, or the readings as a whole, that help to promote dialogue during the class (i.e., it gives us stuff to talk about).

For the week you are responsible for questions, you must submit your questions to me via e-mail (ble@haverford.edu) by noon on the previous Sunday, unless otherwise noted. Questions received on time, and show thought, effort, and an understanding of the readings will receive full credit.

Given the number of students enrolled in the course, ~2 students will be writing questions for each week. After I receive questions from students (and combine or delete duplicate questions) I will post them on the course web page. They should be available by late-morning on Monday if they are submitted to me on time. All students should bring the discussion questions for that week to class.

2. **Hypotheses**: Ten times during the semester each student will turn in a hypothesis based on the readings for that topic (i.e., one hypothesis per topic). A hypothesis is a brief statement that describes the purpose of a potential study and makes predictions about what you think the findings of your study would be (see example on the course webpage). Your hypothesis should be typed at the top of your paper, and should not be more than 2 sentences in length.

In addition to your hypothesis, you should very briefly and generally describe the method of your study (i.e., how you could go about collecting the data necessary for testing your hypothesis). This should not exceed 1-2 paragraphs, meaning your hypothesis and general description of your study should not exceed 1 single-spaced page. A sample hypothesis is given on the course web page.

Your hypotheses serve two purposes for class. First, we'll discuss your hypotheses in class, and generate ways of testing hypotheses as a group. Therefore, on days when we are discussing hypotheses you should be prepared to "defend" your hypothesis (i.e., explain the logic behind your idea, and answer any questions regarding your prediction). Second, your final paper for this class is a research proposal, in which you will design a study that you could conduct. By the time you begin work on this paper, you should have many ideas for studies, based on the hypotheses you generated throughout the semester. You may wish to elaborate on one of your hypotheses for your research proposal (although you don't have to).
You may turn in a hypothesis during class on either a Monday or Wednesday (however, we may not always have time to discuss them everyday—if we do run out of time we'll discuss them during the next class period). On days you chose to submit a hypothesis, please **bring 2 copies of your hypothesis to class** (I will collect one, and you will have one to read from). Discussion of hypotheses will begin the second week of class (so there is no need to write one for Week 1).

You will submit 10 hypotheses over the course of semester. Please note, **you cannot submit a hypothesis for a day you are not in class**. An excellent hypotheses (that receives full credit) will (1) succinctly state a testable prediction, (2) generally and briefly describe a reasonable means of testing the hypothesis, (3) demonstrate a knowledge of the relevant topic (i.e., show how your hypothesis is related to the readings), (4) include the topic and date at the top of the page, and (5) not exceed 1 page.

**3. Article Presentation:** Once during the semester each student will be responsible for giving a brief report on an empirical article that he or she selects. Each student will select an article corresponding to that day’s class topic, either by doing a literature search or based on a recommendation from me (or, ideally, a combination of both). S/he will read the article, and prepare an informal oral presentation to be given during class. The presentation should be brief (~7 minutes; I will cut you off at 10 minutes) and focus on the broad issues examined by the paper, rather than the minute details: What is the goal of the paper (i.e., the hypothesis that is tested)? Generally speaking, how is the hypothesis tested? What are the findings (in general, layperson's terms—no numbers or statistics!)? What are the implications? Please note, the paper you choose should be an empirical article (i.e., data are collected and analyzed) and not a review paper.

It would be a good idea to get the article you choose approved by me beforehand. **Also, you must give me (in person, or as a .pdf file attached to an e-mail) a copy of your article at least 24 hours prior to your presentation** (I will keep the article). Make sure the copy you attach 1) is a "clean", readable copy, 2) includes references, and 3) is photocopied directly from the journal or is printed in .pdf format. **Do not attach a printed on-line article in .html (or other) format** (i.e., it should be, or look like, a photocopied journal article; it should not look like a webpage).

Dates for the presentation are tentative—you should be prepared to give your presentation on the day it is originally scheduled for, however given the flexibility of the course you may be asked to delay your presentation by one class period (but you will never be asked to give your presentation earlier than scheduled). I’ll notify you individually if I anticipate delaying the date of your presentation.

Grades on presentations will be determined by the quality and clarity of your communication, as well as the accuracy of your interpretation of the study. Basically, did you effectively and correctly explain the study?

**4. Theory Paper (Midterm):** On **Monday, October 27th** your theory paper is due. In a sense, this paper will serve as an open-book take-home midterm covering the theoretical perspectives discussed during the first section of class. However, it is unlike an exam in that it will be necessary to do some library work (i.e., literature searches, reading articles), and will require original thought in the synthesis of information (rather than simply recalling and rehashing information presented in class and your texts). Further information about this paper will be available on the course webpage, and will be discussed in more detail as the time approaches.
5. Research Proposal (Final): The second paper (with the other being the theory paper / midterm) for this course is a research proposal. Students will choose topics based on their own interests, and design studies to test their hypotheses. More information about this paper will be made available on the course webpage, and will be discussed in class toward the end of the semester. **It is due at the end of finals week.**

6. Student Topics: The topics for last 6 class days will be chosen by the class.* In addition, the class material for those days will be partly presented by groups of students. Groups of ~3 students will pick the topic for the day, and (with guidance from the instructor) find relevant readings, develop discussion questions, and lead discussion for part of that class period. I will add lecture material or discussion topics as necessary. More information regarding these days of class (e.g., the formation of groups, choosing the topics that are covered, dates etc.) will be available as the semester progresses.

*11/19, 11/24, 12/1, 12/3, 12/8, and 12/10

7. Participation & Contributions: This course is designed a discussion class. Your input and energy is vital to its success. Fifteen percent of your course grade is allotted to your contributions and efforts in class.

**Grading Scale:** Grades will be assigned strictly adhering to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94.00% and above</td>
<td>A / 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.00% - 93.99%</td>
<td>A- / 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.00% - 89.99%</td>
<td>B+ / 3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.00% - 86.99%</td>
<td>B / 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.00% - 82.99%</td>
<td>B- / 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.00% - 79.99%</td>
<td>C+ / 2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.00% - 76.99%</td>
<td>C / 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.00% - 72.99%</td>
<td>C- / 1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.00% - 69.99%</td>
<td>D+ / 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.00% - 66.99%</td>
<td>D / 1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>59.99% and below</td>
<td>F / 0.0</td>
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</tbody>
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**Other Points of Importance:**

**Attendance and Absence Policy:** Class attendance and participation is expected. Students are responsible for all announcements made in class, whether they are present or not. If you must miss a class, please let me know (via e-mail). Course grades for students missing an unacceptable number of class meetings may be adjusted at my discretion.

You are expected to complete assignments (e.g., discussion questions you are responsible for, presentations you are scheduled to make, papers to turn in) in a timely manner, and to meet the deadlines outlined in the course schedule or announced in class. If you cannot complete assignments on time because of an unforeseen occurrence (e.g., illness, family emergency etc.), or because of a school-related conflict (e.g., conflict with other course assignments or activities), please contact me immediately. Acceptance of late work will be at my discretion, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Typically, I am flexible in working with students who discuss absences/ conflicts with me **in advance**, however I understand this isn’t always possible.
Grade Changes / Re grade Procedure: All grade disputes are to be made in writing (please type). We will not discuss or argue regrades in person. All requests for regrades must be made within two weeks after the exam or assignment is returned to the class (or within 2 weeks of the start of the following term for the research proposal).

When disputing a grade, you should state the dispute and the number of points you feel you should have received for the assignment or exam, and the reason you feel your work or answer is correct (including support from the readings or lecture notes). Please note that when you ask for an exam or assignment to be regraded it may be regraded in its entirety, and there is a possibility of losing points. All requests for regrades should be submitted to me along with the original assignment.

Understanding appropriate sources for citations: For all assignments and exams, the following are considered appropriate and valid sources for citations and references:

- Published journal articles, both in online and paper formats.
- Professional handbook chapters and reviews (i.e., edited volumes with chapters written by psychological researchers).
- Academic books (i.e., books written by psychological researchers).

The following are not to be used as citations in your work:

- Information found on the internet, unless it is the online version of a scientific journal (e.g., accessing an electronic version of a journal online is fine). This includes Wikipedia and/or any other webpages.
- Any undergraduate-level textbook.

In short, you should always be working with the primary literature written by psychological researchers. If you have questions about a particular source, please ask.

A few of other important points:

- Buy a stapler...Unstapled papers will not be accepted (or will have their grades adjusted). This includes paper clips, folded corners, etc. In short, make sure your papers are permanently secured with a staple or other such binding. And if your stapler won’t handle the number of pages you’re trying to staple, use a bigger stapler.

- Silence your cell phones, and put them away during class. Please do not text or otherwise fiddle with your electronic devices in class.

- I will not be posting my lectures on-line for a couple of reasons. First, I would like you to come to class. Second, active learning enhances retention. The act of writing down lecture material in your own words will help you remember it better.

- Audio/video recording of class is not permitted without my consent. Please ask if you need to record the class. Unauthorized recording is a violation of Haverford’s Honor Code.

- Do not submit papers or assignments electronically (i.e., don’t e-mail me with your papers attached) unless I explicitly invite you to do so. Spam filters and other such technological goof-ups make e-mailing papers problematic. This does not apply to sending discussion questions or articles to present.
Accommodating student needs/disabilities: Students who think they may need accommodations in this course because of the impact of a disability are encouraged to meet with me privately early in the semester. Students should also the Office of Disabilities Services (https://www.haverford.edu/ods/) to verify their eligibility for reasonable accommodations as soon as possible. Early contact will help to avoid unnecessary inconvenience and delays.

A few words about plagiarism and academic dishonesty: I tend to have a relaxed and laid back teaching style, but do not mistake this for a lack of rigor. I take plagiarism and academic integrity very seriously, and it will not be tolerated. Plagiarism involves your use of another person’s work, words, or ideas without properly crediting them. This includes copying the work from another student’s paper or exam, as well as using direct quotes from a source, such as your textbook or a journal article, without citing the author. Simply rewording a sentence or passage from another source without giving credit is also inappropriate. Furthermore, using another person’s ideas without a proper citation is considered plagiarism as well. The best way to assure that your work does not plagiarize from another source is to liberally use citations within your work (e.g., be very thorough with your references—we will discuss APA style of references in class if necessary) and to ask if you are ever in doubt. Do your own work and follow Haverford’s Honor Code.

On discussing relationships: This course is meant as an overview of the research in the field of close relationships, and as a critical examination of the theories that guide this research. While it may be helpful to sometimes use examples from your personal experiences in discussion, this class is not the appropriate forum to disclose sensitive personal information or to seek guidance regarding your relationships. My training is in experimental social psychology, not clinical practice or therapy—I am not qualified to give advice regarding any individual’s personal relationships (and will not attempt to do so).
Reading List

(These papers are available on the course website; the password is "325")


