



## **Couples Psychology and Intimate Partner Conflict Undergraduate Course Information Guide**

**Course Number: CCH 234, 4 credits, 10 Weeks**  
**Delivery Formats: Online Async**

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### **Course Description**

The desire and pursuit of romantic love and partnership is a normal part of psychological development. This course will examine the psychology behind how couples become attracted to one another by focusing on the relationship between emotions, thoughts and behaviors and the dyadic environment in which they function. Students will learn about healthy partnerships as well as how conflict arises between couples including the context in which behaviors such as abuse and violence manifest. This course will also examine cultural factors that influence couples psychology.

### **Learning Outcomes**

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Understand the psychological concept of romantic love and how it manifests in couples relationships
- Understand the neuroscience behind attraction and emotional intimacy
- Understand and differentiate cultural approaches to romantic relationships
- Identify and explain factors associated with relational conflict
- Identify and explain key theories of individual development related to love and attraction
- Identify and explain key theories of couples psychology
- Identify and apply strategies to repair ruptured romantic relationships

## Learning Strategies and Resources

In this online, asynchronous course, weekly modules utilize a variety of learning resources to understand the psychology of couples, including readings, online discussions, and written assignments. A significant portion of readings can be located on e-reserves.

### Required Readings

Books and learning materials are available at the DePaul bookstore, at <http://depaul-loop.bnccollege.com>, or through alternative sources.

Gottman, S. & Silver, N. (2015). The seven principles for making marriage work: A practical guide from the country's foremost relationship expert. New York, NY: Harmony.

Hendricks, H. & Hunt, H.L. (2019). Getting the love you want: A guide for couples (3rd Edition). New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin.

Johnson, S. (2008). Hold me tight: Seven conversations for a lifetime of love. New York, NY: Little Brown Spark.

Sternberg, R.J. & Sternberg, K. (2019). The new psychology of love (2nd Edition). New York, NY: Cambridge.

Required Movies: For Purchase or Streaming

The Story of Us (1999)

Malcolm and Marie (2020)

Additional readings are available on Electronic Reserve, at the [DePaul Library](#). Login to Ares Course Reserves and select the course. Log in using your Campus Connect User ID and password. You will then get a page listing the courses in which you're enrolled that have readings posted in Ares. Click on the title of this course and the list of our electronic reserve readings will be displayed.

### Learning Deliverables

Online Discussion Posts – The online discussions can vary and will be related to posting your thoughts on the week's current module. Students are expected to participate in these online discussions and, in addition to posting your thoughts/opinion, you will respond to two of your classmates by the designated due date every week. Students are highly advised to post early. Online posts will be graded based mostly on quality and depth of thought. Please use decorum, etiquette, and proper grammar in your posts. There is no minimum or maximum post length, however, you will be assessed on the quality and depth of your thought.

Insight Papers – Insight papers are designed to help students take a deeper dive into a concept of choice related to the specific week's readings and resources. These papers

will focus on students' understanding of a specific concept, students' ability to analyze the concept, and students' ability to apply it to personal experience or observations of others. Insight Papers are to be 4 pages double-spaced.

Applied Papers – Students will write three applied papers investigating and critiquing each of the three main couples psychology and counseling models presented in this course. Students will both explain the foundation for the models as well as apply it to personal experience or observation of others.

Final Applied Paper – Students will choose one of the three couples psychology models of their choosing (Sound Relational House, Imago, or Emotion-Focused) and apply it to a personal situation. Students will 1) describe their observations of the nature of the conflict between the couple, 2) explain how their model of choice explains the conflict, and 3) propose how the couple could improve their relationship using the concepts from the model of choice.

## Assessment of Student Learning

### Distribution of Grade Points

Graded Assignments	Percentage of Final Grade
Online Discussion Posts - 25 points x 6 = 150	13%
Insights Papers - 50 points x 6 = 300	29%
Applied Papers - 100 points x 3 = 300	29%
Final Applied Paper - 300	29%

### Grading Scale

A = 93 to 100	A- = 90 to 92	B+ = 88 to 89
B = 82 to 87	B- = 80 to 81	C+ = 78 to 79
C = 73 to 77	C- = 70 to 72	D+ = 68 to 69
D = 67 to 62	F = 59 or below	INC

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## Course Schedule

Week or Module Title or Theme	Readings / Learning Activities	Graded Assignments
<p>Week 1, Module 1: Introduction to Romantic Love and Couplehood</p>	<p>Achebe, N. (2018). Love, courtship, and marriage in Africa (pp. 119-142). A companion to African history. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.</p> <p>Jankowiak, W. &amp; Fischer, E.F. (1992). A cross-cultural perspective on romantic love. <i>Ethnology</i>, 31, 149-155.</p> <p>Lindholm, C. (2006). Romantic love. <i>Etnofoor</i>, 19, 5-21.</p> <p>Pan, L. (2015). Confucius and Freud (pp. 14-25). When true love came to China. Hong Kong University Press.</p> <p>Reddy, W. (2010). The rule of love. In L. Passerini, L. Ellena, and A.C.T. Geppert (Eds.) <i>New dangerous liaisons: Discourses on Europe and love in the twentieth century</i>. New York, NY: Berghahn Books.</p> <p>Reddy, W. (2012). Introduction (pp. 1-38). <i>The making of romantic love: Longing and sexuality in Europe, South Asia, and Japan, 900-1200 CE</i>. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.</p>	<p>Online Discussion 1</p> <p>Insight Paper 1</p>
<p>Week 2, Module 2: Models and Theories of Love</p>	<p>Aron, A. &amp; Tomlinson, J.M. (2019). Love as expansion of the self (pp. 1-24). <i>The new psychology of love</i> (2nd Ed.), New York, NY: Cambridge.</p> <p>Diamond, L.M. (2019). Love, desire, and sexual fluidity (p. 138-153). <i>The new psychology of love</i> (2nd Ed.), New York, NY: Cambridge.</p> <p>Mikulincer, M. &amp; Shaver, P.R. (2019). A behavioral systems approach to romantic love relationships: Attachment, caregiving, and sex (p. 259-279). <i>The new psychology of love</i> (2nd Ed.), New York, NY: Cambridge.</p> <p>Sternberg, R.J. (2019). When love goes awry (Part 1): Applications of the duplex theory of love and its development to relationships gone</p>	<p>Online Discussion 2</p> <p>Insight Paper 2</p>

	<p>bad (p. 280-299). The new psychology of love (2nd Ed.), New York, NY: Cambridge.</p> <p>Zhou, S., Chelberg, M.B., &amp; Aron, A. (2015). Psychology of Interpersonal Attraction. International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences (2nd Ed.), 12, 626-630.</p>	
<p>Week 3, Module 3: Science of Love</p>	<p>Aron, A., Fischer, H., Mashek, D.J., Strong, G., Li, H., &amp; Brown, L.L. (2005). Reward, motivation, and emotion systems associated with early-stage intense romantic love. Journal of Neurophysiology, 94, 327-337.</p> <p>Buss, D.M. (2019). The evolution of love in humans. In R. Sternberg &amp; K. Sternberg (Eds.) The new psychology of love (2nd Ed.)(p. 42-63). New York, NY: Cambridge.</p> <p>Cacioppo, S. (2019). Neuroimaging of love in the twenty-first century. In R. Sternberg &amp; K. Sternberg (Eds.). The new psychology of love (2nd Ed.)(p. 64-83). New York, NY: Cambridge.</p> <p>Fischer, H. (1998). Lust, attraction, and attachment in mammalian reproduction. Human Nature, 9, 23-52.</p>	<p>Online Discussion 3</p> <p>Insight Paper 3</p>
<p>Week 4, Module 4: Sound Relationship House Model - Theory</p>	<p>Gottman, J.M. (1998). Psychology and the study of marriage process. Annual Review of Psychology, 49, 169-197. Focusing on p. 179-190.</p> <p>Gottman, J.M. &amp; Silver, N. (1999). The seven principles for making marriage work: A practical guide from country's foremost relationship expert. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.</p>	<p>Online Discussion 4</p> <p>Insight Paper 4</p>
<p>Week 5, Module 5: Sound Relationship House Model – Application</p>	<p>Gottman, J.M. &amp; Silver, N. (1999). The seven principles for making marriage work: A practical guide from the country's foremost relationship expert (p. 47-258). New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.</p> <p>Movie 1: The Story of Us (1999)</p>	<p>Applied Paper 1</p>
<p>Week 6, Module 6: Imago Model - Theory</p>	<p>Hendricks, H. (2008). Getting the love you want: A guide for couples. New York, NY: Saint Martin's Griffin.</p>	<p>Online Discussion 5</p> <p>Insight Paper 5</p>

	<p>Safran, J.D. &amp; Gardner-Schuster, E. (2016). Psychoanalysis. Encyclopedia of Mental Health (2nd Ed.). New York, NY: Elsevier.</p> <p>Steelman, S.M. (2016). Object relations theory. The SAGE Encyclopedia of Marriage, Family, and Couples Counseling. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.</p>	
Week 7, Module 7: Imago Theory - Application	<p>Hendricks, H. (2008). Getting the love you want: A guide for couples. New York, NY: Saint Martin's Griffin.</p> <p>Movie 2: Malcolm and Marie (2020)</p>	Applied Paper 2
Week 8, Module 8: Emotionally- Focused Model - Theory	Johnson, S. Hold me tight: A	<p>Online Discussion 6</p> <p>Insight Paper 6</p>
Week 9, Module 9: Couples Psychology – Emotionally- Focused Model	<p>Johnson, S.</p> <p>Movie 3</p>	Applied Paper 3
Week 10, Module 10: Wrap-up		Final Paper Due in Week Eleven

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## Course Policies

For access to all SCPS and DePaul University academic policies, refer to the following links:

[SCPS Student Resources Website](#)

[DePaul Student Handbook](#)

The [D2L Course Website](#) for this course.

## Credit for Prior Learning

Students whose home college is SCPS that have not transferred more than 99 credit hours from community college or exam credit, and have not reached 132 credit hours toward graduation may qualify for prior learning credit. If you have prior knowledge you think may be equivalent to the learning outcomes of a SCPS course, you can contact the Office of Prior Learning Assessment at [scpspla@depaul.edu](mailto:scpspla@depaul.edu) or the [PLA website](#) for information on how to submit a proposal to use Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) credit for a nominal fee in lieu of regular tuition as an alternative to completing a course.

## Course Syllabus

The official syllabus for this course that includes course dates, instructor information and quarter specific details will be provided by the course instructor by the start of the course and available on the course D2L website.

## Course Registration

To find out when this course will be offered next, you can go to the [SCPS Registration website](#) for details on how to register for the course.

For information on how this course can apply to your program, contact your academic advisor.

### **School of Continuing and Professional Studies**

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