



# ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo  
Department of Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies  
SMF 307: Conflict, Crisis, and Dissolution in Close Relationships  
Winter 2020  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-3:50, SJ2 2002

## Instructor Information

Instructor: David Shakespeare

Office: HH 369 (M/W/F); SH 2113 (T/T)

Office Hours: 11:45-12:45 & 2:30-3:00 (M & W); 1:15-2:15 (T & T); 10:15-11:15 (F)

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## Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

## Course Description:

This course will cover the range of difficult situations in relationships, as indicated in the Course Calendar description: "conflict and conflict resolution, family violence, poverty, separation and divorce, illness, and death and bereavement." We will consider how these various challenges and losses affect our sense of self and ability to communicate. We will focus on reading academic material critically, but we will also examine a fictional imagining of loss, and spend time exploring our lives in relation to course material.

Classes will involve lectures and class discussion, small group activities, and work with partners to engage with perspectives from sociology, psychology, anthropology, and communication studies about conflict, crisis, and dissolution in relationships. The course will also involve a significant writing component where we will develop our research and writing skills at an advanced academic level. Writing instruction for topic ranging from the micro (e.g. elements of grammar and style) to the macro (e.g. paragraph composition and organization) will be provided throughout the term, in short amounts, about once every two weeks. These sessions are not scheduled and can be altered in subject matter to suit student needs.

## Course Goals and Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course, successful students should be able to

- identify signs of conflict arising within interpersonal relationships
- understand the dynamics of power and conflict styles operating in interpersonal conflicts
- research to uncover existing theories about a given topic and work towards identifying new areas of scholarship
- compose effective academic documents at an advanced level
- edit writing effectively, using a critical eye on details
- deliver a successful presentation about an academic argument to peers

**Required Reading:**

Greene, Graham. *The End of the Affair*. (available at the UW bookstore)

Articles available through e-reserves, the UW library system, and links on Learn.

Note also that the course will draw largely on the textbook *Interpersonal Conflict* by Joyce L. Hocker and William W. Wilmot (McGraw Hill); this text is discouragingly expensive to purchase, so there is a copy on reserve at the St. Jerome's library.

**Course Requirements and Assessments**

Assessment	Date	Weight
Participation	Ongoing	10%
Short Responses	16 January, 11 February	10%
Annotated Bibliography	25 February	5%
Essay Proposal	10 March	10%
Peer Editing	3 March, 26 March	10%
Team Presentation	various dates; see schedule	10%
Final Test: Team Presentations	2 April	10%
Research Paper	4 April	35%

**\* Brief descriptions of the assignment follow; full details will be supplied as we approach the deadlines.**

**Participation (10%)**

In class, it will be beneficial for you to contribute to class discussions to ensure that your ideas are heard by an appropriate audience; your peers and I have much to learn, and this learning can be done only if you contribute your ideas and questions consistently. The best way to make a significant contribution to the class proceedings is to come to class with the material read and some ideas to offer or questions to ask. On some days, we will engage in small group discussions which will provide reticent students the opportunity to speak to a smaller audience (though not enough to achieve a full score for participation).

Here is how I grade participation marks: at the end of every class, I mark down whether you said one or more significant things in class (i.e. beyond answering "yes" or "no"). If you said one thing, I award you one point; if you say more than one thing, I award you two points. At the end of the term, I add up all of the points for the class. Assuming that there is robust class participation throughout the semester, the person with the most points will be awarded 10 out of 10 for participation. Students with fewer points than that get marked down incrementally by half marks. Note that this is not a competition: I am perfectly willing to award all students in the course 10 out of 10, provided that everyone participates equally. Also note that attendance is not counted, so you will not be able to participate in discussions if you are not here, and there may be some days in which we do group work where everyone present would receive some participation.

**Short Responses (10%)**

You will compose two short responses to class readings: the first is in response to a short magazine article and the second is in response to Greene's novel. Each response will be worth 5% and will be judged on writing ability, organization, and clarity. Each response will be approximately 2 double-spaced, typed pages, or 600 words each.

### **Peer Editing (10%)**

Part of the course's emphasis on writing development will have you participate in two peer editing workshops, one for the topic proposal, and the other for the final research paper. You will work with two other students to read and comment on each other's work and submit a completed evaluation form to the instructor for grading.

### **Annotated Bibliography (5%)**

In preparation for the final essay, you will be required to annotate three (3) sources that you will likely use for the term paper. An annotation is a paragraph that describes the contents of the source and explains how it will be useful for your argument. You must include at least one (2) scholarly, peer-reviewed journal article in your list of annotations. ~ 3 x 100 word paragraphs or 1 double-spaced, typed page

### **Essay Proposal (10%)**

The topic proposal asks you to plan out what you intend to explore and a sketch of your argument, for your final project for the course, the term essay. It should describe as explicitly as possible the (kinds of) sources you will consult, the position you will take, and the topics you will investigate. You will not be committed to following through on your proposal for your final essay, although it will benefit you to pursue the topic for the final paper. The purpose of this assignment is to get you working on your final paper early enough in the term that it will be a substantial production. ~ 900 words or 3 double-spaced, typed pages

### **Team Presentation (10%)**

In teams of three, you will select and present an academic argument on a topic that interests you, including such topic areas as conflicts in families or romantic relationships; the presence of violence in conflict; the role of societal pressures on interpersonal conflict; the effects on children of parental divorce; the relationship between mental wellness and interpersonal conflict; or the relationship between death, bereavement, and grief. This article will be selected and added to our class reading list—everyone will read it before your presentation so that we may respond to it effectively. This assignment will require you to understand, summarize, and extract the most salient points of an academic argument for class engagement. Presentations will be approximately 10 minutes in length, followed by a class discussion, led by the presenters. All team members will sign a group work form and share a grade for the presentation. Presenters will also submit a list of possible test questions based on their presentation. You may choose an article that relates to your term paper, but all of your team must agree to its use, and it must be relevant enough to engage the whole class.

### **Final Test: Student Presentations (10%)**

On the final day of the course, you will write a short test that will test your attention to your peers' presentations. Questions will be based on the articles selected by the teams and their presentations.

### **Research Paper (35%)**

You will select a topic for research and develop it throughout the term, beginning with the annotated bibliography and culminating in this term paper. In it, you will use academic and non-scholarly sources to present and defend an argument, augmenting it with anecdotal evidence from your own life, stories in the news, or of people you have known to demonstrate a good understanding of conflict, crisis, or dissolution in an interpersonal relationship. It will be roughly 8 pages in length.

### Assignment Submission and Collection

The essay can be submitted either as a hard copy in class or to the dropbox on Learn at 11:59pm on 4 April. If you submit your work up to 12 hours after the due date, it will receive a penalty of 1.5%; following that, a penalty of 3% per day will be deducted. See late work policy for details. Written work will be returned to you with feedback and grade two weeks after your submission date.

### Course Schedule

Note that while the assignment deadlines are firm, we might alter the schedule to ensure that we cover the material. We might also need to make changes because of weather conditions and/or university closures. Be prepared to be flexible, but you will be notified of changes in advance. I am also working on arranging for one or more guest speakers; if we have guest speakers come to our class, we will necessarily be altering the schedule, but I don't anticipate changes prior to February.

Date	Class	Readings/In-Class Work	Bring to Class/Papers Due
7 January	Introduction to Course		
9 January	Introduction to Conflict	Khazan, Olga. "Why Families Fight During the Holidays" (Hocker & Wilmot, chapter 1)	
14 January	Introduction to Conflict, Continued	Roloff, Michael E. "Links Between Conflict Management Research and Practice"	
16 January	Writing and Communication Centre Presentation Perspectives on Conflict	Goldberg, Rachel. "How Our Worldviews Shape Our Practice." (Hocker & Wilmot, chapter 2)	1 <sup>st</sup> Short Response
21 January	A Romance Gone Sour	<i>The End of the Affair</i> , Books 1-2	
23 January	Interests and Goals in Conflict	Bevan, Jennifer. "Serial Argument Goals and Conflict Strategies." (Hocker & Wilmot, chapter 3)	
28 January	Interpersonal Power and Conflict	Dunbar, Norah E. "A Review of Theoretical Approaches to Interpersonal Power." (Hockman & Wilmot, chapter 4)	

Date	Class	Readings/In-Class Work	Bring to Class/Papers Due
30 January	Interpersonal Power and Conflict, cont'd	Lerner, Harriet. <i>The Dance of Anger</i> , chapters 1-2.	
4 February	A Romance Gone Sour	<i>The End of the Affair</i> , Books 3-4	
6 February	Library Presentation		
11 February	Writing Instruction: Annotated Bibliographies and Proposals		2 <sup>nd</sup> Short Response Due
13 February	Conflict Styles	Guerrero, Laura K. and Michael A. Gross. "Argumentativeness, Avoidance, Verbal Aggressiveness, and Verbal Benevolence..." (Hocker & Wilmot, chapter 5)	
<b>18, 20 February Reading Week: No Class</b>			
25 February	Conflict Styles, cont'd	Wallace, Harvey. "Characteristics of Family Violence" in <i>Family Violence</i> (on e-reserve)	
27 February	Emotions in Conflict	Lerner, Harriet. <i>The Dance of Anger</i> , chapters 3 & 5. (Hocker & Wilmot, chapter 6)	
3 March	Peer Editing Session: Topic Proposal		2 copies of your essay proposal
5 March	Analyzing Conflict	Coleman, Peter T. "Intractable Conflict" in <i>The Handbook of Conflict Resolution</i> (e-book available through the library) (Hocker & Wilmot, chapter 7)	
10 March	Class Activity: Interviewing	Stewart, Charles J. and William B. Cash. <i>Interviewing</i> , chapter 3. (at Dana Porter Library)	
12 March	Conflict in Families	Stone, Elizabeth. "Stories Make a Family."; Tannen,	

Date	Class	Readings/In-Class Work	Bring to Class/Papers Due
		Deborah. "Oh Mom. Oh Honey."; Noller, Patricia A. "Conflict in Families."	
17 March	Team Presentations	readings t.b.d.	
19 March	Team Presentations	readings t.b.d.	
24 March	Team Presentations	readings t.b.d.	
26 March	Peer Editing: Final Essays		2 copies of your final essay
31 March	Team Presentations	readings t.b.d.	
2 April	Final Test: Team Presentations		

### **Late Work**

All assignments are to be submitted on the due date. For the first twelve hours after the deadline, there will be a penalty of 1.5%, and after that, the penalty will be 3% per day, including weekends. No assignments will be accepted seven (7) days after the deadline. To avoid penalties, prepare your work well in advance. If you have legitimate (often medical) documentation to provide the instructor, you will be exempt from the late penalty, and a new deadline will be set for you if it is a medical emergency. Otherwise, you must notify the instructor in advance; no extensions will be granted after the deadline. If you are granted an extension for legitimate reasons, you and the instructor will decide on a new deadline.

### **Electronic Device Policy**

Your attention and involvement in class discussions and lectures is crucial to your success in the course. Should you require a device (e.g. a laptop) to take notes during lectures, you may do so; however, if you are distracting students around you, the instructor will ask you to use an alternative note-taking method. Students should keep all other electronic devices in bags or pockets for the duration of the class. Students found using these will be asked to put them away or to leave the class if they are caught using them.

### **Attendance Policy**

Your participation in class discussions will be essential to the development of your own ideas and those of your peers. This can only be accomplished if you are on time to and present at all classes and contribute to the class in a significant way.

### **Rules for Group Work with Assignments**

When working on a group assignment, a Group Assignment Checklist must be completed and submitted with the assignment:

[https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/sites/ca.arts/files/uploads/files/group\\_assignment\\_disclosure.pdf](https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/sites/ca.arts/files/uploads/files/group_assignment_disclosure.pdf)

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION [REQUIRED LANGUAGE APPROVED BY SJU SENATE COUNCIL]**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. [Read the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances, www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload\\_file/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Petitions-and-Grievances\\_20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf.](#) When in doubt, please be certain to contact the St. Jerome's Advising Specialist, Student Affairs Office, who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline, www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Discipline\\_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf.](#) For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to University of Waterloo Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties, check the Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals, www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Appeals\\_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf.](#)

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall (Room 1401) at the University of Waterloo, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term, [www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/).