

Social Psychology & Relationships

Module Guide



This module guide is an overview of the basic details, learning objectives, structure, schedule, resources, and assessment of SSA155.

BASIC DETAILS

Module	SSA155 “Social Psychology & Relationships”
Location	B114
Time/Day	15:00-18:00, Thursdays
Instructor	Dr Jessica Sarah Robles (j.j.robles@lboro.ac.uk)
Demonstrator	Jack Joyce (j.joyce@lboro.ac.uk)
Website	https://learn.lboro.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=11744
Office Hours	Wednesdays & Thursdays 9:00-10:00 in Brockington 426

CONTENT

The module content covers a range of topics including romantic, friendship, family, institutional, online and community relationships, from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives. It considers the cultural contexts in which relationships develop, relationships across the lifespan, and controversial issues that have emerged over the years during social psychology's engagement with relationships as a topic for study.

Please consult the rest of the guide for more details:

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES
(and how we accomplish them)

<p>The aim of the module is for students to develop knowledge and understanding of a range of topics in the social psychological study of relationships.</p>		
<p><i>Knowledge & Understanding Learning Outcomes</i></p>	<p>demonstrate knowledge of and reflect critically upon a range of topics, concepts and theories in the social psychological study of relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Required readings ★ In-class activities ★ Pick a topic in which to specialise
	<p>develop knowledge of the research methods used in studying relationships and an ability to reflect critically on them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Apply reading knowledge
<p><i>Intellectual & Subject-Practical Skills Outcomes</i></p>	<p>engage in debates about controversial issues in the social psychological study of relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Discuss readings and applications
	<p>draw on a variety of media (including books and journal articles) to locate relevant material</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Find readings and relevant materials to pursue topics
	<p>assimilate and critically evaluate information and argument from books and journals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Write an annotated bibliography of readings
<p><i>Transferable Skills Outcomes</i></p>	<p>manage time and resources effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Meet deadlines without panic
	<p>engage effectively in small-group work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Work on group activities
	<p>communicate and argue effectively in talk and writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Class discussions and writing
	<p>acquire skills in the use of library resources, reading and preparation, self-directed learning, debate and the presentation of an argument</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Search for sources, read and take notes, solicit help when needed, discuss ideas in class

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STRUCTURE

36 Hours of "Lecture" (3 hours weekly: Thursdays 3-6pm)

Lecture is in scare quotes because your instructor will NOT just talk at you for three hours straight. There will be some lecture in the beginning, broken up by activities that illustrate different points being made, followed by "work" or practical sessions in which you apply the content to find original examples or research articles (guided study time).

64 Hours of Guided Independent Study

Nearly double the time you spend in class should be spent working independently. Some of this work may be initiated (or even finished) during class time, but most weeks you will probably have to do some work from home. Though you will have plenty of guidance during class and in office hours or by email if you need it, a crucial part of the module (and your university progress in general) is learning to direct your own learning: setting goals, planning your work, looking things up, motivating yourself, and so forth.

100% Coursework (Annotated Bibliography)

There are activities and homework in this module that feed into the coursework, on which you are formally assessed for your mark. This coursework is an annotated bibliography in which you will seek out, summarize, and reflect on scholarly sources in relation to a specific topic relevant to social psychology and relationships. More about this assessment is described later in this guide, and on the module website.

Feedback

There are two kinds of feedback provided:

1. *formative* or informal feedback, that helps you learn as you go along. This is provided during class time, generically to the class or individually during assistance with work. You may also request feedback via a face-to-face meeting or email for this purpose.
2. *summative* or formal feedback, that accompanies a mark. You will receive this feedback on your coursework in the form of a rubric, specific comments, and a summary assessment.

Marking

Marking is done by three experienced markers, including and also moderated by the responsible examiner--the instructor on this module. The marking is undertaken with use of a rubric to ensure consistency and clarity. You have the assessment and the rubric ahead of time so you know what to expect. The module will cover various aspects of the assessment throughout the term, but will focus on it in the most detail from week 7. First year marks do not contribute to your final degree classification, but you must earn at least 40% to move forward.

SCHEDULE

We meet over 11 weeks in Semester 1, one week of which (week 6) is a “catch-up” week during which we will not formally hold a session. The module is divided into two parts around this catch-up week: in the first part cover we compare, apply and discuss various perspectives on human relationships (weeks 1-5); in the second part we focus on particular topics that are relevant to different kinds of relationships (weeks 7-10). The last week is a review and workshop to finish your coursework. Coursework is submitted for a mark in week 12, on 17 December.

Week 1 (4 October) What is a human relationship?

<p>We will cover definitions and types of relationships, go over essential module information, and work on strategies for completing tasks within the module.</p>	<p>Each week involves a mix of lecture & activities for 1-1.5 hours, followed by time for work, meetings, feedback, and assisted study.</p>
<p>Homework: using either the examples you obtained during class time, or new examples if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How do each of the readings explain at least one of your examples?</i></p>	<p>Each week will have the same basic prompt with follow-up details on the module website. Post a response of 250-500 words before the next time we meet. More guidance is available online.</p>
<p>Readings: Finkel et al., 2016 Goffman, 1959 Goffman, 1964 =33 pages of reading</p>	<p>Each week we read 1-3 academic publications (such as a book chapter or research article) (less than 50 pages). The list here refers to the author’s surname and the publication date, which are how the files are labeled online for you to find them.</p>

Week 2 (11 October) How can you tell you’re in a relationship?

<p>We will discuss relational behaviours and how relationships are made public or identifiable, and work on strategies for completing tasks within the module.</p>	<p>Each week builds on the previous, so if you miss a week, be sure to consult the lecture materials online and follow-up during the “work” period at the end of the subsequent class.</p>
<p>Homework: using either the examples you obtained during class time, or new examples if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How do each of the readings explain at least one of your examples?</i></p>	<p>Each week will incorporate slightly more challenging expectations into your post, and will ask you to show increasing mastery of writing style and format. Posts are not formally marked.</p>
<p>Readings: Afifi & Johnson, 1999 =34 pages of reading</p>	<p>Readings do not necessarily get more challenging across the term, but your ability to engage with them in different ways should improve!</p>

Week 3 (18 October) How do you start a new relationship?

We will consider how different relationships are initiated in different contexts for different reasons, and work on strategies for completing tasks within the module.	By now you should have a good idea of the flow of the module and what to expect. Be sure to ask questions if anything is unclear!
Homework: using either the examples you obtained during class time, or new examples if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How do each of the readings explain at least one of your examples?</i>	Though posts are not marked, these do comprise content for the following class, where by now you should expect to share what you posted with your tablemates and on occasion with the class as a whole.
Readings: Bottema-Beutel et al., 2015 LeFebvre, 2018 =30 pages	Remember that your coursework will be an annotated bibliography of readings like the ones we do in class.

Week 4 (25 October) How do you maintain a relationship?

We will examine how different sorts of relationships are maintained or not, and work on strategies for completing tasks within the module.	Note that in addition to building on content, we are continuing to work on how to read and write about research.
Homework: using either the examples you obtained during class time, or new examples if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How do each of the readings explain at least one of your examples?</i>	Posts are to practice the kind of reading comprehension and writing you will need to show in your assessed coursework. You may be able to use revised versions of your posts in your coursework submission.
Readings: Riordan, 2017 Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003 =32 pages	Academic readings can be challenging, so don't feel badly if you struggle! Check the online resources for reading tips.

Week 5 (1 November) What happens after the relationship is over?

We will reflect on various examples of relational decline and dissolution, and work on strategies for completing tasks within the module.	This is the last week that <i>focuses</i> on foundational knowledge and perspectives on relationships in general.
Homework: using either the examples you obtained during class time, or new examples if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How do each of the readings explain at least one of your examples?</i>	If you have not done so already, take some time to get informal feedback from students or the instructor during class on what you can do to improve how you understand and write about research.
Readings: Hayes & Leudar, 2016 Wilson et al., 2009 =40 pages	Next week is catch-up week! If you missed or misunderstood any readings, now is your chance to return to them.

Week 6 (8 November) Catch-up week

During this week we will not formally hold a session (and your instructor is out of the country from Thursday-Sunday). You also do not have any readings or posts assigned. However, extra drop-in office hours are being held Monday-Wednesday in case you have any questions about coursework about which you'd like to meet individually or in pairs/small groups. There is also a survey online for you to provide feedback about the module so far, so that any changes might be made that would improve your learning experience before the end of the module.

Week 7 (15 November) Spotlight on SEX

This week's focus is on sexual behaviour as an aspect of various kinds of relationships, and we will go over coursework details.	This week starts the portion of the module that focuses on specific relational phenomena. From now on the coursework guidance will also become more specific.
Homework: using either sources you discovered during class time, or new ones if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How does at least one scholarly source you found explain something about this week's spotlight in relation to at least one of the required readings provided?</i>	Posts from this week will flip the previous weeks' strategy: instead of linking readings to examples you provide, you will be finding readings that develop the topics provided in class, and linking those readings to the ones provided.
Readings: Kitzinger & Frith, 1999 Yule et al., 2017 =24 pages	Note that this week starts you finding your own readings too, and linking those readings together with the readings provided. This is the key task you must do in your coursework!

Week 8 (22 November) Spotlight on CONFLICT

This week's focus is on how conflict develops and affects relationships of all sorts, and we will go over coursework details.	If you haven't already, be sure to be thinking about topics YOU want to explore in your coursework!
Homework: using either sources you discovered during class time, or new ones if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How does at least one scholarly source you found explain something about this week's spotlight in relation to at least one of the required readings provided?</i>	Remember, posts now need to incorporate the following: a link to the spotlight topic; a discussion of one of the assigned readings for the week; and a discussion of a reading you have found. The length of the post doesn't change: we are working on being concise and writing about what is relevant.
Readings: Sheppard & Aquino, 2017 Zhang & Lin, 2009 =38 pages	Keep in mind that though your coursework will need to be original and based on new sources.

Week 9 (29 November) Spotlight on TECHNOLOGY

This week's focus is on how technology is involved in or represents relationships, and we will go over coursework details.	Note that your coursework topic will have to be very specific, in order to address the requirements with limited space.
Homework: using either sources you discovered during class time, or new ones if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How does at least one scholarly source you found explain something about this week's spotlight in relation to at least one of the required readings provided?</i>	When writing your posts, consider how to incorporate your improved style into your coursework. You may be able to use some of your posts as part of your submitted coursework. See the coursework guide for details.
Readings: Bazarova et al., 2012 Herbert, 2018 =25 pages	Note that sometimes readings include a lot of citations, including by the same authors, and these are all valid to use to find your own sources!

Week 10 (6 December) Spotlight on EVERYDAY LIFE

This week's focus is on everyday life in relationships, from hobbies and entertainment to boredom, and we will go over coursework details.	You should have your coursework topic pretty well sorted by this week, and if you haven't already, start looking for sources.
Homework: using either sources you discovered during class time, or new ones if you like, post a response to the online prompt: <i>How does at least one scholarly source you found explain something about this week's spotlight in relation to at least one of the required readings provided?</i>	This is the last post of the module, and a good time to check whether you have everything right: style, format, clarity, accuracy, relevance, and so forth! All these are important criteria for the coursework. Check out the rubric if you haven't yet done so!
Readings: Goffman, 1978 Goodwin & Cekaite, 2013 =44 pages	These are the last assigned readings--now you need to finish finding your own.

Week 11 (13 December) Review and writing workshop

This week's class is divided into three parts. First we will have a short "lecture" portion (30-45 minutes) reviewing module content and skills, and going over aspects of and questions about the coursework assessment (an annotated bibliography). Second we will have a workshop in which you do peer review and receive informal feedback on what you have written so far. Third and final, you have free time to work on your coursework and ask questions. You do not have any more posts assigned and the only reading is what you do individually to collect sources for your coursework.

COURSEWORK IS DUE 17 DECEMBER AT NOON

RESOURCES

The primary resource for this module is the website--through there you can access a number of materials essential for completing this module. Below is an outline of these materials.

- General Information
 - Including module times, instructor, location, the module guide, calendar
 - Resources for content (such as a glossary of terms) and module skills (such as advice on finding and reading sources)
 - Some links to resources outside the module that may nonetheless become relevant to you (such as the extensions and mitigating circumstances policies)
- Lecture Materials
 - Week-by-week materials for lecture including lecture slides, recorded lectures, and additional resources
- Practical Materials
 - Week-by-week materials for your own work, including in-class activities, homework, and readings
- Assessment
 - Complete guide to coursework, with examples
 - Rubric and discussion of marking

Readings

All readings are provided on the website in PDF form as well as through the library.

Other Resources

Subject Information for Communication & Media/ Social Psychology	https://learn.lboro.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=22
University Library	http://www.lboro.ac.uk/library/
Counselling and Disability Service	http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/cds/
Student Handbook	http://www.lboro.ac.uk/students/handbook/

ASSESSMENT

There is one formal piece of marked coursework in this module, due 17 December 12:00 (noon). This coursework builds on the activities and writing you have done throughout the semester.

Annotated Bibliography

An *annotated bibliography* is a series of summaries of academic sources that relate to a single topic. Yours will need to consist of at least 5 sources with 150–200 words description each. Higher marks may be awarded if you have more sources, but only if they are relevant, show good comprehension of the research, and do not exceed 1500 words total. See the website for more details.

Marking Process

Marking is done through the Learn “Turnitin/Grademart” portal on our website, where you submit your coursework. This is also where you will receive your feedback once marking is finished. Coursework is assessed by the instructor and two others, and all work is moderated by the instructor to ensure consistency. Marking is done according to School marking criteria (<https://learn.lboro.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=477517>).

Rubric

School marking criteria are adapted into a rubric for purposes of using the online marking platform and to apply to this specific piece of coursework. This modified version of the criteria are as follows:

1. Relevance and quality of sources
2. Summaries are comprehensive and demonstrate accuracy of comprehension
3. Sources are critically evaluated with additional support
4. Style and format, including APA citations and references

Each criterion is given a score from 1–4 corresponding to marking levels (1=first, 2=second, 3=third, 4=fail). The overall mark is determined by what scores you get for each criterion. See the website for more details about the rubric.

Extensions

Extensions up to 48 hours are permitted and are processed by the administration office (not your module instructor). Extension requests must be submitted to the office in advance, with documentation. If there is a problem for which 48 hours is not sufficient, you may make a claim for what’s called “mitigating circumstances.” This also requires filling out a form and providing evidence, and this decision will be made by a university board meeting. More information about this process is provided on our module website and on the Subject Information site on Learn.