

**Psychology 351  
Peer Relationships  
Spring 2016**

MWF 10:00-10:50

LBC 317

Instructor: Rachael Reavis

Email: [reavira@earlham.edu](mailto:reavira@earlham.edu)

Office: LBC 305

Office Hours: drop-in & by appointment

**Textbook:**

Rubin, K., Bukowski, W., & Laursen, B. (Eds.) (2009). *Handbook of peer interactions, relationships, and groups*. New York: The Guilford Press.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the APA manual.

Course documents and additional readings (listed on schedule) can be found on Moodle.

**Course Description & Objectives:**

*Without friends no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods.*  
Aristotle

*Forgive your enemies, but never forget their names.*  
John F. Kennedy

**Class Format:**

Learning is fundamentally an active, collaborative process, and you will learn more by articulating your thoughts, questions, reactions, agreements, and objections to the readings, and by working through discussions with fellow classmates than you will by listening to me talk uninterrupted. Therefore, this class will be highly interactive. I will lecture to help you to understand topics in our textbook and to provide additional information. However, much of class time will be spent discussing the readings and the questions that they raise for you and your classmates. Thus, you will need to be fully prepared to engage in discussion every class day. You will also need to contribute to a class atmosphere in which all class members thoughtfully listen and respond to each other. Class discussion may sometimes touch on topics that are personally sensitive for some individuals; we will all need to be careful to maintain sensitivity to each other and to be considerate of each other's privacy both in and out of class. Finally, you will be making a few formal presentations throughout the semester so that you have an opportunity to share your thoughts about our research articles and get feedback on your presentation skills.

The main goal for this course is to prepare you to successfully complete your independent senior research project.

**Relevant Earlham Learning Goals:**

The following learning goals are especially relevant for this course:

1. **Communicate**
2. **Investigate**
3. **Integrate**
4. **Create**

**Psychology Department Goals:**

The following psychology department goals (based on the APA guidelines) are especially relevant for this course:

1. Knowledge Base of Psychology
2. Scientific Inquiry & Critical Thinking
3. Communication

**Specific Course Goals:**

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- 1) Discuss the importance of peer relationships and the changes in peer relationships and processes across childhood.
- 2) Discuss individual differences in peer relationships. Why do some children struggle, whereas others excel in their peer relationships?
- 3) Discuss important ways in which peer relationships influence and are influenced by children's emotional, cognitive, and social development.
- 4) Discuss specific peer relationship issues, including (but not limited to) bullying and friendship.
- 5) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various research strategies and be able to apply them to specific research questions.
- 6) **Embark on your senior research project!**

**Credit Hour Explanation**

This is a 3-credit course. The expectation of credit hours is defined federally (<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div8&node=34:3.1.3.1.1.1.23.2>) and states that there are a minimum of two hours of outside work per hour of class. Thus, the expectation is that you are in class, researching, or working on other assignments 9 hours per week for this course. Some weeks, particularly as you are working on your research projects, you may devote more time to this class. This class should help you learn how to manage your time around research and data collection so that you will be fully prepared to take on your senior project.

**Evaluation:**

- 1) **Discussion Leading.** Public speaking and the ability to effectively lead a coherent discussion are skills that will be valuable regardless of your career path. Student-led discussions also contribute to an active learning environment. Each week, two students will be responsible for leading discussion about the assigned readings, and each student will be responsible for leading discussion **three times** during the semester. Typically, I will lecture on Mondays and lead the class through a careful review of the methods and results sections on Wednesday. Discussion leaders will be responsible for leading discussion on Friday. **Discussion leaders should meet prior to class to determine how to organize the discussion.** To facilitate discussion, all students will be responsible for posting questions to Moodle by midnight on Wednesday about the reading for the week (see below). All students should read through these questions, and the **discussion leaders should draw from these questions to help structure discussion.** Discussion leaders should **use a variety of methods**, such as staging debates, using small group discussion, and designing studies to address unanswered questions raised by the article. Each discussion leader is also required to **locate an additional empirical article** published in a peer-reviewed journal within the last eight years (**no publication dates before 2008**) that is directly relevant to the topic. Discussion leaders should communicate, because they are required to choose unique articles. Discussion leaders should **type up a 1-page summary of the supplementary article.** The summary should be broken into sections or use an outline format so that the class can quickly understand and read it. Discussion leaders will provide a **2-4 sentence reminder** of the topic and main result of the assigned article. They will have **no more than 3 minutes each** to provide a *very brief* synopsis of the supplementary articles. Discussion leaders will **be expected to incorporate the additional knowledge** gained from supplementary articles into to discussion. Leaders may want to (but are not required to) wait until discussion questions have been posted to see if questions raised might be answered in another article. If you choose to wait, you will only have one day to thoroughly read and summarize your supplementary article, so keep that in mind. **Discussion leading will account for 10% of your grade.**
  
- 2) **Class Involvement.** Class involvement, including participation, attendance, assignment completion, and posting of discussion questions **will account for 10% of your grade.**
  - **Participation/Assignments.** Every student is expected to attend each meeting of all classes for which he or she is registered. Students are responsible for getting class notes and handouts if they are late or absent from class. Any material from assigned readings, class lectures, presentations, and discussions may be included on the exam for this course. Occasionally, additional assignments may be assigned.

Excellent - 5	Positive - 4	Neutral – 2 or 3	Negative - 1	Absent - 0
Makes insightful, thoughtful comments, showing the ability to integrate and critically analyze	Regularly speaks, brings up questions of own, respectfully responds to others, does not dominate	Does not speak regularly, avoids speaking unless called upon, brings up unrelated points or simply reiterates others' points	Derails or inappropriately dominates, belittles others, does not acknowledge other perspectives, is texting or off-task	

I expect most days, most students will earn 3s or 4s for participation.

- **Discussion Questions.** To encourage participation and help discussion leaders, each person will need to post **two discussion questions about the empirical article** on the Moodle forum by 11:59 pm on Wednesday. These questions should show that you have read the article (and chapter) and thought critically about them, and **should encourage discussion** from your classmates. Yes/no questions or questions that are answered in the chapter or article are not acceptable. Instead, these should focus on applications and extensions of the results, relations to previous readings, alternative methodologies, etc. One of your questions may be a thoughtful response to or elaboration of another student's question. Students do not need to post discussion questions on days that they are leading discussion.

Excellent - 5	Good - 4	Neutral – 2 or 3	Poor - 1	Missing - 0
Insightful, thoughtful question that requires deep thinking, and integration of ideas across readings and information, and/or thoughtful application to real-life situations.	Thoughtful question that has the possibility of provoking interesting discussion.	Question may be weak or show some misunderstanding of the article. Weak questions require more than yes/no answers, but do not provoke much thought.	Requires a yes/no answer or can be answered from the chapter or article.	No question submitted

I expect most students will earn 2-4 points on most of their discussion questions.

- **Reading Questions.** For each article, you will answer a question posed on Moodle. Usually, this will be a question about the methods and/or results. The point of these questions is to help you better be able to read and understand articles on your own. You do not need to complete these on days when you are presenting or when you have written a critique.

Correct - 5	Mostly Right - 4	OK – 3	Needs Work - 2	Wrong - 1	Missing - 0
All questions are answered correctly and completely	Most questions are answered correctly. Answers show a solid understanding of method and/or result, but some information incorrect or incomplete	Some questions are answered correctly. Shows some understanding of method or results, but some aspects not understood well	Some of the answers may be partially correct, but there is not evidence that the method or results were understood.	Most or all of the questions are answered incorrectly.	No answer submitted

I expect that scores may start out lower at the beginning of the semester and then will improve as you increase your ability to read complex empirical articles.

- 3) **Research reports/critiques.** Two times during the semester when you are not leading discussion, you will write a **critical analysis** of the assigned article. Before class, you will study your article and write an analysis of the article (4-6 pages, double-spaced) including its purpose, methods and analyses used, results, and conclusions. ***Most importantly*** it should include your assessment of the paper, including its contributions and limitations, and alternative interpretations. I recommend that you consult the grading rubric before beginning your assignment. Write concisely and use your space wisely. It is highly unlikely that you will be able to write an adequate paper in fewer than 4 pages. Your critique paper will be due on Moodle **by class time** on the day that it will be discussed (typically on Fridays). You may want to bring a copy of your paper (on your computer if you wish) to refer to during discussion. **Your critique papers will account for 20% (10% each) of your grade.**

- 4) **Media/Pop Culture Paper.** You will write a short, five-page paper discussing peer relationships as portrayed in the media and popular culture. You will be required to watch at least one movie where peer relationships is a central theme (*Stand By Me*, *Mean Girls*, etc.) I'll give you a short list of possibilities. (You can watch a movie not on the list – just run it by me first.) You will also find a news media article (cnn.com, nytimes.com, etc.) that addresses a theme found in your movie. For example, if you choose *Mean Girls*, you might find a news article about popularity or relational/social aggression. In your paper, you will compare and contrast the fictional portrayal, news media portrayal, and research on the subject. You should have at least three research references. One may be the chapter reading relevant to your topic, one may be the assigned empirical reading (or a supplemental reading you did), and the other should be a new article that you look up and read. Your paper should be in APA style, and include a title page, 50-word abstract, body of your paper (formatted like an introduction) and references. **Your paper will account for 15% of your grade.**
- 5) **Research Project.** You will conduct a research project and prepare a poster presentation based on your research project. You will be asked to work in groups of 2-3 students to develop a hypothesis and design an experiment to conduct with college students. Most of the research we read will be correlational, but many of the questions can also be addressed experimentally. For this project, you will develop a study that has at least one independent variable (IV) with two levels. The IV you manipulate can be within subjects or between subjects. You may have no more than one between-subjects variable (this includes gender) with no more than three levels (preferably two). **Kate Blinn** ([blinnka@earlham.edu](mailto:blinnka@earlham.edu), 765-983-1408) **is our library liaison.** She is an excellent resource and is there to assist you throughout your project. Your grade for the research project will come from several components. **In total, your research project will account for 25% of your grade.**
- Outline of literature review with clear, well-reasoned/supported hypotheses. (5% of grade)
  - IRB application/Design of study (5% of grade)
  - Poster presentation
    - i. Quality, readability, accuracy of poster (5% of grade)
    - ii. Quality of presentation (5% of grade)
  - Results section (*each* group member will hand in their own, *independently written* results section; you should *NOT* read anyone else's; APA style; 5% of grade)
  - Turning assignments in on time and timely collection of data. (Failure to do so will negatively affect grade)
  - Self/group-assessment – each student will write an assessment discussing who was responsible for what work, the quality of the work from each individual, and how well each person worked as a team. Each student will then state whether every team member deserves the same grade, or whether some members (including self) deserve a higher or lower grade than others. The self-assessments will be taken into consideration when assigning grades.
- 6) **Final Exam.** You will have a take-home final, which will have short answer and essay questions. **Your final exam will account for 20% of your final grade.**

**APA Style.** All papers should follow APA style, including a reference section. We will not be going over APA style in class, but you are responsible for knowing it. If you do not own an APA manual, then you are expected to use the one in the library. (You will need it for senior research as well.)

**Late Policy.** Discussion questions posted on Thursdays will be given half-credit. No credit will be received after that. If you do not turn in your reports or papers on time, you will lose a letter grade for the first 24 hours that it is late, and another letter grade for each part of 12 hours thereafter. Thus, the best grade that can be received on a paper turned in 2 hours late is a B, a C for a paper turned in 25 hours late, and a D for a paper turned in 37 hours late. You will have ample time to complete your written assignments. If you choose to wait until the last minute you run the risk that your computer dies, you catch the flu, or you have a death in your extended family. ***These will not be excuses for late assignments and you will be penalized, so do not procrastinate.*** Most assignments will be uploaded on Moodle, and the times and dates are listed on the syllabus. (Some are due by class time, others due by 11:59 pm.) ***Failure to attach files or attaching corrupted files is not an excuse for late work.*** I strongly recommend that you log out of Moodle, log back in, download, and open the file you attached to ensure that it opens properly. You are responsible for backing up your work.

### Grading:

Your final grade will be calculated according to the following formula.

10%	Discussion Leading
10%	Assignments, Participation, Discussion Questions, Reading Questions
20%	Research Reports
15%	Media Project
25%	Research Project
20%	Final Exam

A: 94%+; A-: 90%-93.9%; B+: 88%-89.9%; B: 84%-87.9%; B-: 80%-83.9%; C+: 78%-79.9%; C: 74%-77.9%; C-: 70%-73.9%; D: 65%-69.9%; F: < 65%

**Please note that I do not round grades.**

To calculate your grade, calculate the percentage of points you earned for each grade category. For example, participation, questions, etc. (everything under number (2) in evaluation) are out of 5 points for each day, question, etc. Add up all the points you earned for participation, questions, etc. and divide by the total possible. Perhaps you earned 55 of 70 possible points. Divide. That would give you 78.5%. Do that for each category. Then multiply each of those numbers by the proportion its worth of your total score. For example, participation, questions etc. is worth 10% of your grade. So you would multiply 78.5 times 0.10, which is 7.85. Do that for all grading categories. Then add those numbers up and that's your grade!

Here's an example:

	Points Earned	Points Possible	Percent Earned	Prop. Worth	Calculated
Discussion Lead.	240	300	80	.10	8
Participation, etc.	255	300 (will differ)	85	.10	8.5
Research Reports	150	200	75	.20	15
Media Project	85	100	85	.15	12.75
Research Project	80	100	80	.25	20
Final Exam	80	100	80	.20	16
				<b>Total:</b>	<b>80.25, B-</b>

**Office hour etiquette:** I am happy to meet with you outside of class. I do not have set office hours, but will be in my office most times I am not in class. You are welcome to drop in. Please be understanding if I am in the office, but working on something else. We can pick a time for you to come back, if that is the case. If we cannot find a time that works soon enough, we can communicate over email, use the IM function in Zimbra, or talk via Skype. If we have an appointment, please be courteous and arrive on time for your meeting. If you arrive late or fail to come (without informing me in advance), it takes away from time I could be spending with other students. If you cannot make your scheduled appointments, then we may have to limit our meetings to class time and via email.

**Email Etiquette:**

You are encouraged to contact me via e-mail with any questions that you may have, but I ask that you make sure you have looked for the answer yourself first (on Moodle; in course documents; etc.) and that you correspond professionally.

**Technology guidelines<sup>1</sup>:** You need to protect yourself against technology problems. You need to develop work habits that take potential technological problems into account. These habits will serve you in your career. Technological problems are a fact of life, and are not considered unforeseen issues. (Your dorm falling into a sinkhole would qualify as “unforeseen”). Start early and save often. Always keep a backup of your work. Carbonite and Backblaze are two services that will automatically back your work up into a cloud. Or you can invest in an external hard drive. Or you can email yourself your work.

Computer viruses, lost flash drives, corrupted files, incompatible formats, WiFi connectivity problems – none of these unfortunate events should be considered an emergency. Take the proper steps to ensure that your work will not be lost forever. Learn the locations and operating hours of all the computer labs on campus. Do not procrastinate. Know the resources on campus for technical problems with connectivity or Moodle. The Help Desk will need time to assist you. Again, don't procrastinate.

**Academic Honesty:**

All students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity in this course. The honor code is both a privilege and a responsibility, and you are expected to take it seriously. Suspected infractions, such as plagiarism or fabrication of reports will be treated seriously and will be reported. **Professional misconduct as a researcher will result in an F for the course.** Furthermore, if you are aware of a violation of academic integrity, it is your responsibility to take action.

An excellent place to find help in knowing when and how to cite others' work appropriately can be found on the Libraries page: [http://library.earlham.edu/friendly.php?s=academic\\_integrity](http://library.earlham.edu/friendly.php?s=academic_integrity). The site also includes Earlham's full statement on academic integrity and procedures for addressing academic violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

**Students with Disabilities:**

Please speak with me as soon as possible and let me know what accommodations Academic Support Services has suggested for you. Accommodation arrangements must be made in the first 2 weeks of the semester. Please see <http://www.earlham.edu/policies/learning-disabilities.html> for details

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<sup>1</sup> Drawn from material by George H. Williams

### Schedule of Topics & Assignments

Please note that this schedule is tentative. Readings are due in class on the day they are listed.

Week	Day	Topic & Reading
1	1/13	<b>Topic:</b> Syllabus, Introduction, Topic Ideas
	1/15	<b>Topic:</b> Background & Developmental Trends <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 1, Ch. 3 <i>Library Day</i> <b>Submit one question from each chapter on Moodle.</b> Questions should demonstrate thoughtful reading and should not be simple questions with yes/no answers.
2	1/18	<b>Topic:</b> Importance of Peer Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 30
	1/20	<b>Topic:</b> Importance of Peer Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Gustafsson, Janlert, Theorell, Westerlund, & Hammarström, 2012 <b>Groups assigned in class</b>
	1/22	<b>Topic:</b> Importance of Peer Relationships <b>IRB certification should be completed by today.</b> (Everyone should email me stating that they have completed it – if you have completed it previously, just email to let me know.)
3	1/25	<b>Topic:</b> Assessing Peer Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 5; Pepler & Craig, 1995
	1/27	<b>Topic:</b> Assessing Peer Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Mares, Braun, & Hernandez, 2012
	1/29	<b>Topic:</b> Assessing Peer Relationships <b>Consult with your group this weekend (via email is fine) about topic for research.</b>
4	2/1	<b>Topic:</b> Defining Social Competence <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 9 <b>“Final” topics due in class.</b> <b>In class: Find articles, present to group/class</b>
	2/3	<b>Topic:</b> Defining Social Competence <b>Reading:</b> Suway, Degnan, Sussman, & Fox, 2012 <b>Summary of one empirical article per group member for research project, due via Moodle by 11:59pm</b>
	2/5	<b>Topic:</b> Defining Social Competence
5	2/8	<b>Topic:</b> Influences on Peer Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 28
	2/10	<b>Topic:</b> Influences on Peer Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Rodriguez, Perez-Brena, Updegraff, & Umaña-Taylor, 2014
	2/12	<b>Topic:</b> Influences on Peer Relationships <b>Summary of two additional empirical articles per group member for research project due via Moodle by 11:59pm on 2/14 (Sunday)</b>
6	2/15	<b>Topic:</b> Sex Differences in Peer Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 21
	2/17	<b>Topic:</b> Cross-Cultural Issues in Peer Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 24
	2/19	<b>No Class, Early Semester Break</b>

7	2/22	<b>Topic:</b> Friendship <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 12, Ch. 31 <b>Basic method due in class.</b> <b>IV (and levels), DV</b> <b>In class: review Qualtrics &amp; Sona Systems</b>
	2/24	<b>Topic:</b> Friendships <b>Reading:</b> Paquette MacEvoy & Asher, 2012
	2/26	<b>Topic:</b> Friendships <b>Literature review outline &amp; hypotheses/basic method (IV, DV, measurement) due via Moodle by 11:59 pm.</b> (Coordinate with group members about who will submit.)
8	2/29	<b>Topic:</b> Acceptance, Rejection, & Popularity <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 13 <b>Discuss IRB application in class.</b>
	3/2	<b>Topic:</b> Acceptance, Rejection, & Popularity <b>Reading:</b> Slaughter, Imuta, Petersen, & Henry, 2015 <b>IRB applications due via Moodle by 11:59 pm.</b> (Coordinate with group members about who will submit.)
	3/4	<b>Topic:</b> Acceptance, Rejection, & Popularity
9	3/7	<b>Topic:</b> Bullying/Victimization <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 18
	3/9	<b>Topic:</b> Bullying/Victimization <b>Reading:</b> Sentse, Kretschmer, & Salmivalli, 2015
	3/11	<b>Topic:</b> Bullying/Victimization
10	<b>3/14, 3/16, 3/18</b>	<b>No Class, Spring Break</b>
11	3/21	<b>Topic:</b> Exclusion <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 14 <b>Data collection should begin this week (pending IRB approval)</b>
	3/23	<b>Topic:</b> Exclusion <b>Reading:</b> Masten, Telzer, Fuligni, Lieberman, & Eisenberger, 2012
	3/25	<b>Topic:</b> Exclusion
12	3/28	<b>Topic:</b> Romantic Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Handbook, Ch. 19
	3/30	<b>Topic:</b> Romantic Relationships <b>Reading:</b> Korchmaros, Ybarra, & Mitchell, 2015
	4/1	<b>Topic:</b> Romantic Relationships <b>Hand in title of movie(s) you will watch for media paper by class time.</b>

13	4/4	<b>Application Week – Movies</b> Watch your peer-related movie by class time and be prepared to discuss it.
	4/6	<b>Application Week – Other Popular Media</b> Read your related news article by class time and be prepared to discuss it.
	4/8	<b>Application Week – Implications for Research</b> Be prepared to discuss whether/how future research should address themes raised by fictional and media accounts of peer issues. <b>Media Paper due on Moodle by 11:59 pm on 4/10.</b>
14	4/11	<b>Download data in class. Prepare files. Begin data analysis.</b> <b>Prior to class, think about what analyses you will do, given your data (t-tests, etc.&amp; what groups are you comparing on what outcomes, etc.)</b> Meet in LBC 314 <b>**You are required to go to the ARC poster session (Monday night) and at least one ARC paper session (Tuesday night, Wednesday at 1)</b>
	4/13	<b>Continue analyses in class. Work on posters in class.</b> Meet in LBC 314
	4/15	<b>Work on posters in class, with focus on making graphs.</b> <b>Poster draft due via Moodle by 11:59 pm.</b> Meet in LBC 314
15	4/18	<b>Topic:</b> Intervention <b>Reading:</b> Handbook Ch. 32, Ch. 33 <b>Final Exam handed out in class.</b>
	4/20	<b>Topic:</b> Intervention <b>Reading:</b> Stauffer, Heath, Coyne, & Ferrin, 2012
	4/22	<b>Topic:</b> Intervention <b>Poster due to printer.</b>
16	4/25	<b>Student Poster Presentations</b>
	4/27	<b>Student Poster Presentations</b>
	4/29	<b>Student Poster Presentations</b> <b>Individual results section and self/group assessments due via Moodle on 5/1 by 11:59 pm.</b> <b>Upload posters to Moodle following presentation.</b>
	5/5	<b>Final Exam due via Moodle by 10:30am.</b> Students who complete course evaluations by 11:59pm on 4/29 can have until 5/6 (by 11:59pm) to turn in their final exams.