

PSYC 4085 Friendship

Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Marie-Cécile Bertau

Email: mbertau@westga.edu

Office: Melson Hall 216

Office Hours: Mondays, 11am – 1 pm

Class Meetings: TUE, 11:00-1:30pm, Nursing 110

Course Description

In psychology, parents - and in general the family at home with siblings and possibly other relatives - are typically considered for the individual's socio-cultural and psychological development. This course proposes to shift this familiar focus and to look at friendship as a crucial experience in socialization, development, and significant for well-being. The overarching question leading this interest is *how we relate to others and therewith become a person*. The class will thus address relationships in a developmental perspective (e.g. attachment theory; notion of the psychic envelope; transitional object) leading to ways in which individuals relate to non-relatives in a very close way: in childhood and adolescence and also in adulthood. Importantly, friendship is also understood as culturally and historically specific in the ways individuals practice their friendship; questions to pursue are e.g.: is friendship supposed to happen between same sex, different sex? Who is allowed to be friends with whom? At what point in life time? Are there differences in forms of friendship between individualistic and collectivistic cultures? What do friends do together, i.e. what practices do we observe, and how are these altered and shifted through modern technologies? There is no textbook, the class facilitations and discussions are based in academic readings provided.

Aim of Understanding

Humans are fundamentally related beings, that is, they need to be related to others who are, in turn, related to them in order not only to survive but to be a whole person. This means that human beings cannot develop just from within and by themselves, rather, they need others to do so: to become an individual and a person with a developed consciousness, language, thinking, and emotionality. Thus, it is

crucial for psychologist to investigate the surrounding of individuals in order to understand them – we cannot separate an individual from her and his others when wanting to understand her or him. Paraphrasing Vygotsky (1999), we can say that it is through others that we become ourselves.

The types of relations humans develop can be considered in terms of their family and kin positions to each other, in terms of their age and, most importantly, in the context of their particular socio-cultural setting that expects and enables specific relations, while prohibiting others. Thus, psychology has to broaden its usual individual scope to a socio-cultural and historical one, asking questions such as: Can a girl from this social class be friend with this other girl from a different (lower, higher) social class? How did that change historically? How are people from different ethnic backgrounds able to be related closely to each other? How is friendship different in other cultures than in the western societies? What differences can we observe *within* western societies? And also: What is happening to given and practiced forms of friendship with the use of technology as connector between people?

Students will develop a socio-psychological concept of friendship and explore the forms of relatedness to humans beyond the nuclear family. The aim is to lead the students to see and understand the basic issue of relatedness for humans that needs an inter-individual approach to any given individual – be it in research or practical work. A specific aim is broach the current issue of how technology affects our notion of friendship and our practices of being friends to each other.

Teaching and Learning Philosophy

My philosophy of teaching and learning is based in the principle of teaching that offers material to learning, which is coupled on the side of the student with *responsible learning*.

Responsible learning is done with a commitment to one's own development; it is organized by the *constraint* of being graded but also by the *freedom* in how to navigate the material offered by the teacher according to one's interests and questions.

I will offer you several readings, which are mainly first sources (not from textbooks). We will read and discuss passages of these texts together in class, and the way you will engage with the reading and discussing will be important for the quality and depth of your learning experience.

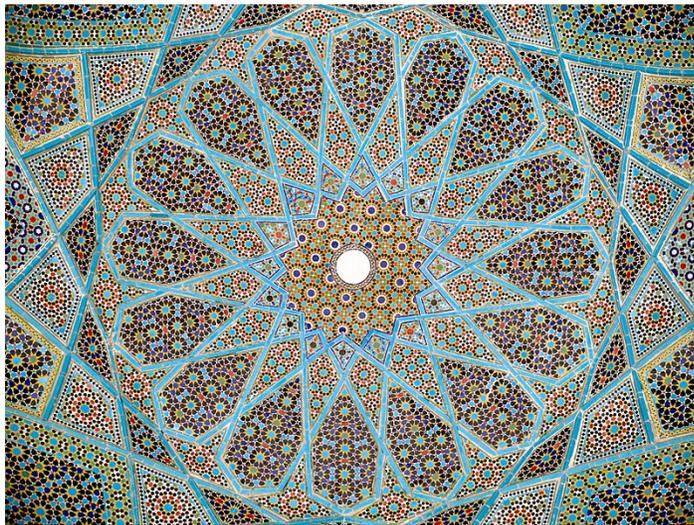
Another important principle is that we learn better when we talk about what we learn, what we find puzzling, interesting etc. This is the principle of *dialogic learning*. The time we will have together in class

for reading, thinking, exchanging ideas, and doing all these activities together as a group is our dialogic learning time.

The assignments reflect these principles of self responsibility and dialogic learning. In particular, students will work in pairs (“dialogically”) in order to enhance each other’s curiosity and learning experience. Students will work together towards conducting a short interview with two interviewees (dyadic interview with dyad, i.e. 4 face-to-face), and they will present their small research in a common final presentation (discernible parts will allow individual grading).

The assignments are considered an important element to the students’ learning experience, they are meant to contribute to the learning instead of simply asking for its result. They allow the students to deepen and affirm their understanding, for themselves as well as in a shared dialogic space.

This mosaic might illustrate the “shared dialogic space of learning”, where the group’s voices come together to form a beautiful whole.



Mosaic. Iranian glazed ceramic tile work, from the ceiling of the Tomb of Hafez in Shiraz, Iran. Province of Fars. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Roof_hafez_tomb.jpg

Assignments, Requirements

All the texts that we will read and talk about in class will be supplied as PDF on Course Den. Regarding attendance, I expect that you will be attending classes very regularly, you can miss class two times, but any more absence will affect your grade. Finally, coming in time is a mark of respect for the whole class and a sign of your professionalism.

The following specific assignments will be given:

- **All sessions:** reading in preparation and discussing in class.
- **One time for each student:**
 - Either:** Summarizing a section in our work including 2-3 class meetings. A handout is mandatory to this summary delivered at the beginning of the new section. Extensive guidelines will be given to the handout.
 - Or:** Facilitating a reading that everybody has prepared and taking care of the discussion together with the teacher. A handout is mandatory to the facilitation. Extensive guidelines will be given to the handout.
- **Pilot research:** this class has a research part; students will conduct a short pilot research in paired couples, consisting of one face-to-face dyadic interview with two interviewees and the analysis of the verbal data. The leading question for the interviewee is, *What is your notion of friendship and how does it apply to virtual friends?* Extensive guidelines will be given to the small research. **Summary of Interviews of 3-5 pages will be uploaded on Course Den by December 3, 2019.**
- **Class presentation about the research:** The student pairs will present their pilot research in 10-minutes talks with some 5 minutes discussion on **December, 10, 11:00 AM -1:00 PM** (first group of 12 students) and **December 12, 11:00 AM -1:00 PM** (second group of 12 students) in our usual class room. The format is similar to an academic conference presentation. The grading rubric is given below. **Please submit your presentation (ppt) to Course Den by 12/09.** Extensive guidelines will be given to the presentation.

- **Grading Rubric for the Summary of Section – 50 pts.**

1. Header: Your name, date, class, topic (12)
2. Clear layout structure. Clear language to explain. (16)
3. Length: 1 – 2 pages (10)
4. Reference(s): at the end and in text if using quotes. (12)

- **Grading Rubric for Facilitation and Handout – 50 pts.**

Grading Rubric for Facilitation - 25 pts.

1. Being clear and understandable; addressing the audience
2. Relating to the reading
3. Initiating discussion with question at end

Grading Rubric for Handout - 25 pts:

1. Head: Your name, date, class, topic
2. Clear layout structure. Clear language.
3. Length: depending on your text, the handout can have 2-3 pages.
4. Reference(s): at the end and in text if using quotes.

- **Grading Rubric for the Interview Summary – 60 pts.**

1. **Submit by due date** [10 pts]
2. **Respect formal aspects:** [20 pts]
 - a) Word document, 12 pt., 1,5 line spacing, page numbering
 - b) length of paper: 3-5 pages without references
 - c) Cover sheet with due information: name of course, your name and student number, name of teacher, task and title of your paper, date. This cover sheet is not counted in the 5 pages
 - d) Correct spelling and phrasing (“written style”)
 - e) Correct quotation (APA style)
 - f) Correct referencing (APA style)

3. **Use of the following structure for the summary paper** **[30 pts]**
- 1) **Introduction** (theoretical background to give a context to the research; whom you interviewed and when in what kind of setting)
 - 2) **Summary of Interviews** (summarize the content and add some quotes)
 - 3) **Conclusion** (concluding thoughts about how your research results connect to the theoretical background)
 - 4) **References** (APA style!)

• **Grading rubric for the Final Presentation – 60 pts.:**

- 1) Being on time (10 minutes) – 15 pts
- 2) Speaking in a clear language – 15pts
- 3) Presenting results in a synthetic way (not a list) that helps to grasp the relevant aspects – 20 pts
- 4) Offering one question to the discussion – 10 pts

• **Overall Grading Rubric**

1 Page to Friendship	=	10 pts
Summary/Facilitation	=	50 pts.
Interview Summary	=	60 pts.
Final Presentation	=	60 pts.

= Total: 200 pts.

A = (180-200 pts)
B = (160-180 pts)
C = (140-160 pts)
D = (120-140 pts)
F = <120 pts

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Week 1 Tuesday, August 20

No classes, Bertau on a conference (International Society for Theoretical Psychology).

Prepare: “What is friendship for me?” – take notes, write about friendship as you see it, but please do not only stick to stories of your friendships – try to describe in a general way; for instance you would say: friends are loyal even if one isn’t doing right – and not telling the story behind this!).

Submit to Course Den by 08/25.

You will bring your notes to our first class meeting on August 27, they will serve as basis to our group work.

Week 2 Tuesday, 08/27

Group work: “What is friendship for me?”, and more.

Common reading: Buber 1958, extract – the ethics and the forms of relations.

Introduction to the course: overview on content and common organization.

***** Section 1: Development of (Close) Relationships

Week 3 Tuesday, 09/03

Introduction to chapter “Development” (Bertau)

Attachment theory and early infancy from a psychoanalytical viewpoint: Gilmore and Meersand 2014, chapter 1

Psychic envelope and skin ego – where and how we are hold (Bick and Anzieu) *Interaction: what kind of envelopes can we find in our culture? Where do people feel most conformable and safe, “hold”?*

Week 4 Tuesday, 09/10

Individuation and separation in toddlers: Gilmore and Meersand 2014, chapter 3

Winnicott's Transitional Object: Wilson and Robinson, 2002a

Interaction: what kind of transitional objects do you know, use etc.?

Week 5 Tuesday, 09/17

Attachment in adolescents: Allan & Land, 1999

***** Section 2: Culture and Anthropology of Friendship

Week 6 Tuesday, 09/24

Cultures of friendship: Ben Elul (2013); a short note:

<https://www.topuniversities.com/blog/importance-friendship-different-cultures>

Anthropology of friendship: Beer and Gardner (2015)

And the short notes by Keller

Interaction: Experiences with friendship ion other cultures?

Week 7 Tuesday, 10/01

Costas, 2012: "Culture of friendship" at the service of an enterprise

Interaction: how intimate relations are used for making people work better, confusing family, friends and work.

Fall Break – 10/03-04

Week 8 Tuesday, 10/08

Paine 1969, Friendship in middle-class culture

Interaction: Do these notions and observations match your experience of today?

***** END OF Section 2

***** Section 3: Psychology of Self and Models of Self

Week 9 Tuesday, 10/15

Kohut's "selfobject": Banai and Shaver 2005, pp. 224-228; definition by Oppenheimer (online);
to Kohut's self psychology: Wilson & Robinson 2002b; and video in class

Week 10 Tuesday, 10/22

Dialogical Self Theory: Hermans, 2001

and self-notions in West and East: Markus and Kitayama (1991, extract)

***** END OF Section 3

Week 11 Tuesday, 10/29

Looking back where we started in week 1 and 2: What changed for you?

Preparing the interviews.

***** Section 4: Online Friendships

Week 12 Tuesday, 11/05

Turkle 2011, chapter 10: some experiences with friendships via devices

Interaction: What is your experience? What are your practices?

Week 13 Tuesday, 11/12

Amichai-Hamburger et al. 2013: Considering internet friendships

Week 14 Tuesday, 11/19

Chan and Cheng 2004: Comparing actual and online friendships

Thanksgiving 11/25-29

Week 15 Tuesday, 12/03

Final group work and synthesis. If needed: Help with research and final presentation.

Fall classes end December 6

Final Presentations: 12/10 (11:00-1:00) and 12/12 (11:00-1:00)

In normal class room

REFERENCES

- Allan & Land, 1999. Attachment in adolescence. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment. Theory, research, and clinical application* (pp. 319-335). New York, London: The Guildford Press.
- Amichai-Hamburger, Y., Kingsbury, M., & Schneider, B. H. (2013). Friendship: An old concept with a new meaning? *Computers in Human Behavior* 29, 33–39. doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2012.05.025
- Banai, E. & Shaver, P. R. (2005). "Selfobject" needs in Kohut's self psychology. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 22(2), 224-260.
- Beer, B., Gardner, D., (2015). Friendship, Anthropology of. In J. D. Wright (Ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, (2nd edition), Vol 9 (pp. 425–431). Oxford: Elsevier.

- Buber, M. (1958). *I and Thou*. (R. G. Smith, Transl.). New York: Charles Scribner. (Original work published in 1923)
- Chan, D. K.-S. & Cheng, G. H.-L. (2004). A comparison of offline and online friendships qualities at different stages of relationship development. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 21(3), 305-320.
- Costas, J. (2012). "We are all friends here": Reinforcing paradoxes of normative control in a culture of friendship. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 21(4) 377–395.
- Gilmore, K. J. & Meersand, P. (2014). *The little book of child and adolescent development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hermans, H. J. M. (2001). The dialogical self: Toward a theory of personal and cultural positioning. *Culture & Psychology*, 7(3), 243-281.
- Keller, M. A cross-cultural perspective on friendship research. *ISBBD Newsletter. Serial No. 46(2)*, 10–11, 14. Retrieved August 12, 2019 from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.584.5901&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Markus, H. R. & Kitayama, Sh. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98(2), 224-253.
- Oppenheimer, A. (2005). Self-Object. In T. Gale (Ed.), *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*. Retrieved August 13, 2019 from Encyclopedia.com: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/psychology/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/self-object>
- Paine, R. (1969). In search of friendship: An exploratory analysis in 'middle-class' culture. *Man, New Series*, 4(4), 505-524.
- Turkle, S. (2011). *Alone together. Why we expect more from technology and less from each other*. New York: Basic Books.
- Wilson, A. & Robinson, N. M. T. (2002a). Transitional objects and transitional phenomena. In M. Hersen & W. Sledge (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Psychotherapy* (pp. 861-866). Oxford: Elsevier.
- Wilson, A. & Robinson, N. M. T. (2002b). Self psychology. In M. Hersen & W. Sledge (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Psychotherapy* (pp. 615-620). Oxford: Elsevier.

COURSE POLICIES

Accessibility. Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. To make an appointment, please contact Counseling & Career Services in 123 Row Hall, or call 678-839-6428. For additional information, visit the following website: http://www.westga.edu/counseling/index_8884.php. Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should also contact me as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Civility. We should work together to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. While we may sometimes disagree with each other on topics discussed in class, it is important that we remember that appreciating diversity in perspectives is an important part of the learning process. With that said, all opinions are welcome. However, disagreements should be directed at an argument and not the person. It is expected that everyone will be treated with respect. **If you ever feel that you are not being treated with respect in the classroom, please let me know.**

Cell phones and other noisy things. Cell phones, pagers, iPods, headphones, etc. are not to be in use while in class or during exam days. Please refrain from texting, instant messaging, gaming, and emailing while in class. It is distracting to the instructor as well as to those around you. If you require an exception to this rule, come and talk to me about your situation asap. If any of these issues becomes a problem, you will be excused from the class.

Academic and Personal Integrity: As outlined by the University of West Georgia Honor Code, “West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity.” Violations of this policy will be met with sanctions and ignorance of its provisions is not an acceptable excuse. Make sure to read the university policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty in your student handbook. Plagiarism involves the use of others’ words and/or ideas without giving them proper credit, which includes passing another person’s paper off as your own and failing to cite a source. If you copy a student’s paper or copy a paper off the internet, you will get caught. Plagiarism software can detect copied papers and copied text. You are responsible for knowing how to properly cite sources with APA formatting.

Communication Policy. As the instructor, I will endeavor to reply to all messages that conform

to conventional standards of polite, respectful correspondence within 48 hours. I will reply to other (i.e., less than polite) messages as circumstances permit. Please note that I reserve the right (and have the responsibility) to purge offensive or excessively aggressive posts to Course Den. Although it should go without saying, please refrain from attacking, harassing, or threatening either fellow students or instructors via the Course Site (or any other means, for that matter).

Intellectual Property Rights. Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and notes presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, course materials may not be modified and **must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person**, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

Note: The syllabus contains a lot of essential information about the course so please make sure to read it carefully and revisit it regularly during the semester. In addition, all students must review the following information about university policies:

https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/assets/docs/faculty-resources/common_language_for_course_syllabi_v2.pdf

Students are expected to review the following information:

<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php>