

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**HEAL**

**HEAL 351 B01 – Relationship Health, 41129**  
**3 Credits, Summer 2021**  
**Distance Learning**

**Faculty**

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**Pre-requisites/Co-requisites**

None

**University Catalog Course Description**

Describes development of healthy relationships. Examines influencing factors. Analyzes current research. Designs strategies for maintaining healthy relationships.

**Course Overview**

This course addresses student-learning outcomes in the study of healthy relationships. To encourage knowledge and comprehension skills, students learn about relationships and what constitutes a healthy relationship. To facilitate application and analysis skills, students learn about personal, psychosocial and health-related factors influencing the relationship as well as the role of social networking technologies. To foster synthesis skills, students learn about relevant research and design strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online using an asynchronous format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on June 1 at 12:01am.

**Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

*Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:

[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#supported-browsers](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. [Delete this sentence if not applicable.]
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download: [Add or delete options, as desire.]
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### *Expectations*

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will start on Monday at 12:01am and finish on Sunday at 11:59pm.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least two times per week.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Late work: Late assignments will be marked down by 15% each day and will not be accepted after **three days**. These terms are negotiable only in the case of documented emergencies and, if possible, with **advance notice**. Work with me... the more I know, the more I can help you.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times. One-on-one sessions will take place via Zoom or BB Collaborate.
- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always

re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

### **Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Define relationship and state what constitutes a relationship.
2. Identify and distinguish types of relationships (e.g., romantic, sexual, familial, friendship, parental, collegial, and individual).
3. Recognize and explain what comprises a healthy relationship.
4. Examine general factors (personal values, standards, and guidelines) to developing a healthy relationship and explain how these factors may vary from one type of relationship to another.
5. Discuss how personal factors (e.g., self-esteem and self-image, interpersonal communication styles and prowess, goal-setting, stress management, and conflict resolution) influence the state of health of a relationship.
6. Analyze how psychosocial factors (i.e., peer pressure, family, community, advertising, sports, media, politicians, religion, culture) strongly influence the state of health of a relationship.
7. Discuss how health-related concerns (violence and abuse, drugs and alcohol involvement, mental disorders) negatively impact the nature, quality, and sustainability of relationships.
8. Discuss how emerging social networking technologies (i.e., Twitter™, Facebook™, instant messaging, etc.) influence the development and maintenance of a healthy relationship.
9. Summarize current research on the connection between satisfying, fulfilling relationships and individuals' overall state of health.
10. Design strategies for developing and maintaining (i.e., overcoming challenges and obstacles) a healthy relationship.

### **Professional Standards**

Not Applicable

### **Required Texts**

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2011). *Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high*. 2nd edition. New York: McGraw-Hill

Ansari, A., & Klinenberg, E. (2016). *Modern romance*. New York: Penguin Press (also available on Audible.com)

### **Readings**

Carolyn Hax -- Washington Post columnist

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/2010/07/06/ABRBs7D\\_linkset.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/2010/07/06/ABRBs7D_linkset.html)

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard throughout the semester.

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard). This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 100 possible points.

## **Assignments – No field work is required for this course**

- **Anecdotal Journal (10 total entries) (20 points)**
  - This experience is designed to help you to develop your observation skills as well as reflect on your own engagement in relationships and will not be available for your classmates to read. You will identify a relationship (individual or group) in which you are participating and develop observations regarding the dynamics of the relationship, what works, and what can be improved upon. These journal entries do not need to be of an intimate nature, but should reflect your improved understanding of what contributes to healthy relationships. Weekly prompts will be posted to Blackboard to help you develop the following week's observations. These journal entries will be completed and submitted on Blackboard by 11:59pm the Sunday they are due.
- **Weekly Reflections via Discussion Board (10 total) (25 points)**
  - These weekly reflections will be completed via discussion board, which means they will be available for your classmates to read. Each student is expected to post a reflection in 10 different discussion forums and reply to another student's reflection within that forum. Nine of the reflections (with reply) are worth 2 points while one reflection (with reply) is worth 7 points, for a total of 25 points that will be factored directly into the overall grade. These reflections will be completed and submitted on Blackboard by 11:59pm the Sunday they are due.
- **Media Evaluation (20 points)**
  - This paper will demonstrate your understanding of the components of healthy relationships. Using some type of media (e.g., film, television series, theatrical presentation, musical album, etc.) you will observe and explain the dynamics that are operating within at least three relationships. More guidance will be provided during the semester. This paper should be approximately 6-8 pages in order to cover the topics completely. It should be written in APA style, 12-point font, and double-spaced. A reference page is required. In addition to course material, 5 external sources should be cited in the text and included on the reference page. This is NOT a paper that can be written well in a couple of days. Work needs to be started early. A draft of one relationship, edited and proofread, is due on Blackboard by Sunday, June 27 at 11:59pm. The final copy is due on Blackboard by Sunday, July 18 at 11:59pm.
- **Cultural Video Presentation (15 points)**
  - Relationships are very culturally determined. First, you will conduct independent research on family relationships in another culture. Next, you will interview an individual over 35 years old from that culture to enhance your understanding of these particular cultural relationship practices. Finally, you will develop a video presentation to be submitted on Blackboard by Sunday, July 24 at 11:59pm. Additional guidance will be provided during the semester.
- **Final Exam (20 points)**
  - The final exam is composed of 10 short-answer items. To best prepare for the exam, students should use the Crucial Conversations and Modern Romance textbooks as well as other materials provided on Blackboard.

**Grading Scale**

A = 94 – 100	B+ = 88 – 89	C+ = 78 – 79	D = 60 – 69
A- = 90 – 93	B = 84 – 87	C = 74 – 77	F = 0 – 59
	B- = 80 – 83	C- = 70 – 73	

**Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>.

**Class Schedule**

Week		Topic	Readings/Assignment Due
1	Jun 1-6	Introduction Types of Relationships	<i>Journal Entries #1 &amp; #2 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #1 due</i>
2	Jun 7-13	Dysfunction in Relationships Crucial Conversations	<b>Modern Romance, Crucial Conversations (Chapters 1-4)</b> <i>Journal Entries #3 &amp; #4 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflections #2 &amp; #3 due</i> <i>Submit media choice</i>
3	Jun 14-20	Complicated Relationships Attraction and Influence	<b>Crucial Conversations (Chapters 5-9)</b> <i>Journal Entries #5 &amp; #6 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflections #4 &amp; #5 due</i>
4	Jun 21-27	Vulnerability and Intimacy in Relationships Communication: The Key to Healthy Relationships	<b>Crucial Conversations (Chapters 10-12)</b> <i>Journal Entries #7 &amp; #8 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #6 due</i> <i>Draft of Media Evaluation due</i>
5	Jun 28-Jul 4	---	<b>Happy 4th of July !!</b>
6	Jul 5-11	Understanding Ourselves and Others Power and Responsibility	<i>Journal Entries #9 &amp; #10 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflections #7 &amp; #8 due</i>
7	Jul 12-18	Fidelity and Integrity The Relationship with	<i>Weekly Reflections #9 &amp; #10 due</i> <i>Media Evaluation due</i>

		Myself	
8	Jul 19-24  **This is the last week of class and the exam period ends Jul 24. Note earlier due dates.	Ending Relationships in A Healthy Way	<i>Cultural Video Presentation due</i>  <i>Final Exam due</i>

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- **Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.**

#### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should

be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

**Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.**