

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

**HEAL 351 DL1 – Relationship Health, 14631**  
**3 Credits, Spring 2022**  
**Distance Learning**  
**1/24-5/18**

**Faculty**

Name: Dr. Amanda Gordon  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Office Location: Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate  
Email Address: agordon8@gmu.edu

**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 Jan 24 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 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:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player: <https://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/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**

- 1) Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2011). *Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high*. 3rd edition. New York: McGraw-Hill
- 2) Ansari, A., & Klinenberg, E. (2016). *Modern romance*. New York: Penguin Press (also available on Audible.com) **OR** Gottman, J., & Schwartz Gottman, J. (2018). *Eight dates*. New York: Workman Publishing.

**For this course, you should choose *either Modern Romance or Eight Dates*, not both. You are certainly welcome to read both, but it isn't required!**

### **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

- **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 8-10 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, March 27 at 11:59pm. The final copy is due on Blackboard by Sunday, May 1 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, May 8 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/Eight Dates textbooks as well as other materials provided on Blackboard.

**TOTAL****100 points****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	Jan 24-30	Introduction	<i>Journal Entry #1 due</i>
2	Jan 31-Feb 6	Types of Relationships	<i>Journal Entry #2 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #1 due</i>
3	Feb 7-13	Dysfunction in Relationships	<b>Modern Romance/Eight Dates</b> <i>Journal Entry #3 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #2 due</i>
4	Feb 14-20	Crucial Conversations	<b>Crucial Conversations : Chapters 1, 2, 3, &amp; 4</b> <i>Journal Entry #4 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #3 due</i> <i>Submit media choice</i>
5	Feb 21-27	Complicated Relationships	<b>Crucial Conversations : Chapters 5, 6, &amp; 7</b> <i>Journal Entry #5 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #4 due</i>
6	Feb 28-Mar 6	Attraction and Influence	<b>Crucial Conversations : Chapters 8 &amp; 9</b> <i>Journal Entry #6 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #5 due</i>
7	Mar 7-13	Vulnerability and Intimacy in Relationships	<b>Crucial Conversations : Chapters 10, 11, &amp; 12</b> <i>Journal Entry #7 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #6 due</i>

8	Mar 14-20	---	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
9	Mar 21-27	Communication: The Key to Healthy Relationships	<i>Journal Entry #8 due</i> <i>Draft of Media Evaluation due</i>
10	Mar 28-Apr 3	Understanding Ourselves and Others	<i>Journal Entry #9 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #7 due</i>
11	Apr 4-10	Power and Responsibility	<i>Journal Entry #10 due</i> <i>Weekly Reflection #8 due</i>
12	Apr 11-17	Fidelity and Integrity	<i>Weekly Reflection #9 due</i>
13	Apr 18-24	The Relationship with Myself	<i>Weekly Reflection #10 due</i>
14	Apr 25-May 1	Satisfying Relationships	<i>Media Evaluation due</i>
15	May 2-8	Ending Relationships in a Healthy Way	<i>Cultural Video Presentation due</i>
16	May 9-15		<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**

#### 1. GMU Policies and Resources for Students

##### *Policies*

1. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
2. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
3. 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.
4. 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>).

*Campus Resources*

1. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
2. 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/>.**