

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**HEAL 351-001 – Relationship Health**  
**3 Credits — Spring 2023**  
Wed. 10:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., Thompson L003  
23 Jan-17 May

**Faculty**

Name: Kate McCauley, MEd, LCSW

Office hours: Wednesday after class or by appt.

Email address: [kmccaul3@gmu.edu](mailto:kmccaul3@gmu.edu)

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:** 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 relationship.

**Course Delivery Method**

Seminar.

**Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable student 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, second edition*. NY, McGraw Hill

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

### **Readings (Daily)**

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)

In addition, selected articles will be identified 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, hard copy).

### **Assignments and Examinations — No Fieldwork is required for this course**

#### **Class Participation/In Class Work** *(This is a performance-based assessment)*

Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings or other assignments due for that class and/or participate fully in class activities. As a member of this course, you are expected to participate. Participation means joining in the discussion, sharing ideas and reflections, raising questions, and evaluating issues. It does not require self-revelation. For those who are truly uncomfortable speaking in front of others, it will be your responsibility to see me during office hours to persuade me as to your understanding and more reserved participation in the class.

To increase learning students need to be open to curiosity in their learning. Each week, students will respond to Curiosity Questions. There will be a written and oral component. Written responses will be collected randomly throughout the semester. Responses will demonstrate growth throughout the semester. (Addresses objectives: 1-7)

#### **Anecdotal Journal** *(This is a performance based assessment)*

This experience is designed to help you to develop your observation skills as well as reflect on your own engagement in relationship. 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 journals 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 journals will be completed and submitted on Blackboard by 10:30 a.m. the Wednesday they are due. (Addresses objectives: 5-7.)

#### **Weekly Assignments** *(This is a performance-based assessment)*

These weekly exercises will also be completed on Blackboard. Each prompt will encourage students to understand themselves with regard to the relationships in which they interact. These journals will be completed and submitted on Blackboard by 10 a.m. the Wednesday they are due.

**Partner Cultural Presentation** *(This is a performance-based assessment)*

This class focuses on standard American/Western research practices related to relationship health. Relationships, in particular, are very culturally determined. You and a partner in the class will conduct independent research on family relationships in another culture. You will interview an individual over 35 years old from that culture to enhance your understanding of these particular cultural relationship practices. You will develop a presentation for our class to be presented during our scheduled final. You will submit a link to your presentation on Blackboard.

**Relationship Evaluations (3 Total)** *(This is a performance-based assessment)*

Three papers will demonstrate your understanding of the components of healthy relationships. Consistently using the same media (e.g., book, film, television series, theatrical presentation, musical album, etc.) you will observe and explain the dynamics that are operating within three relationships. Each paper will focus on one relationship. More guidance will be provided in class and Blackboard.

Each paper will follow the guidelines provided on Blackboard. Students will explore three different topics discussed in class for each relationship. This will include strategies, possible obstacles, evaluation in self-care, improvements observed, attitudes and values, and implementation of new behaviors.

The guidelines provided explain a specific format for the paper. Failure to follow this format will impact the grade on the paper.

Ten points are deducted for each day late, with a maximum of 3 days late (not class sessions), unless an excused medical emergency. (Addresses objective 10.)

See rubric below and on Blackboard.

**Exams**

There are no exams in this class. Required written assignments will necessarily reflect the student's developing understanding and application of knowledge gained in this course.

**Other Requirements:****On-Time Attendance**

This course content is not something that is learned from a textbook. It requires engagement within small groups and the larger class. Absences adversely impact the class experience for the student as well as other members of the entire class. Please set a personal expectation that you will arrive in class on time and ready to participate.

**Grading:**

This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 1000 possible points.

<i>Grade Components</i>	<i>Final grades will be determined as follows:</i>	
Class Participation/In Class Work 100	A 940-1000	C 740-779
Anecdotal Journals (20 pts each) 200	A- 900-939	C- 700-739
Weekly Assignments (20 pts each) 200	B+ 880-899	D+ 670-699
Partner Cultural Presentation 200	B 840-879	D 630-669
Relationship Evaluations (50,100, 150 pts) 300	B- 800-839	D- 600-629
<b>Total: 1000</b>	C+ 780-799	F Below 600
	Student grades reflect student achievement and not student behavior.	

*"Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration."*

--Thomas Edison

**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**

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

## CLASS SCHEDULE

Spring 2023

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

Class Date	Topic/ Readings	What's Due?
Class 1 -- Jan 25	Introductions/Syllabus The Nature of Relationships	
Class 2 -- Feb 1	Types of Relationships	<b>Anecdotal Journals due Classes 2 - 11 I Am From</b>
Class 3 -- Feb 8	Dysfunction in Relationships <b>Modern Romance</b>	<b>Weekly Assignment due Classes 3 - 12 Submit Media Choice</b>
Class 4 -- Feb 15	Crucial Conversations <b>Crucial Conversations - Chap 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>Identify 1st Relationship</b>
Class 5 -- Feb 22	Gender Norms & Emotional Literacy <b>Crucial Conversations - Chap 3, &amp; 4</b>	<b>Draft of 1st relationship for peer review</b>
Class 6 -- Mar 1	Attraction and Influence <b>Crucial Conversations - Chap 5, 6, &amp; 7</b>	<b>Draft of 1st relationship for Kate's review (optional)</b>
Class 7 -- Mar 8	Vulnerability and Intimacy in Relationships Reading: <b>Crucial Conversations - Chap 8 &amp; 9</b>	
	March 15 Spring Break Stay Safe	
Class 8 -- Mar 22	Communication -- The Key to Healthy Relationships <b>Crucial Conversations-Ch 10,11,&amp; 12</b>	<b>1st Relationship Eval Due</b>
Class 9 -- Mar 29	Understanding Ourselves and Others	
Class 10 -- Apr 5	Power and Responsibility	<b>2nd Relationship Eval Due</b>
Class 11 -- Apr 12	Fidelity and Integrity	<b>Final Anecdotal Journal Due</b>
Class 12 -- Apr 19	The Relationship with Myself	<b>Final Weekly Assignment Due</b>
Class 13 -- Apr 26	Satisfying Relationships	<b>Final Relationship Evaluation Due</b>
Class 14 -- May 3	Ending Relationships in a Healthy Way	
FINAL -- May 10	Cultural Presentations	<b>Presentation</b>

## 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 VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. 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, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures 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/>.**

Mason is now partnered with TimelyMD to deliver **TimelyCare** – a new virtual mental health and well-being platform for students. The service provides 24/7 access to virtual care at no cost and augments the in-person and virtual mental health services that remain available to Mason students through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and Student Health Services (SHS).

### **How can students access **TimelyCare**?**

Students can go to [timelycare.com/gmu](https://timelycare.com/gmu) or directly download the **TimelyCare** app from the app store to register with their school email address. Students can then start visits from any web-enabled device – smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop – anywhere in the United States.

**Who can use **TimelyCare**?** Any enrolled Mason student.

### **What services are available?**

- **Talk Now:** Unlimited on-demand mental health support 24/7, available to all Mason students throughout the world!
- **Health Coaching:** Unlimited access to health coaching, available to all Mason students throughout the world.
- **Scheduled counseling sessions:** Limited to 12 sessions per academic year, available to all Mason students throughout the United States. Students can choose the day, time, and mental health provider of their choice.
- **Psychiatry sessions:** Available to all Mason students throughout the United States by referral from CAPS, Student Health Services, or a **TimelyCare** counselor.
- **Self-Care Content:** Yoga and meditation sessions and group conversations

### **How much does a **TimelyCare** visit cost?**

**TimelyCare** services are available at no cost to students.

# Rubrics

## ASSESSMENT RUBRIC(S)

Name	Anecdotal Journal			
Description	Each Journal will be graded with the following considerations: -The topic of the prompt is thoughtfully explored -Your insight into the relationship improves over the semester -You tie your discussions to material learned in classes to this point.			
Rubric Detail				
	Levels of Achievement			
Criteria	Keen Insight	Classic College	Basic Response	Submitted Work
<b>Thoughtful Exploration</b>	<b>15 to 20 points</b> Responds to all prompt questions + Connects to course content + Evidence of proofreading + Demonstrates keen insight to Relationship Dynamics	<b>10 to 14 points</b> Responds to all prompt questions + Connects to course content + Evidence of proofreading	<b>5 to 9 points</b> Responds to all prompt questions	<b>1 to 4 points</b> Submitted

Name	Weekly Lessons			
Description	Each Lesson will be graded with the following considerations - Student demonstrates thoughtful understanding of the content presented. - Student includes content explored in class discussions in the reflection. - Lessons are submitted in a timely fashion.			
Rubric Detail				
	Levels of Achievement			
Criteria	Keen Insight	Classic College	Basic	Submitted Work
<b>Thoughtful Exploration</b>	<b>15 to 20 points</b> Reflection connects response to appropriate course material+ Evidence of proofreading + Response demonstrates an understand that goes deeper into the lessons surface observations	<b>10 to 14 points</b> Responds to all prompt questions based on the specific assignment + Reflection connects response to appropriate course material+ Evidence of proofreading	<b>5 to 9 points</b> Responds to all prompt questions based on the specific assignment	<b>1 to 4 points</b> Submitted

Name Class Participation/In Class Work

Description Students will engage in the class exercises and participate in class discussions.

Rubric Detail

Levels of Achievement

Criteria	Keen Insight	Classic College	Basic	Simple
<b>Class Engagement</b>	<b>76 to 100 points</b> Regularly contributes to class discussion. Chooses to be Curious with questions and follow-up + Regularly attends class -- no more than 2 missed classes (unrelated to COVID) + Actively participates in class exercises sharing responsibility & supporting others' engagement.	<b>51 to 75 points</b> Chooses to be Curious with questions and follow-up + Regularly attends class -- no more than 2 missed classes (unrelated to COVID) + Actively participates in class exercises sharing responsibility & supporting others' engagement	<b>26 to 50 points</b> Regularly attends class -- no more than 2 missed classes (unrelated to COVID) + Actively participates in class exercises sharing responsibility & supporting others' engagement	<b>0 to 25 points</b> Regularly attends class -- no more than 2 missed classes (unrelated to COVID)

# Rubrics

Name	Relationship Evaluations
Description	Three Papers. These papers will demonstrate your understanding of the components of healthy relationships. Using a book, film, television series, theatrical presentations, musical album, or other media you will observe and explain the dynamics that are at play within specific relationships. You will assess the relative health of the relationship and make recommendations for improved or continuing health. Each paper will increase in point value 50, 100, 150 See paper guidelines provided.

## Rubric Detail

Criteria	Levels of Achievement			
	Keen Insight	Classic College	Basic	Submitted
<b>Thoughtful Exploration</b>	Paper submitted with at least 3 topics for the relationship described. + Examples from the source media are provided. + Topics and examples are thoroughly explained and well connected. + Relative health of relationship is explained and suggestions for a healthy relationship are made. + Paper Guidelines are followed. Topics and examples are explained and well connected. + Paper Guidelines are followed.	Paper submitted with at least 3 topics for the relationship described. + Examples from the source media are provided. + Topics and examples are explained. + Relative health is mentioned and suggestions are made. + Paper Guidelines are followed. Topics and examples are explained and well connected. + Paper Guidelines are followed.	Paper submitted with at least 3 topics for the relationship described. + Examples from the source media are provided + Paper Guidelines are followed.	Paper submitted with 3 topics for the relationship described. + Paper Guidelines are followed.

# Rubrics

Name	Cultural Presentations			
Description	You and a partner in the class will conduct independent research on relationship in another culture. You will interview an individual over 35 years old from that culture to enhance your understanding of these particular cultural relationship practices. You will develop a media presentation for our class to be presented during our scheduled final. You will submit a link to your presentation on BlackBoard.			
Rubric Detail	Levels of Achievement			
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Keen Insight</b>	<b>Classic College</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Submitted</b>
<b>Thoughtful Exploration</b>	<p><b>150 to 200 points</b></p> <p>A broad swath of the course content is explored and content clearly expresses a respect for the cultural differences expressed by the interview subject + While the cultural norms in relationships are explored these norms are compared to the topics we have discussed class. Similarities and differences are considered as part of the presentation + Presentations effectively uses multi-media components for clear partnership between the presenters is demonstrated.</p>	<p><b>101 to 150 points</b></p> <p>Course Content is generally explored with the presentation showing cultural competency in the interviewed culture + The aspects that are similar and different are identified and explored + Presentations uses various media components to maintain audience interest + Partners share responsibility of the presentation strengths.</p>	<p><b>51 to 100 points</b></p> <p>Some aspects of the course are explored in the presentation. + Basic comparison to cultural norms in North America are included.</p>	<p><b>10 to 50 points</b></p> <p>Basic presentation with partner is delivered</p>