SYLLABUS
PSYC 131: Human Emotion
Yale University - Summer Session B (July 7 – August 7)

Note: This syllabus is tentative and subject to minor changes.

Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00-4:15 PM
Location: TBD

COURSE INSTRUCTORS

Hillary Devlin, M.S., M.Phil. & Aleena Hay, M.S., M.Phil.
(hillary.devlin@yale.edu) (aleena.hay@yale.edu)
Office: SSS 414D Office: SSS 414D

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What are emotions, and how can we study them? Can we trust how happy or sad a person says they are, or do we need to get information from additional sources? How do personal factors, like our culture or gender, influence the emotions we experience and express? Do our emotional lives shift as we age? Why are our teenage years a time when emotions run so high? Can we regulate our emotions, and what influences our ability to do so? How do our emotions shape our social lives and our relationships? Why do we sometimes experience pleasure when others fail? What factors are associated with greater happiness and emotional well-being?

This course will help us to better understand the broad range of human emotions, spanning from more basic emotions – like joy, sadness, anger – to more complex states, such as embarrassment, guilt, gratitude, love, and lust. We will explore the existing research within the study of human emotion, and will work to answer the fundamental questions of how, when, and why we feel the way we do.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this course is to gain a deeper understanding of the study of human emotion. The course will be in the format of an interactive seminar, including both lectures and group discussion. Specific objectives for this course include:

1. To critically analyze empirical research within the field of human emotion.
2. To understand theoretical perspectives within the study of emotion.
3. To thoughtfully discuss study methods and findings within the existing literature.
4. To design a novel study idea relevant to the field of emotion.

GRADING & ASSIGNMENTS

Your final course grade will be made up of the following five components:

1) Exams (2 exams x 20% each = 40% total):

There will be a mid-term exam and final exam (non-cumulative). Exams will primarily focus on content from the course lectures, but will also include some information from the assigned readings and class discussions. A study guide with topics and terms to study will be distributed one week prior to each exam. Exams may include a combination of multiple-choice, fill in the blank, true/false, and short answer questions.

2) Research Proposal and Brief Presentation (20%):

Students will write a 4-5 page research proposal paper (double spaced, 1” margins, 12 point font). The first part of the paper will include a brief overview of relevant background literature. The second part of the paper will include study questions, hypotheses, design, and possible
outcomes and discussion. Additional information will be provided in a handout that will be given out in class.

3) Role of Discussant (10%):

At the beginning of the term, each student will sign up to serve as the discussant for one of the lecture topics. As discussant, students will be asked to e-mail out three thoughtful discussion questions one week prior to the discussion of that topic in class. These questions should pertain to multiple or all of the assigned readings for that topic.

Discussion questions should be thoughtful and involve critical thinking (e.g., “In what ways might the result regarding the relationship between gender and emotion have differed if the authors used emotion measures other than self-report?”), and not merely content-related questions (e.g., “What did the authors find regarding the relationship between gender and emotion?”). The questions should also be designed to facilitate class discussion, so rather than a yes/no question (e.g., “Do you agree with the authors’ conclusions?”), you would want to pose an open-ended question (e.g., “Do you agree with the authors’ conclusions about cultural differences in emotion expression? Explain why or why not”).

4) Weekly Response to Discussion Questions (10%):

Before each class, you will respond to the discussion questions sent out by your classmates who are serving as the discussant(s) that week. You will be given a 1 (full credit), 0.5 (half-credit), or 0 (no credit) for each assignment. You will e-mail these responses to Aleena & Hillary by 10AM EST on the day of class. We also recommend bringing a copy of your responses to class so that you can refer to these during the class discussion that day.

5) Participation (20%):

Attendance is required and all students are expected to participate in the course discussions during both lecture and the discussion section portion of class. Therefore, students should have completed the assigned readings and answered the discussion questions prior to class, in order to facilitate a lively class discussion. This may take the form of critically analyzing the research, posing thoughtful questions, or other contributions.

COURSE POLICIES

A) Academic Integrity

The strength of the Yale University community depends on academic and personal integrity. This requires honest originality, including truth in presentation, diligence and precision in writing (citing works and ideas), and acknowledging collaborations with others. Plagiarism, or the use of another person’s work, words, or ideas without permission and/or acknowledgment, is a serious matter and will not be tolerated within this course. One of the greatest consequences of plagiarism is the threat it poses to student’s intellectual development; students who plagiarize do not learn and personal ethics are compromised. In this course, students must be honest and truthful in all aspects of their academic work. If there are suspected instances of cheating, this will be raised with the Executive Committee at Yale College.

B) Requests for Grade Changes

All requests for consideration for grade changes should be submitted in the form of a written document at the end of the term. Specifically, at the end of the term, please submit a written
document noting the grade in question, your original answer, and no more than 4-5 sentences on why you think this answer is correct or deserves more credit. You may submit as many grades as you wish to be reviewed but please submit this as a single request. Also, please note that in reviewing grades, instructors may decide not to change your grade, may increase your grade, or may give you a lower grade than you had originally. This means that submitting a re-grading request may result in your grade going up, going down, or not changing at all. All requests for grade changes will be considered at the end of the term and not beforehand. Grade changes regarding possible mathematical errors can be submitted at any time.

**COURSE CALENDAR**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Course Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues, 7/7</td>
<td>“Perspectives on How to Define Emotion”</td>
<td>1: Theoretical Perspectives of Emotion</td>
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<td>2: Emotions Across Cultures</td>
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<td>Thurs, 7/9</td>
<td>“Emotion in Our Ancestors and Other Species”</td>
<td>3: Evolution &amp; Emotion</td>
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<td>4: Emotion in Animals</td>
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<td>Tues, 7/14</td>
<td>“Capturing Emotions Through Research”</td>
<td>5: Eliciting Emotions</td>
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<td>6: Measuring Emotion</td>
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<td>Thurs, 7/16</td>
<td>“Modern Advances in Emotion &amp; Biology”</td>
<td>7: The Brain &amp; Psychophysiology</td>
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<td>8: Neuroendocrinology</td>
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<td>Tues, 7/21</td>
<td>“Emotions Turned Inward or Outward”</td>
<td>9: Prosocial Emotions</td>
<td>EXAM 1</td>
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<td>10: Self-Conscious Emotions</td>
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<td>Thurs, 7/23</td>
<td>“Emotions in Romance, Sex, &amp; Relationships”</td>
<td>11: Emotions in Gender &amp; Sex</td>
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<td>12: Emotion in a Relational Context</td>
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<td>(Guest Speaker: Dr. Margaret Clark)</td>
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<td>Tues, 7/28</td>
<td>“Emotions Across the Lifespan”</td>
<td>13: Emotion in Children &amp; Adolescents</td>
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<td>14: Emotion in Older Age</td>
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<td>Thurs, 7/30</td>
<td>“Emotions in the Modern World”</td>
<td>15: Emotions &amp; Pop Culture</td>
<td>RESEARCH PROPOSAL &amp;</td>
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<td>16: Emotions &amp; Industry</td>
<td>BRIEF PRESENTATION</td>
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<td>Tues, 8/4</td>
<td>“Controlling our Emotions for Better or Worse”</td>
<td>17: Emotion Regulation</td>
<td>EXAM 2</td>
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<td>18: Positive Emotions &amp; Happiness</td>
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<td>Thurs, 8/6</td>
<td>“Promoting Emotional Well-Being”</td>
<td>19: Health &amp; Emotional Well-Being</td>
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<td>20: Mindfulness of Emotion</td>
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**ASSIGNED READINGS**

There is no textbook for this course. Below are the required course readings for each week’s class. All assigned readings should be completed before class. Copies of the articles will be distributed in advance.

**Tuesday July 7th: “Perspectives on How To Define Emotion”**

**Theoretical Perspectives of Emotion:**

**Emotions Across Cultures:**
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**Thursday July 9th: “Emotion in Our Ancestors & Other Species”**

Evolution & Emotion:

Emotion in Animals:

**Tuesday July 14th: “Capturing Emotions Through Research”**

Eliciting Emotion:
1. Complete course qualtrics survey of different methods of emotion elicitation (link will be provided via e-mail)

Measurement of Emotion:

**Thursday July 16th: “Modern Advances in Emotion & Biology”**

The Brain & Psychophysiology:

Neuroendocrinology:

**Tuesday July 21st: “Emotions Turned Inward or Outward”**

Prosocial Emotions:

Self-Conscious Emotions:
Thursday July 23rd: “Emotions in Romance, Sex, & Relationships”

Emotions in Gender & Sex:

Emotions in a Relational Context:

Tuesday July 28th: “Emotions Across the Lifespan”

Emotions in Children & Adolescents:

Emotions in Older Adults:
1. Watch Laura Carstensen’s TED talk: [http://www.ted.com/talks/laura_carstensen_older_people_are_happier](http://www.ted.com/talks/laura_carstensen_older_people_are_happier)

Thursday July 30th: “Emotions in the Modern World”

Emotions & Pop Culture:

Emotions & Industry:

Tuesday August 4th: “Controlling our Emotions for Better or Worse”

Emotion Regulation:

**Positive Emotions & Happiness:**

**Thursday August 6th: “Promoting Emotional Well-Being”**

No assigned readings for this week; You will select one exercise to elicit emotional well-being for the week (qualtrics link with options will be provided via e-mail)!