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 fundamental assumption for this class is 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. Paraphrasing Vygotsky (1999), we can say that it is through others that we become ourselves.

The class will thus address relationships in a developmental perspective (e.g. attachment theory) leading to ways in which individuals relate to non-relatives in a very close way: in childhood and adolescence and also in adulthood. A particular important question is what happens to friendship through digital media – how are online friendship working? Are there any differences to offline friendships? Is some new type of friendship developing?
Aim of Understanding, Learning Objectives

• My aim is to lead you to see and understand the basic issue of relatedness for humans; as psychologists, we need to take an inter-individual approach to any given individual – be it in research or practical work. A specific aim is broaching the current issue of how technology affects our notion of friendship and our practices of being friends to each other.

• You will come to understand that 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.

• You will understand the importance of investigating and understanding 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.

• You will be able to articulate different ways and patterns of relations between people and how these develop throughout life.

• You will develop a socio-psychological concept of friendship and explore the forms friendship takes in the online realm.

• You will learn the basic method of a semi-structured dialogic interview in order to apply and further explore the knowledge acquired in class.

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 expect you to be well prepared and actively working with the texts that we will read in order to find your own way through the subject topics.
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 writing short reflections 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 three short interviews with one interviewee or, if possible, with two interviewees (dyadic interview with dyad, i.e. 4 face-to-face in conversation). The pairs working of students working together will present their small research in a common final presentation (discernible parts will allow individual grading).

I consider the assignments an important element to your learning experience, they contribute to the learning instead of simply asking for its result. They allow you to reflect, deepen and affirm your understanding, for yourself as well as in a shared dialogic space.

Imagine a mosaic made of single pieces coming together to form a whole, this might illustrate the “shared dialogic space of learning”, where the group’s voices come together form a beautiful whole.

Readings, Assignments, Requirements

**Required text:** *Bridge to Terabithia*, by Kathleen Paterson

**All other the texts** that we will read and talk about in class will be supplied as PDF on Course Den in a separate LIBRARY.

**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. Similarly, I ask you to leave class when it’s over, not earlier.

**Phones:** Please turn your cellphones and other devices on vibrate before class starts. Electronic devices should not be visible while class is going on.
The following specific assignments will be given:

- **One page to friendship answering two questions DUE on Course Den by 01/13**
- **Short quiz to the reading of the day:** writing in class
- **5-minutes and 10-minutes reflection:** writing in class
- One time for each student: **Facilitating** a reading that everybody has prepared and taking care of the discussion together with the teacher. A **handout** is mandatory to the facilitation. **Guidelines will be given to the handout.**
- **Three Research Interviews:** This class has a research part; students will conduct a short research in pairs, consisting of one face-to-face interview with one, possibly two interviewees followed by a brief 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.**

**Three Interviews:**

i. Interview 1 = with International student on campus
ii. Interview 2 = with parent generation
iii. Interview 3 = with grandparent generation

The results to all Interviews are shortly presented by the researcher pairs in class (02/18, 03/24, 04/14)

- **Final presentation in class about the research involving all three interviews:** The student pairs will present their research in 10-minutes talks with some 5 minutes discussion on **April 29 and May 5, 2019.** The format is similar to an academic conference presentation. The grading rubric is given below. **Please submit your presentation (ppt) to Course Den by 04/28.** **Extensive guidelines will be given to the presentation.**

**Grading Rubrics**

- **Grading Rubric for Reflections:**

  As long as your reflection is clearly linked to the task or text at hand, and as long as it is clearly and carefully written (grammar, spelling, punctuation), you will get **10 points for each 5-minutes reflection** and **20 points for each 10-minutes reflection.** Any reflection I cannot read and/or without your name and date will be counted as 0.
• **Grading Rubric for Short Quizzes**

  Short quizzes will come with 5 questions on paper in class, each worth 2 points, total **10 points for each quiz**. Any answers I cannot read and/or without your name and date will be counted as 0.

• **Grading Rubric for the short presentation of each interview**

  The two students should present in an even and fair way. I expect you to give some background information to the interview time and site, and to the interviewee. Present then the core of what was said and add some reflections and comments (e.g. what was difficult, surprising, new, interesting, disappointing to you?). Each short presentation **30 pts**.

• **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


  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 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

Three 5-minutes reflection = 30 pts (10 each)

Three 10-minutes reflections = 60 pts. (20 each)

Seven short quizzes = 70 pts (10 each)

Three presentations to interviews = 90 pts (30 each)

Facilitation and Handout = 50 pts (25 each)

Final Presentation = 60 pts.

Attendance = 30 pts (missing 1-2: 30; 3-5: 15; 6: 5; 7+: 0)

__________________________________________

= Total: 400 pts.

A = 360-400 pts
B = 320-359 pts
C = 280-319 pts
D = 240-279 pts
F = <240 pts

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

Week 1 Tuesday, January 7, 2020

No classes, Bertau at a Summer School in Chile.

*Prepare two questions:*

1) “What is friendship for me?” 2) “What do I want to know about friendship”?

Please take notes, write one longer paragraph to each question so as to make one page. **Submit to**
Course Den by 01/13. You will bring your notes to our first class meeting on January 14, we will start talking about friendship using your notes.

Week 2 Tuesday, 01/14

Class discussion: “What is friendship for me?”, and more.

Introduction to the course: overview and organization, explaining the research part.

Students conduct interviews in teams (2 students) to explore the understanding of friendship in times of online and offline friendships by speaking to different cultural and age groups.

Week 3 Tuesday, 01/21

The ethics of relations: Common reading of Buber 1958 (extract)

(mc: possibly add Gergen 2009, short passages to make clear we are related beings)

5-minute-reflection: Others as objects

Week 4 Tuesday, 01/28

Attachment theory: chapter 3 in Crain (2011): Bowlby and Ainsworth

Closing: Short quiz about reading Crain

Week 5 Tuesday, 02/04

Friendship in development:

Opening: Short quiz about reading Hay or B&S

Hay (2005) and Bukowski and Sippola (2005) [5 pages and 8 pages]

Int1: Briefing for interview 1 with International students on campus

Week 6 Tuesday, 02/11

Opening: Short quiz about reading

Children’s changing concept of friendship: Furman and Bierman (1993)

Closing: 10-minutes-reflection: a poem to my childhood friend
Week 7 Tuesday, 02/18

THERABITHIA 1 – relate week 6 and 7. Focus: being some else in another world

Results to Int1

5-minute-reflection: Imagining experiencing “another self” and the space opening up

Week 8 Tuesday, 02/25

Friendships in adolescents: Bukowski et al. (1993)

Opening: Short quiz about reading

Week 9 Tuesday, 03/03

Opening: Short quiz about reading

Kohut’s “selfobject”: Banai and Shaver 2005, pp. 224-228;

Week 10 Tuesday, 03/10

Friendships: mirroring etc. [Holly Sterling]

Inbetween: 10-min-reflection: About my best friend / About how my best friend could be

THERABITHIA 2: focus on detest turning into sympathy (the episode with Janice Avery) – Why do we despise someone?

Int2: Briefing for interview 2 with parent generation

SPRING BREAK MARCH 16 – 20 *** ENJOY!

Week 11 Tuesday, 03/24

Results to Int2. Class discussion: What did we learn about online friendship from Int1 and Int2? (Interviewer pairs present shortly)

Turkle 2011, chapter 10 (focused reading): experiences with friendship via devices.

5-minute-reflection: My experiences with device-mediated friendships.
Week 12 Tuesday, 03/31

Opening: Short quiz about reading

Parks and Floyd (1996): Making friends in cyberspace

Closing: relate back to “being another self” and DST (week 7)

Int3: Briefing for interview 3 with grandparent-generation

Week 13 Tuesday, 04/07

Opening: Short quiz about reading

Amichai-Hamburger et al. 2013: Considering internet friendships

Week 14 Tuesday, 04/14

Chan and Cheng 2004: Comparing actual and online friendships

Or Buote et al. (2003) similarities and differences online/offline

Results to Int3

Week 15 Tuesday, 04/21

THERABITHIA 3: focus on lost and grief of a friends.

Inbetween: 10-min-reflection about the reading Therabithia – Experience, thoughts...

Briefing for final presentation.

Week 16 Tuesday, 04/28

Learning Community: Common Gathering

**Final Presentations: 04/29-05/05**
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