

Introduction to Social Psychology

Psychology 3201
Spring 2008
Monday and Wednesday, 6:15 – 8:15
Elliott Hall N119

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Section Leader	Jennifer Filson Office: N120 Elliott Hall (regular office hour) N317 Elliott Hall (for appointments) Office Hour: Wednesday, 5pm – 6pm (N120), or by appointment (N317) Email: filson0007@umn.edu

Prerequisites

PSY 1001: Introduction to Social Psychology

Course Overview

Based on the recognition that we humans are social animals, the fundamental assumption of social psychology is that *human behavior is a function of the social environment*. In other words, social psychology is concerned with how the social environment both impacts and is impacted by individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. This perspective has proven invaluable in explaining much human behavior (But not all! It is, after all, one particular perspective based on one particular assumption!). You may find studying social psychology to be very appealing because it is readily applicable to and observable in your everyday experiences as a social animal. But beware! Although social psychological principles may at times seem intuitive and self-explanatory, this course will reveal to the inquisitive mind a complicated and fascinating glimpse into the human psyche.

This course is designed to provide you with a thorough overview of social psychological principles, theories, constructs, and methodologies. Specific topics covered include: conformity, prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination, attitudes, persuasion, person perception, aggression, prosocial behavior, and interpersonal relationships.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will understand the social psychological approach to human behavior, the fundamental domains of social psychology, and the basic theoretical and methodological approaches used by social psychologists.

Course Website

<http://www.psych.umn.edu/courses/> or www.myu.umn.edu (my courses)

Course Texts and Resources

Required Texts:

For Lecture:

Aronson, E., Wilson, T.D., & Akert, R.M. (2004). *Social psychology (6th ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Recommended: <http://www.prenhall.com/aronson>

- Companion website to Aronson, Wilson, & Akert
- Note: there is a study guide available on the website free of charge.

For Discussion:

Readings will be drawn from a variety of social psychology readers and posted to the website. All readings will be posted by the beginning of the term, listed by the date by which you should have read them.

Course Design

Lecture: Monday 6:15 – 8:15; Wednesday 6:15 – 7:15

Discussion Section: Wednesday, 7:15 – 8:15

How the semester is organized:

- **Lectures:** In order to engage all students, a variety of teaching methods will be used during this time. These include lectures, in class demonstrations, group work, writing, and video presentations. Please be prepared to participate actively in lectures. You are encouraged to ask questions at any time. *If you miss a lecture, please get the notes from one or more of your classmates.* In general, lecture material will differ somewhat from the material presented in the text, although weekly topics for lectures and readings will overlap. To benefit maximally from lectures, discussions, and activities in class, students are strongly advised to complete the AWA assigned readings before the week for which they are assigned. **Lectures will be posted on the website at the end of the week.**
- **Discussion Sections:** Once each week (Wednesday), you will have the opportunity to earn up to 10 points towards your course grade by completing discussion section assignments (**See schedule of reading for exact dates**). You can earn up to 8 points for each writing assignment, plus up to 2 points for active, meaningful participation in that day's discussion. Points will be allocated based upon writing assignments due at the beginning of each discussion section. **You must be in attendance for discussion section to earn that day's writing assignment points. Late assignments will not be accepted, and all assignments must be typed. Assignments must be brought to class; no emailed assignments will be accepted. No exceptions.**

For each discussion section, you will be asked to complete a writing assignment along the following lines:

1. For **each article**, type a **3-5 sentence summary** of the article's main points. This ensures that we are all on the same page at the start of the discussion.
2. For **each group of articles** to be read for a given day, **write 3 thought questions**. Each thought question should be about ½ of a page, single spaced. These questions should start with the article, and then go further. For example: Does the article's conclusion not line up with other research we have discussed? Does the method used in the article seem a poor test of the article's hypothesis? Does the article not line up with your personal experience? **For each thought question, you should provide:**
 - a. the information in the article that prompted your question
 - b. the questions you intend to pose
 - c. an attempt to answer the question you posed based on other reading from the course, personal experience, or, best of all, a blend of the two.
3. You **MUST** be present in class to receive credit for the assignment.

Assignments and Grading

- **Reading Assignments:** The list of readings is located in this syllabus. You are expected to complete all readings before the class session in which they are assigned, in order to participate fully in class. We expect that you will complete this reading. We encourage you to ask any questions you may have about these readings. A schedule of assigned readings appears on page 8 of this syllabus.
- **Exams:** There will be three exams. Each exam will cover the readings and lectures up to the day before the exam. The exams will be made up of questions taken from lectures, from the AWA textbook, and from the readings assigned in Discussion Section. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions, and will be worth 100 points. **There will be between 5 and 10 cumulative questions on Exam #3.**

Please note the following dates in your schedule:

Exam #1	Wednesday, March 5th
Exam #2	Monday, April 23rd
Exam #3	Monday, May 12th, 6:15 – 8:15pm

- Exams will take place in the same classroom as lectures on the dates listed above. The test items will be designed to test your understanding of basic terminology, your grasp of elementary concepts, your knowledge in support of these concepts (research results), and your ability to integrate these concepts and apply them to novel situations. **Each exam will be worth 100 points.**

A note about make-up exams: A make-up exam will be given ONLY if: 1) an official, University sponsored event requires you to be off campus during the regularly scheduled examination time; 2) a medical emergency prevents you from attending class; 3) a family emergency prevents you from attending class; 4) jury duty, military service, a religious observance, or a similar obligation prevents you from attending class. If you are going to miss an exam for any of the above reasons, you *must* contact the instructor *before* the exam and you must provide written documentation of the event or emergency in order to schedule a make-up exam. **No exams will be given after Wednesday, May 14th.**

“Real World” Essay Assignments:

- Throughout the course, you will have two “real world” essay assignments. The first will be due on **Wednesday, March 15th**, the second on **Wednesday, May 7th**. In each essay, I want you to employ one or more of the concepts you learn about in this class to a single advertisement, news or magazine article, (legitimate) website content, etc. The point is to apply your knowledge to everyday events. Social psychology studies real life phenomena, and you should get used to perceiving events through its lens.
- Each assignment should include the stimulus on which you are reflecting as well as 3-5 pages of double-spaced text. You want to be thorough in your analysis. If there are 4 possible angles to take, choose one or two and really go in depth. “Covering your bases” by touching briefly on all 4 angles WILL hurt your grade.
- This is not an “artsy” project. You will be best served by thinking deeply about how the material you have selected employs or embodies the concepts we have learned about in class. The presentation of the stimulus should be clean, neat, and professional presentation.
- As an example, you might find a perfume ad that uses an attractive female model to sell the product. You could conceivably talk about persuasion via heuristics, social comparison, interpersonal attraction, or even conformity.

Extra Credit Options

Students will have the opportunity to earn extra credit in this course through voluntary participation in selected psychological research projects. For each hour of participation in these projects students can earn up to 2 extra credit points (that is, you receive 1 point for each ½ hour of participation). You may earn a total of 10 extra credit points for the course. These extra credit points may be distributed among as many or as few projects as you desire, but in no case will more than 10 extra credit points be awarded. That is, you could participate in a single five hour study that offered 10 points for participation, or you could participate in 10 half-hour studies each offering 1 point, and so on.

Please note that only participation in studies that are approved as Research Experience Program (REP) studies will earn you extra credit points. Participation in non-REP studies does not qualify and will not be honored. Please check to make sure that the study is an approved REP study before participating.

You may sign up for REP studies on the bulletin board across from N119 Elliott Hall or sign-up using the on-line REP system. Also, researchers may come to class on occasion to recruit participants. Again, all REP extra credit points will be added to your total points for the course. There is no penalty for not choosing to participate in REP studies.

To access the on-line REP system, use the following web address:
<http://www.psych.umn.edu/research/rep/>

You then click on the link titled “MyREP” which will prompt you to log into the system. With the on-line REP system, you can search for studies that you would like to participate in and keep track of the REP points you accrue (researchers are asked to post points within 3 business days of your participation).

There is no guarantee that every student will have the opportunity to earn the maximum number of REP points, but there are typically enough projects to accommodate those students who choose to participate. When you sign up for a study, be sure to write down the DATE, TIME, and PLACE of your session. You and the researcher are the only ones who will know where and when your study takes place. The instructor, the discussion leader, and the Psychology Department office staff will *not* have any information about your study session. You should keep track of the studies you participate in to make sure you are awarded the appropriate number of extra credit points. In the event that, at the end of the semester, you do not think that you have been awarded the appropriate number of points, you will need the following information about EVERY study you participated in: the study name, study number, researchers name, phone number, the date you participated, the location of the study, and the number of points you were awarded. If you do not have this information, it will in all likelihood be impossible for the instructor to clear up any discrepancies in the number of points you were awarded. To facilitate keeping track of this information, please use the form provided below.

Form for REP Point Recording

Study Name	Study #	Researcher's Name	Researcher's Phone	Date/Time	Location	Points Awarded

Table 1: Projected possible scores for each activity

Class Assignment	Total Points (Extra Credit Possible)
Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
Exam 3	100
Discussion section	100
Real World Essays	50
Total	450
Out of Class Extra Credit (REP studies)	10

Table 2: Letter grades based on points earned

Points Earned	Letter Grade
419 - 450	A
403 - 418	A-
390 - 402	B+
372 - 389	B
358 - 371	B-
344 - 357	C+
326 - 343	C
313 - 326	C-
299 - 312	D+
281 - 298	D
267 - 280	D-
Fewer than 267	F

Incompletes:

- A grade of “incomplete” (“I”) will be entered for any student who—due to extenuating circumstances or personal emergencies explained to and acceptable to the professor—does not complete all of the requirements for this course by the time of the regularly scheduled final examination. Such extenuating circumstances may include major emotional traumas (i.e., death or major illness in the family), or personal injury or illness. Such extenuating circumstances **DO NOT** include missing examinations or deadlines because of vacations, travel, out-of-town parties or weddings, forgetfulness, employment, or heavy course loads. The professor will require documentation of personal emergencies that interfere with completion of course work. All students are expected to anticipate examination conflicts and conflicting deadlines, and should plan for them accordingly (e.g., please do not make air travel reservations that interfere with your ability to complete the two exams when they are regularly scheduled). *Additionally, assignment of a grade of “I” may not be used to forestall a failing grade; students who do not complete all the course requirements will receive a grade of “I” ONLY if they have earned passing grades on the work they have completed. If students have not done passing work, they will receive a grade of “F” in the course.* All outstanding work must be completed by the end of the semester immediately following the semester in which the “I” was assigned. An incomplete that is not finished up by that time will convert to a grade of “F.”

DATES	TOPIC and READINGS
Week 1: 1/23	Welcome and Introduction to Social Psychology W: Aronson (2004)
Week 2: 1/28, 1/30	Research Methods in Social Psychology M: AWA 1 & 2 W: AWA 1 & 2; Mook, 1983 – practice assignment
Week 3: 2/4, 2/6	Social Cognition M: AWA 3; W: Zajonc ; Norenzayan & Nisbett
Week 4: 2/11, 2/13	Social Perception M: AWA 4 W: Kelley (1950)
Week 5: 2/18, 2/20	The Self & Cognitive Dissonance M: AWA 5 & AWA 6 W:; Festinger and Carlsmith (1959); Tesser
Week 6: 2/25, 2/27	Attitudes M: AWA 7 W: LaPierre (1934)
Week 7: 3/3, 3/5	Exam 1 M: Exam 1 review - optional W: Exam 1; Real World #1 due
Week 8: 3/10, 3/12	Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination M: AWA 13 W: Solomon, Greenberg & Pyszczynski
Week 9: 3/17, 3/19	Spring Break – No Classes
Week 10: 3/24, 3/26	Intergroup Relations M: AWA 13 W: Dovidio & Gaertner
Week 11: 4/7, 4/9	Conformity and Compliance M: AWA 8, Milgram video W: AWA 8; Stanford Prison video – writing assignment #1 due 4/14
Week 12: 4/14, 4/16	Interpersonal Attraction and Relationships M: AWA10 – Writing Assignment #1 due W: Fletcher & Simpson; Shulman (2004)
Week 13: 4/21, 4/23	Exam 2 M: Exam 2 review - optional W: Exam 2
Week 14: 4/28, 4/30	Aggression and Prosocial Behavior; Social Psychology and the Law M: AWA 11 & 12; Bandura et al. (1961); Darley & Batson (1973) W: AWA 16
Week 15: 5/5, 5/7	Social Psychology and the Law M: AWA 16 & Darley (2004) – writing assignment #2 due 5/7 W: Guest Lecture: Anita Kim Real World #2 and Writing Assignment #2 due

For lecture: Aronson, Wilson, & Akert (AWA)

The Syllabus May Change

This syllabus is a fluid document; the syllabus may change to accommodate the needs of the class and the instructor. You are responsible for all such changes announced in class.

A Few Tips for Doing Well in Psychology 3201

Students are sometimes seduced into believing that because “it’s *only* common sense,” they don’t need to prepare as rigorously for exams in PSY 3201 as they must in other courses. Not true. Because your course grade in large part reflects your performance on three exams, I would like to relay a few reading and study tips.

1. Complete all reading assignments *for* the day on which they appear on the syllabus. That way you’ll have a way to organize and make sense of new information that is presented in lectures.
2. Read carefully and actively, both before class and while studying for exams. That is, to absorb and remember information for which you are held accountable on exams, reading your text as you read the newspaper or *Time* magazine seldom ensures success. What do I mean by “reading carefully and actively?” **First**, survey the chapter to get a feel for its contents. What three or four major topics will the chapter address? How much space is devoted to each topic or idea? Start surveying and asking yourself questions from the get-go. **Second**, remember that it’s *your* book. **Highlight** important concepts or sentences with a marker, or **underline** those parts with a pen or pencil. **Write** notes or questions to yourself in the margins. Pause between sections of the chapters to see if you can remember what you just read. Quiz yourself periodically. **Third**, although some people can read a chapter carefully in one sitting, not everyone can. If and when you feel your attention wandering, take a short break. Then return to reading once you’re able to concentrate again. **Fourth**, be sure to read each chapter carefully *at least* twice before exams (e.g., *minimally*, before class and then again closer to the time of the exams). **Fifth**, when studying for the exams, make use of your highlights and margin notes as you review chapters one last time. But do that in a specific way. Although it’s gratifying to take a look at your marginal notes or review questions and realize how much you remember, don’t spend valuable time going over what you already know well. Instead, devote that last hour or so to selective reading and review—about material you *don’t* know so well.
3. As soon as you can after class, take about 15-20 minutes to go back through your notes to fill in gaps, while the lecture is still fresh in your mind. You’ll be amazed at how much you’ll remember, and at how complete your notes will be when you prepare for exams.
4. Make good use of the online *Study Guide*; the multiple choice questions on the exams will look a lot like those in the *Study Guide*.
5. *After* you’ve studied, *review* with one or two other students in class (i.e., quiz each other). The best rule of thumb for making good use of your exam preparation time is “study alone, review together.”
6. Attend each and every class; no one can take notes for you better than you, yourself, can. And please be forewarned: I have discovered a number of omissions and inaccuracies in the notes provided by commercial note-taking services, so use such services at your own risk.

7. Office hours are scattered throughout the week. Come see us (either Jennifer or Brad) with questions or concerns. It might be helpful as you read your assignments or review your class notes to use the margins to jot down questions or sources of confusion. From these notes, you can make a list of topics or issues about which you would like clarification when you meet with the professor or teaching assistants.

Accommodations for Special Needs

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. In order to receive accommodations for disabilities, the student *must* be registered with Disability Services. You may contact Disability Services at (612) 624-4037. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. If you have special needs requiring accommodation, *please contact the instructor during the first week of class.*

Grade Disputes

If you wish to dispute the grade assigned on an exam, your dispute must be presented to the instructor **IN WRITING** within one week after the exam has been returned. You must include a specific rationale for why your answer is correct. "I think I deserve a better grade" does **NOT** constitute a rationale.

Academic Misconduct

The following is the University of Minnesota Policy on Scholastic Misconduct:

"Scholastic misconduct is broadly defined as "any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work or that involves misrepresentation of your own work."

Scholastic dishonesty includes, (but is not necessarily limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors concerned; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another student's work.

If you are found to be cheating on examinations or to be engaging in scholarly dishonesty in your work, you will receive NO CREDIT, although the instructor has the prerogative to judge case by case in such circumstances. Note that this will most likely result in your failing the entire course. In addition, the academic misconduct will be reported to the CLA Scholastic Conduct Committee.

Notes from CLA

The College of Liberal Arts (CLA) has asked us to include the following notes on several academic regulations as a reminder to students enrolled in CLA classes:

1. The two grading systems used are the A-F and the S-N. Departmental majors must take major courses on the A-F system; non-majors may use either system. In all courses, the bottom line for the S grade is the equivalent of the C- grade; in other words, what is normally considered as D-level work will be assigned a grade of N in the S-N system. All students, no matter which system used, will be expected to do all work assigned in the course, as determined by the instructor. Any changes you wish to make in the grading base must be done in the first two weeks of the semester.
2. The instructor will specify the conditions, if any, under which an “incomplete” will be assigned instead of a grade. The instructor may set dates and conditions for make-up work, if it is to be allowed.
3. Inquiries regarding any change of grade should be directed to the instructor of the course; you may wish to contact the Student Ombuds Service for assistance.
4. Students are responsible for all information disseminated in class and all course requirements, including deadlines and examinations. The instructor will specify whether class attendance is required or counted in the grade for a class.
5. The College of Liberal Arts does not permit a student to submit extra work in an attempt to raise his or her grade, unless the instructor has specified at the outset of the class such opportunities afforded to all students.
6. The College of Liberal Arts has defined academic misconduct broadly as “any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work or that involves misrepresentation of your own work. Scholastic dishonesty includes (but is not necessarily limited to) cheating on assignments and examinations; plagiarizing, which means misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the consent of all professors concerned; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another student’s work.” Instructors may define additional standards beyond these.
7. Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate fully in class or meet all course requirements are encouraged to bring this to the attention of professors so that appropriate accommodations can be made.
8. University policy prohibits sexual harassment as defined in the 5/15/97 policy statement. Copies of the 5/15/97 policy statement on sexual harassment are available at 419 Morrill Hall. Complaints about sexual harassment should be reported to the University Office of Equal Opportunity at 419 Morrill Hall.