

Psychology 8201: Social Cognition
Fall 2005, 3 credits
Wednesday, 10:00AM – 12:00PM, N227 Elliott Hall

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 3-5PM or by appointment.

Rationale for the Seminar:

Social cognition is a thriving, scientifically active subfield of social psychology. It encompasses the study of the cognitive processes underlying social judgment, thought, and behavior. Social cognition has reached a stage in its development as a scientific field that the principles and processes associated with the field have become influential not only within social psychology (where social cognitive analyses influence theory and research on a wide range of social psychological phenomena, ranging from the self to intergroup relations), but in other subfields within psychological science (e.g., social development, I/O psychology, cognitive neuroscience) as well as in the other social sciences (e.g., political science, mass communications). Therefore, the primary objective of this graduate seminar is to orient you to the social cognitive *approach* to research questions and to enhance your ability to evaluate the contribution of the social cognitive perspective as it has been applied to research issues inside and outside the subfield's specific domain. There are any number of ways to accomplish these objectives, and each year this seminar adopts a different focus as a means to accomplish these pedagogical goals. This year our focus will be G. Moskowitz's epistemological perspective – "What does it mean to 'know' something?"

Course Requirements:

There are three requirements for this seminar and two of them formally count toward the final grade. **First**, since this seminar will be conducted primarily in a discussion format (a modified, ostensibly benign Socratic method), you are expected to have completed the assigned readings prior to each session, and to come to the seminar prepared to discuss the material with your colleagues. Everyone is expected to contribute to our in-class discussion of the reading material and weekly thought questions.

Second, *50% of your final grade will be based on the quality of five brief, 2-3 page thought essays* that focus on five empirical papers to be assigned during the semester.

Third, the remaining 50% of your final grade will be based on a 10-15 page paper (APA style required) which is due no later than 12:00PM on Monday, December 19th. This paper should be in the form of a research proposal on a topic of your choice and the conceptual framework for this paper must reflect what we have discussed and learned about the contributions of the social cognitive perspective during the term. *You are required to set up an appointment with me to discuss your paper ideas at any time during the semester.* Feel free to come and discuss your proposal more than once and/or via email. Please do not keep these appointments until the final two or three of the semester as my schedule (and yours) becomes difficult to manage.

Required Course Text [available at the University Bookstore in Coffman Union]:

Moskowitz, G.B. (2005). *Social cognition: Understanding self and others*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Schedule of Core Seminar Readings
[non-text readings will be distributed to you]

- (1) Sept. 7: Overview and introduction to the seminar.
- (2) Sept. 14: Moskowitz, Introduction and Ch. 1, 1-65.
- (3) Sept. 21: Moskowitz, Ch.2, 66-109.
- (4) Sept. 28: Moskowitz, Ch. 3, 110-152.
- (5) Oct. 5: Moskowitz, Ch. 4, 153-192.
- (6) Oct. 12: Moskowitz, Ch. 5, 193-232.
- (7) Oct. 19: Moskowitz, Ch. 6, 233-266.
- (8) Oct. 26: Moskowitz, Ch. 7, 267-309.
- (9) Nov. 2: Moskowitz, Ch. 8, 310-352.
- (10) Nov. 9: Moskowitz, Ch. 9, 353-387.
- (11) Nov. 16: Moskowitz, Ch. 10, 388-437.
- (12) Nov. 23: Moskowitz, Ch. 11, 438-479. **One-page final paper proposals due.**
- (13) Nov. 30: Moskowitz, Ch. 12, 480-513.

(14) Dec. 7: Moskowitz, Ch. 13, 514-547.

(15) Dec. 14: Presentation of final paper topics.

Reminder: Final Paper Due: Monday, December 19, by 12:00PM. Email paper as Word file or hard copy.