Intro to Social Psychology
Course Syllabus
Spring, 1985

PSY 216
TLN: 3154

138 Gilbert
12:30-13:50 UH

Instructor: Dr. Robert Mauro
311 Straub
686-4917

Teaching Ass't: Joachim Krueger
312 Straub
686-4912x32

Office hrs: Tu, Th, 2:00-3:30, and by appt.

Tu, Th, 10:00-11:00, and by appt.

Textbooks: Deaux, K. & Wrightsman, L. (1984). Social psychology in the '80's 4th ed. Monterey CA: Brooks/Cole.
Krupat, E. (ed.) (1982). Psychology is social 2nd ed. Palo Alto, CA: Scott Foresman.

In the reading list below, the initial W refers to readings in Deaux and Wrightsman and the initial K refers to readings in Krupat.

4/4 Introduction
W ch. 1 & 2

4/9 Social Perception: looking at others
W pp. 80-93; K ch. 1

4/11 Social Cognition: thinking about others--attitudes
W pp. 266-275

4/16 Social Cognition: explaining behaviors
W pp. 94-105

4/18 Social Cognition: strategies in human inference

4/23 The social definition of reality: self-perception
W ch. 3

4/25 Emotion and nonverbal communication
W ch. 5

4/30 Influencing others: the Milgram experiment
W ch. 11, K pp. 105-141

5/2 Influencing others
W ch. 12; K pp. 76-93

5/7 MIDTERM EXAM

5/9 Affiliation, attraction & love
W ch. 6, K ch. 4

5/14 Human sexuality
W ch. 7

5/16 Groups and group behavior
W ch. 13, 14

5/21 Prejudice & stereotyping
W pp. 252-265, ch. 16

5/23 Aggression
W ch. 8, K ch. 5

5/28 Aggression

5/30 Altruism
W ch.9, K ch. 6

6/4 Mass behavior

6/6 Environmental psychology
W ch. 17, 18, optional: K ch. 8

6/13 10:15, FINAL EXAMINATION

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to complete a multiple choice midterm and a multiple choice final. In addition, all students will be required to complete a social psychology research requirement in one of three ways:

1) Research project: Either individually or in pairs, students may choose to plan and carry out a small empirical research project. This option allows students the opportunity to engage in the creation of new information rather than simply observing research or passively absorbing information. We believe that completing a research project with our assistance will provide dedicated students with an extremely useful learning experience. To encourage you to choose this option but to choose it only if you are willing to work on producing a high-quality product, if you choose this option, you will be graded on the basis of your midterm, final, and paper grades, each counting for 1/3 of the final grade. If you produce a quality product, your grade could be raised substantially; however, if you produce a mediocre prodct, your grade could actually be lowered. See the handout labelled Research Project Option for further details. The only absolutely rigid requirements are that the paper topic be approved by either Joachim Krueger or myself by April 30, and that the project be empirical.

2) Research participation: Students may choose to fulfill the research requirement by participating in 4 experiments approved for the PSY 216 experimental participation requirement. This will normally involve 4 hours of out-of-class time. If you choose this option, your grade will be based solely on your midterm and final scores, each score counting for 1/2 of your final grade. For more information, see the handout labelled Experimental Participation Option.

3) Paper option: Students may choose to fulfill the research requirement by writing a 5-8 page paper on the ethics of social psychological research. If you choose this option, your grade will be based solely on your midterm and final scores, each score counting for 1/2 of your final grade.

On or before April 18 you must notify us in writing preferably on the Research Requirement Option Form of your choice of option. After this date you may not change your option. You must fulfill the social psychology research requirement before you can receive a grade in this course.

Experimental Participation Option

To complete the social psychology research requirement by participating in experiments, you must complete 4 experiments approved for PSY 216 credit.

To participate in these experiments, you must complete 3 steps; each must be done in a specific way.

First, you must sign up for the experiment. Whenever an experiment is being offered it will be posted on the "Subjects for Extra-Credit Psychology Experiments" sign-up boards. These two boards are located in Straub Hall, outside of room 154. If you enter Straub Hall through its main center doors, the boards will be on your right, past the candy machine. One board is on the west wall; the other is on the east wall. Both boards are sectioned off and each section is labelled with a different day of the week (Mon, Tues, etc.). When an experiment is being offered, the experimenter will post a sign-up sheet in the appropriate section to represent what day of the week the experiment is to occur.

Each sign-up sheet contains the following information: the DATE, TIME, and PLACE when and where that experiment will occur. Each sign-up sheet also contains the experiment's code name. These code names are completely unrelated to the experiment; they are just to help you remember the experiment. Each sign-up sheet also lists who is eligible to sign up for that experiment. Most of these restrictions refer to which classes may sign up for that experiment, for example, "Students from Psy 216 or Psy 215 only." Often other restrictions are listed, for example, "Must be right-handed" or "Must have normal to corrected-normal vision." Do not sign up for any experiment that you are not eligible for.

You sign up by simply writing in your name, social security number, phone number, and course number (Psy 216) on a blank line. If all the lines are filled, do not write in any new ones. Finally, one last very important thing: You may only do each experiment once.

The second thing that you must do is show up for the experiment. Go to the scheduled room at the scheduled time on the experiment's scheduled date. By signing up for an experiment, you are entering into a contract with the experimeter. If you find out that you won't be able to participate, you must cancel. To cancel, go back to the sign-up board. There you will find strips of white tape. Place a strip of white tape over the line that you signed your name on. This is the only way that you may cancel your sign up. However, the experimenter is allowed to take down his or her sign-up sheet about five minutes before the experiment begins. So, if you're going to cancel you must do it at least five minutes before the experiment begins. If you are more than five minutes late to an experiment, the experimenter may not be able to include you in the experiment, in which case you will be considered a "no-show" (see below).

The last thing you must do is give Joachim Krueger your participation credit slip. At the end of each experiment, the experimenter will have you fill out an experiment participation credit slip which s/he will sign and date. It is then your responsibility to turn it in.

To summarize, here are the three major steps for participating in an experiment for extra credit. First, go to the sign-up board and sign up for an experiment. Remember to pay close attention to the restrictions listed on each sign-up sheet. Also remember that you may not participate in the same experiment more than once. If you sign up for an experiment that you are not elegible for or sign up for the same experiment twice, you will be penalized. Second, show up for the experiment. Remember if you cannot participate in an experiment that you are signed up for, you must cancel by placing a strip of white tape over your name. Third, turn in your participation credit slip.

If you have any questions or problems concerning extra-credit experiment participation, please see Joachim Krueger, 312 Straub, 686-4912.

Experimenters work very hard to conduct their research and I have insisted that they be very conscientious about explaining their research to you. I ask you to be considerate of the researchers by: 1) not signing up for experiments for which you do not qualify (e.g., and experiment may require right-handed males only), 2) not signing up for an experiment more than once, and 3) showing up for experiments for which you have signed up and doing so on time. If you fail to comply with these instructions, you will be required to participate in an additional experiment for each violation in order to complete your research requirement. For example, if you miss one experiment that you signed up for, you will be required to participate in 5 (instead of 4) experimets in order to complete the research requirement.

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Optional Research Project

There are four broad objectives that I wish to achieve through the research project. First, the research project requires students to (a) define a problem of interest, (b) try to devise a method or procedure that will allow them to collect evidence that would confirm or disconfirm the idea or problem that they have stated, (c) collect that evidence in a systematic and objective way, and (d) draw conclusions about the validity of the idea they have tested. This means that students will be asked to actively create new information, rather than simply passively absorb information as you would in a more traditional learning experience.

A second objective of the project is to illustrate that scientific endeavor is not mysterious, heavenly, or "for computers only;" science is a product of the human mind and, as one philosopher of science commented, "only glorified common sense."

A third objective of the project is to illustrate that an idea or a hypothesis is "tested" by creating a specific situation in which the implications of an idea can be verified or disconfirmed by observation; the process of translating general principles into their "testable" implications is important for developing critical acumen.

A fourth objective of the research is to familiarize students with the difference between casual, non-systematic observation of behavior (which we all use by necessity in our day-to-day lives) and the systematic, non-biased observations that we strive to achieve in scientific research. I believe that the view of science as "glorified common sense" suggests that while our common sense (on casual observation) is quite sufficient for most events, our common sense can, on occasion, lead us astray and that is why we frequently have to impose greater rigor on our observational techniques to minimize sources of bias in our observations. The imposition of rigor on our observations is, in my opinion, what differentiates subjective, casual impressions from objective, systematic measurement.

Research Proposal and Research Project

Students who decide to undertake the research project must submit a research proposal to us no later than April 30. We will not accept any completed projects that have not been approved as proposals, and no proposals will be accepted later than April 30.

You must consult with one of us before April 25th. We will be available to assist you in translating some of your ideas into a research design during office hours and by appointment. The research proposal should consist of a reasonably detailed plan of (1) the idea or hypothesis you intend to examine, and (2) the techniques, methods, or procedures you intent to use to gather evidence relevant to the idea you will be examining. After the proposal is

turned in (no later than April 30), we will comment on the proposal, make suggestions for improvement, and in some cases involving ethical or moral considerations, indicate disapproval of the project. After we return the project to you, you should start collecting data as soon as possible so that you may complete a coherent written report by June 6.

Below are a few of the better student research projects from the last two years:

1. A comparison of batting averages of white and black players on major league baseball teams. Result: Black players have higher batting averages than whites on almost every team.

2. A systematic content analysis of the roles of boys and girls in elementary school readers. Result: In a random sample of readers, boys almost always initiated and "adventure;" girls almost always tagged along.

3. A survey of housing discrimination in Portland, where a racially mixed couple requested information from an apartment manager shortly after a white couple requested some information: Result: Discrimination against racially mixed couples appeared in 25% of the cases.

4. A survey of attitudes toward a proposed housing project, where the sample consisted of people living at different distances from the project. Result: Liberal (i.e., favorable) attitudes toward the project increased in proportion to the subject's distance from the project.

Format for Research Reports

Each research project should consist of five separate sections: Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results and Discussion, and Appendix. A description of each of these sections follows.

1. Abstract. This section should be no longer than 150 words and should accurately and very concisely describe the purpose, general method, and results of the research project.

2. Introduction. This will be a statement of the purpose and rationale for conducting the research. Basically, it should be an answer to the question, "What are the reasons for conducting this research?" In a sense, you are required to "prove" to the reader that you are investigating an interesting problem.

3. Method. In general, the purpose of any experiment (or research of any kind) is to provide a public demonstration of a phenomenon. This implies that the description of the research method should be explicit enough so that another person could read your research report, and if desired, could accurately replicate your experiment. This section should consist of several subsections:

a. Subjects -- description of number of subjects, how they were selected, their characteristics, etc.
b. Procedure -- description of what was "done" to subjects, how experiment was conducted, etc., and
c. Dependent Measures -- what variables were being assessed, and how were these measured. For research involving questionnaires, questionnaire should be described briefly, but copy of actual questionnaire should be placed in the Appendix section.

4. Results and Discussion. This section will consist of the presentation and analysis of the collected data, as well as your interpretation of these data. Any comments interpretations and conclusions should be presented at the end of this section.

5. Appendix. ALL questionnaires, stimulus materials, detailed coding schemes, and raw data for all subjects should be placed in the appendix. The professor (and others) may wish to analyze some of your data further, and this can only be done if all the data are present in this section.

   NOTE: The appendix should include every subject's score on every measure obtained. For example, let us assume that you are comparing the responses of two groups of subjects, G_1 and G_2, in their answers to a questionnaire containing ten questions. Let us assume 20 subjects in each group. Present the data in two matrices -- one for each group. For example: