

Psychology 456

Social Psychology I: Attitudes and Social Behavior

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Office hours: Wednesday 1-3pm

Text (required): David Myers (1987). Social Psychology (2nd Ed). McGraw-Hill.

Reading Materials (required): Course package is available at the EMU copying center.

### Primary Goals

The primary objective of this course is to review and critically examine major issues in social psychology. The course begins with issues on relationships between attitude and behavior (Unit I). We will see, however, that to fully understand this topic, it is necessary to understand in detail workings of both cognitive processes (i.e., ways in which people think) and affective processes (i.e., ways in which people feel) within a broader cultural context. These are, thus, the topics for the rest of the course. In Unit II we review recent development in the area of social cognition including stereotyping and self perception. Unit III examines affective processes such as aggression and love. Finally, in Unit IV we will discuss ways in which culture molds the social mind. In addition to these substantive issues, important methodological questions are also discussed along the way.

### Course Requirements

The grade of the course will be based on two exams (Midterm and Final) and an essay. The weight given to each will be approximately equal: 30% midterm exam, 35% final exam, and 35% essay.

Each exam will be <sup>a</sup>composite of questions of various format (multiple-choice, short answer, semi-essay). Both materials in readings and those in lectures are covered.

In an essay you must define and address one question that you find interesting. There are some important constraints, however. You must (i) refer to three topics covered in the course and all the readings assigned under those topics, (ii) choose, based on the references available either in the Myers text or in the assigned readings, two additional journal articles relevant to your question, find the articles at a library, make a xerox copy of each, read them, and finally (iii) integrate all the above readings in addressing the question that you choose. This would mean that the question must be broad and rich enough to allow you to integrate some diverse materials, yet tangible (as opposed to spiritual, religious, moralistic, ... etc.) enough to be answerable based on what you will have learned in this course. Success of an essay, therefore, will depend on your choice of a

question. I strongly encourage you to begin thinking today, and keep thinking, about what question you may want to address in the essay.

The essay must be typed with double space and less than 10 pages. It must follow a standard of scientific writing. Most important, there must be a reference section at the end where articles you referred to in the text are listed (the reference section will not be included in the 10 page limit). Also, attach to your product the xerox copies of the journal articles that you have incorporated. The essay is due at the beginning of the last meeting of the course (3/9). Delay will cost you 1/3 of a letter grade a day.

### Course Schedule

Note: DM refers to the text by David Myers.

Jan 5: Introduction

DM-ch1.

### Unit I. ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR

Jan 10: Attitude as an organizing force of behavior

- a) DM ch2.
- b) Manstead et al (1983)

Jan 12: Self-justification

- a) Steel et al (1981)

Jan 17: Conformity

- a) DM ch7
- b) Maass & Clark (1986)

Jan 19: Social influence (Milgram film)

- a) DM ch9

Jan 24: Persuasion

- a) DM ch8
- b) Petty et al (1981)

### UNIT II. SOCIAL COGNITION

Jan 26: Person perception

- a) Brown, R. (1987). Social psychology, Ch11.
- b) ch3(p74-p88)

Jan 31: Perception of groups (Guest lecture by Prof. Myron Rothbart)

- a) DM-ch4(p117-p150).

b) Rothbart et al (1987)

Feb 2: MIDTERN EXAM

Feb 7: Perception of self

a) Vallacher & Wagner (1987)

b) Lepper et al (1973)

Feb 9: Self in social interaction

a) Nisbett & Ross (1980). Human inferences. ch9.

b) DM ch3(p88-p109) & ch4(p110-p117).

UNIT III. AFFECT IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Feb 14: Prejudice

a) DM. ch13,&15.

Feb 16: Aggression

a) DM ch11

Feb 21: Liking and love

a) DM ch14.

b) Sternberg (1987)

Feb 23: Altruism

a) DM ch12.

b) Trivers (1985) ch15

Feb 28: Theories of emotion

a) Lanzetta et al (1976)

b) Hochschild (1982)

Mar 2: Roles of affect in social thinking and action

a) DM ch5

b) Nisbett & Ross (1980) ch10

IV. MIND IN CULTURE

Mar 7: Cultural metaphors of self-other relation

a) DM ch6

b) Triandis et al (1983)

Mar 9: Cultural construction of mind

a) Weisz et al (1984)