

Psychology 456/556
Attitudes and Social Behavior
MWF 12-12:50, 110 Willamette

Ruth Bennett, M.S.
Winter 1998

OFFICE HOURS

Monday, 1-3

Please feel free to request additional times (but bear in mind that I may not always be able to accommodate last-minute requests).

Office: 326 Straub
Phone: 346-4993
E-mail: rbennett@darkwing.uoregon.edu

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To be a social psychologist is to be fascinated by people. This course is about turning this fascination into science. To what extent can we trust our intuitions (or even judgments)? Can a clever experimental methodology do justice to human complexity? What are the *reasons* (both in terms of immediate gains and evolutionary imperatives) that cause us to act in the ways that we do? Can science tell us anything about "human nature"?

This course focuses on the social influences on human behavior and the ways in which the mind processes social information. It is research-based, meaning that the information discussed has been derived from empirical investigation, and conceptual rather than applied, meaning that we will not be learning about the seven habits of highly effective people -- which is not to say that learning abstract principles of social cognition *won't* help you figure people out!

PREREQUISITES

The prerequisites for this class are PSY 302 and 303. If you are taking this class without having had those prerequisites it is assumed you are willing to take on the additional responsibility to acquire the skills taught in those classes by yourself. All students will be graded on the assumption that all prerequisites have been met; students who have not taken 302 or 303 will not be held to a lower standard.

COURSE READINGS

Required:

- *The Social Animal*, 7th edition, by Elliot Aronson (at the bookstore)
- Course packet of journal articles (at the bookstore)

Recommended:

APA *Publication Manual*, 4th edition (at the bookstore and also in the reference section of the Knight Library)

Ellyson, S. L., and Halberstadt, A. G. On Reading the Research Literature. (On reserve for this course at Knight Library.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

• Attendance

I will not take attendance. However, showing up is your best assurance of a decent grade. It is your responsibility to keep current with changes in the syllabus, or other announcements -- generally made right at the beginning of class. As an added incentive, some material will be on the exams which is only discussed in class.

• Quizzes

There will be five multiple-choice quizzes, and you may drop the lowest grade. All quiz dates are noted on the syllabus, and any changes will be announced in class. No make-up quizzes will be given.

• Midterm

This will be something of a glorified quiz, except that the format will most likely be essay rather than multiple-choice. If you have a good reason not to come to class on the day of the midterm, it may be possible to make arrangements to take the test before the scheduled test date. No make-up exams will be given after the scheduled test date.

• Paper

The quizzes and exams in this class address the conceptual side of social psychology; the paper addresses its empirical side. You will each be responsible for writing a research proposal, which will include a literature review, hypothesis or hypotheses, detailed methodology, and expected results, all in APA style.

You will be asked to hand in a preliminary piece of work on your proposal and a draft, which will be edited by your classmates. This requirement will be discussed further in class.

The final version of your proposal is due on March 12. Papers turned in after the start of class on the 12th will be docked 5%; papers turned in after 5 pm on the 12th will accrue an additional 5% penalty. You will incur an additional 10% late penalty for each extra day the paper is late (a day is considered to end at 5 pm, for our purposes).

• Reading

You are responsible for all assigned reading. Although I recognize it will not always be possible, you should try to do all reading before the day it is being discussed -- you will get more out of lecture that way (also, I've been known to call on people).

Be aware that the chapters in *The Social Animal*, while long, are written in a narrative style and are quick to read. (Note, though: the book is not in APA style. **Don't** use this as a model for your paper.) The journal articles, on the other hand, while short, will require much more time per page. Plan accordingly.

• Final

The final exam will be cumulative and will most likely consist of both multiple-choice and essay questions. A make-up final exam will be offered only in cases of documented emergencies.

GRADING

Grade distribution

At the end of term, all points will be summed. The two highest grades will be averaged; these form "the mark." All grades that are at least 90% of "the mark" will receive an A (with appropriate plusses and minuses); all grades that are between 80-89% of "the mark" will receive some form of a B; all grades that are between 70-79% of "the mark" will receive some form of a C; between 65-69%, a D; and below 65%, an F. These cutoffs may be relaxed over the course of the term, but they will not be made more stringent.

Please note that this means that it is theoretically possible for everyone in the class to receive an A. Also note that this means you are not automatically penalized for helping your classmates study -- if the whole class does well (or at least minimizes variance), the whole class will receive good grades. However, there will be no additional "extra credit" assignments offered, because doing so could artificially drive up the value of "the mark" and make what is supposed to be an optional assignment in effect compulsory. Some bonus points can be earned through high-quality class participation, but your best bet for improving a low grade is to discuss these ideas with your classmates or myself -- which is how it ought to be.

Summary of point potentials:

What	Worth (in points)	How many	Total	% of total grade
Quizzes	25	5 (4)	100	20% (5% each quiz)
Midterm	75	1	75	15%
Final	100	1	100	20%
Paper assignment	50	1	50	10%
Paper draft	50	1	50	10%
Peer edit	25	1	25	5%
Final paper	100	1	100	20%
			500	

LUNCH

Perfectly reasonable for a 12-1 class, but be considerate, or they'll tell us we can't have food in the room.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Also please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability. (The Counselor for Students with Disabilities is Hillary Gerdes, 346-3211, TTY 346-1083, hgerdes@oregon.uoregon.edu)

COURSE SCHEDULE

"It takes...a mind debauched by learning to carry the process of making the natural seem strange, so far as to ask for the why of any instinctive human act. To the metaphysician alone can such questions occur as: why do we smile, when pleased, and not scowl? Why are we unable to talk to a crowd as we talk to a single friend? The common man can only say, Of course we smile, of course our heart palpitates at the sight of the crowd...And so, probably, does each animal feel about the particular things it tends to do in the presence of particular objects....To the lion it is the lioness which is made to be loved; to the bear, the she-bear. To the broody hen the notion would probably seem monstrous that there should be a creature in the world to whom a nestful of eggs was not the utterly fascinating and precious and never-to-be-too-much-sat-upon object which it is to her."

- William James, 1890

SA = Aronson, The Social Animal

RP = Reading packet

Week 1 - an introduction to concepts and methods

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
1/5		
1/7	SA CH 1 RP Humphrey	
1/9	SA CH 9 RP Morton	

Week 2 - altruism and conformity

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
1/12	SA CH 2 (start)	
1/14	SA CH 2 (finish) RP Darley & Batson	
1/16	RP Simon	QUIZ #1

Week 3 - conformity (continued) and persuasion

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
1/19	-----NO CLASS-----	
1/21	RP Asch RP Milgram SA CH 3 (start)	
1/23	SA CH 3 (finish)	

Week 4 - social cognition I.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
1/26	RP Storms RP Dutton	
1/28	RP Baldwin RP Wilson	
1/30	SA CH 4 (start)	QUIZ #2

Week 5 - social cognition II.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
2/2	SA CH 4 (finish)	ASSIGNMENT #1
2/4	RP Kenrick (start)	QUIZ #3
2/6	RP Kenrick (finish)	

Week 6 - self-justification

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
2/9	SA CH 5 (start)	
2/11		MIDTERM
2/13	SA CH 5 (finish)	

Week 7 - prejudice

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
2/16	SA CH 6 (start)	
2/18	SA CH 6 (finish)	
2/20	RP Fox	PAPER DRAFT

Week 8 - aggression

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
2/23	SA CH 7 (start)	QUIZ #4
	RP Berkowitz	
2/25	SA CH 7 (finish)	
	RP Wright	
2/27		PEER EDITS

Week 9 - liking, loving, & attraction I.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
3/2	SA CH 8 (start)	
	RP Snyder	
3/4	SA CH 8 (finish)	
	RP Pennebaker	
3/6		QUIZ #5

Week 10 - liking, loving, & attraction II.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>DUE?</u>
3/8	RP Buss & Schmitt	
3/10		
3/12		FINAL PAPERS

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, March 17, 8 am