

PSY 456 - Social Psychology

Summer 2004

M-H 12.00-1.50 pm, Chapman 307

Instructor: Francesco Foroni, 304 Straub

Office hours: Tue. @ 2-3 pm & by appointment

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NOTE: During the term I will move to r.404 Straub Hall; phone 3460452

Course Information

COURSE CONTENT/OBJECTIVES/PREREQUISITES

In this course you will learn about research and theories in social psychology. More important, you will learn to think carefully about important social phenomena (such as prejudice, aggression and social attitudes), and thus about yourself and other people. By the end of the course, you should have a good understanding of what are the major topics of study in social psychology, and how social psychology research is done. Expect to work in this course. In return for your hard work you will gain excitement about social psychology, insights into the complexities of social behavior, and increased self-awareness of the way the social phenomena work.

The course is research based, meaning that the information taught is mostly derived from empirical research in social psychology. Thus, you will not only study theories of social behavior, but you will also study experiments and observations that have been carried out to test and demonstrate the theories. The readings in the reading packet are "primary sources"--that is to say, reprints of original journal articles. For this reason, Psychology 302 and 303 (Statistical Methods and Research Methods), or their equivalents, are required as prerequisites for this course.

Many people--formally trained social psychologists and others too--have pointed out that "everyone is a social psychologist." This observation will be capitalized upon--you are strongly encouraged to be on the lookout for examples of the phenomena we are covering in your everyday life. However, keep in mind that many of our "everyday" social psychology theories may not be correct, and that some of the most famous social psychological research findings are counter-intuitive (not what you would expect). In fact, the science of social psychology can sometimes predict how and why everyday social psychology theories will be wrong.

COURSE READINGS

There is a Reading Packet (RP). The articles and chapters are available on e-reserve at the Knight Library.

E-reserve: http://libweb.uoregon.edu/acs_svc/reserve-index.html

Search by Instructor (Foroni) or course number (Psy 456).

To download article use:

Username: summer04

Password: rays

Important Note: The articles are not in alphabetical order; they are in the order the library scanned them.

In addition, a copy of the book will be available in the reserved section at Knight library.

The course has a moderate amount of reading assignments. The readings are either articles taken from the prime research journals of the field or chapters from *The Social Animal* (SA) by Elliot Aronson (8th edition, 1999) (a copy of the book will be on reserve at the library). These readings will challenge your understanding of both theory and methodology. It is essential that you keep up with the readings in order to:

- benefit from the lectures
- succeed in quiz and final exam
- write a creative and thoughtful final paper
- write your weekly response

GRADING

Your grade is based on a combined total from different activities. There are a total of 550 points.

Electronic assignment (part 1)	Pass/no pass	= 15 points
Electronic assignment (part 2)	Pass/no pass	= 15 points
3 1-Page Weekly Responses	If you will turned in each one (not graded)	= 60 points
Mid-Term Quiz/test	Graded	= 100 points
1 Term Paper (4-6 pp.)	Graded	= 100 points
In class participation/activities		= up to 60 points
Final Exam	Graded	= 200 points
Total		550 points

Communication

Because this course is 4-week long and its schedule is intensive from the first week on, it is important that we communicate effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. Come to class and contribute; see me in my office; make sure that you check your E-mail and the class web page (on blackboard) several times a week. There are few problems that cannot be solved by open and effective communication.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

STUDENTS FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS A SECOND LANGUAGE

In the past, some special arrangements have been made for students whose native language is not English. Please see me if you are a non-native English speaker and think you may have trouble in this course because of language difficulties.

Deadline	Last day to:
June 21:	Drop this course (100% refund, no W recorded)
June 23:	Drop this course (50% refund, no W recorded)
June 24:	Add this course
June 28:	Withdraw from this course (50% refund, W recorded)
July 8:	Withdraw from this course (0% refund, W recorded)
July 8:	Change grading option for this course

Course Activities

During this course, you will be asked to perform different activities. For each of these activities (see list below) you will get points that will sum up to your final grade. For some of these activities (i.e., electronic assignment, weekly report) you will gain the points just completing them, for others (i.e. quiz, final exam, in class participation, and term paper) the points will be proportionate to your performance.

** Electronic assignment (part 1): communication and material assessment*

To bring everybody up to speed, an early electronic assignment consists of

- activating your e-mail account (if you don't have one already);
- exploring the course web page (<http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>);
- acquiring the class reader for week 1;
- reading/checking the schedule and other web resources;
- sending me an E-mail describing:
 - what you did and found on the web page
 - who you are (Name and student ID#)
 - how many credits are you taking beside this class

** Electronic assignment (part 2): Term paper report*

During week 3 (no later than Tuesday July 6th) you are supposed to send me a brief e-mail describing your progress about the paper. Your report should include you name, the target article you have selected and your progress on each one of the points you need to include in your paper.

**Weekly responses*

Over the next 4 weeks, you will have many new ideas and make many new observations about social phenomena. Writing allows you to think about these ideas and to communicate them, so you will write weekly a 1-page response (300 words circa) for this course.

The responses can be reflections on the week topics, report of phenomena that you experienced and that are relevant to the topics, critique of an article you read, a proposal

for a new experiment, an application of a principle, a theoretical analysis of an everyday phenomenon, a description of an inconsistency in the literature, or an idea for a policy to solve a societal problem. Even if in order to gain the points you will be just asked to handle in your responses (response are due on Mondays during class time), I will read and comment on them (I will return them at the end of the same week). The week before each weekly-report is due (on Thursday), I will post a question or a outline that will help/guide you in reflecting and writing your weekly report. This outline is a help but it is not meant to be a limitation to your thinking and writing.

**Mid-Term Quiz/exam*

On Thursday (July 1) you will have a quiz at the beginning of the class. This prove counts for 100 points. There will not be any make up quizzes. During the quiz, you will be asked multiple-choice questions and few brief open questions. The prove will last only for part of the class time.

**Term Paper*

This is a medium-size paper (4-6 pp.; see below for required formatting). You will be able to summarize and use some of the ideas and knowledge you will acquire during the course in your paper. The papers should be clear and concise. This is your occasion to pick a small topic from social psychology and explore it. The format will be a critical discussion of a research article.

The paper need to cover several aspects:

- Brief description of the general topic the article is about;
- Brief summary of the article (e.g., research question, methods, results);
- Limits and problems with the article and possible solution (e.g., methodological problems or issues with author(s)'s interpretation);
- Future directions or additional research questions that could be asked. How?
- Importance/relevance and implication of the results for real life situation with at least one example.
- Bibliography that you used to support your arguments

During the first week I will give you a list of articles you can chose from (I will consider other suggestions for target articles, however you need to have my approval for using an article outside the lists).

During 3rd week (by Tuesday the 6th) you are supposed to send me an e-mail about your progress I will respond individually by e-mail about it and I will give you feedbacks if necessary.

Your report should include you name, the target article you have selected and your progress on each one of the points you need to include in your paper.

For your final paper, you will need to use empirical recourses (at least 3) and provide support for your arguments using the sources you gather.

You cannot simply make a claim or speculate without backing it up with arguments, examples, data, or literature sources. If you have any doubts or you just need more feedbacks you can talk to me at any time.

Because good writing requires feedback from others and multiple drafts, it is highly encouraged (not required) to exchange an initial draft of the paper with one of your classmate in order to have editing-feed-backs and suggestions. The final draft is due by 4 o'clock on Thursday July 15th at the front office (Straub 131). Please include a front page with your name, social security number and the title you picked for your paper.

Important note: ALWAYS keep a copy of your paper, either on disk, or on a hard copy. Your peer editors are no more reliable than you, perhaps less so, and they may misplace or forget your paper. You are responsible for having your paper turned in.

Formatting: The paper will be 4-6 pages long, double-spaced, 12 points font. The margin must not be more than 1 inch top and bottom, and 1,5 left and right. You will have to include a cover page with your name, your social security number and the title of the paper.

**Final Exam*

The final exam (scheduled for Thursday July 15th during class time) covers material from the lectures, the course reader, the article you picked for the paper, and all the activities related to the class (e.g., in class discussions). The exam will contain multiple-choice items and short-answer questions.

If you know you are not able to complete the final exam at the scheduled time (e.g., collegiate athletes' away events), you must talk to me **before** the exam date. In case of unforeseen events such as illness or death of a close relative, special arrangements can be made if documentation is provided. No other exceptions will be made.

Cheating is not tolerated. Students who will be discover in cheating (e.g., copied somebody else's paper) will fail the class.

If you decide to exchange and Peer editing someone else paper

Clear writing teaches clear thinking. Unfortunately, term papers are often written in a hurry, adding distractions to the difficulty of the task. Sometimes we are more concern with meeting the page minimum than with the quality of the paper. In addition, many creative ideas go unappreciated because they are drowned in muddled language.

An excellent way to learn to write well is by reading and commenting on other people's writing. Moreover, it is very insightful receiving other people's comments and suggestion about our own paper. For these reasons it could be very helpful to exchange and peer-review each other's term paper, provide comments and suggestions about all areas (see peer-review editing hints).

As an author, you should be as clear as possible so your editor has something to work with. As an editor, you should be as constructive as possible, so your author can improve his or her initial draft (see peer-review editing hints).

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