

PSY 456 - Social Psychology

Spring 2005

U and H 12.00-1.20 pm
(room 142 STRAUB Hall)

Instructor (first Unit): **Francesco Foroni**, r. 404 Straub Hall
Office hours: Thu. @ 2:00-3:50 pm & by appointment
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Phone: 346-0452

Instructor (second Unit): **Adam D. I. Kramer**, r. 383 Straub Hall
Office hours: Mon, 1-2 PM, Thu, 1:30-2:30 PM, & by appointment
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Phone: 346-3936

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. You should expect a fair amount of 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 research, 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 FORMAT

This course will be divided in 2 distinct UNITS.

- UNIT 1 (week 1-5): Instructor of the class will be Francesco Foroni.
- UNIT 2 (week 6-10): Instructor of the class will be Adam Kramer.

These two units are complementary and will cover different aspects and topics in Social Psychology. However, even if the course, for practical purposes, has been structured in this way, the topics covered in the two units are and need to be considered related and interdependent; moreover, the understanding of the major social psychology phenomena relies on the integration of knowledge from each of these units.

COURSE READINGS

The course has a moderate amount of required reading. 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).

The articles and chapters will be available (in pdf format) on blackboard.

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 on the mid-term and final exam
- write a creative and thoughtful final paper

COURSE GRADING SYSTEM

Your grade is based on a combined total from different activities. There are a total of 500 points.

UNIT 1: quiz/test (aka midterm)	Graded	= 200 points
UNIT 2: quiz/test (aka final)	Graded	= 200 points
1 Term Paper (7-10 pp.)	Graded	= 100 points
Total		500 points

COURSE ACTIVITIES

*****Mid-Term Quiz/exam*****

On Thursday (April 28th) you will have a midterm quiz/test during the class. It counts for 200 points, or 40% of your final grade. There will not be any make up quizzes/test. During the quiz, you will be asked multiple-choice questions and brief open-ended questions. The midterm quiz/test will cover the readings and the topics covered in class during the first 5 weeks (up to Tuesday April 26th).

*****Final Quiz/exam*****

On Tuesday (June 7th at 8 am) you will take the final exam. It counts for 200 points, or 40% of your grade. There will not be any make up quizzes/test. During the quiz, you will be asked multiple-choice questions and brief open-ended questions. The final quiz/test will cover the readings and the topics covered in class during the second 5 weeks (Tuesday May 3rd included).

If you know you are not able to complete the midterm and/or the final exam at the scheduled time (e.g., collegiate athletes' away events), you must talk to the instructor **before** the corresponding 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 are discovered in cheating (e.g., copying somebody else's paper) will fail the class and be reported to the University administration.

******Term Paper******

During this class you will write a 7-10 page paper. This is a medium-size paper (7-10 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 should include several components to fully display your understanding:

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

For your paper, you will need to use empirical recourses (at least 6) 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 feedback or source recommendations, you can talk to either instructor at any time

On Blackboard you will find a list of articles you can chose from (other suggestions for target articles will be considered, however you need to have instructor approval for using an article outside this list).

The paper needs to be sent by e-mail to the instructor before the deadline (see below).

Paper copies are not accepted, and electronic copies must be in Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, or plain-text format. If you have any trouble with this requirement, please speak to an instructor **before** the paper is due.

IMPORTANT NOTE: YOU HAVE THE CHOICE of writing the paper during:

- The **first 5 weeks** of the class (deadline May 2nd at 4 pm, send the paper to fforoni@uoregon.edu), OR
- The **second 5 weeks** of class (deadline June 2 at 4 pm, send the paper to adik@uoregon.edu).

There is no difference in grading between the two paper options; it is up to you to choose which topic you find most interesting, and to then write your paper in the appropriate unit. This is a good way to organize/schedule your working load for the term (e.g., if you have a lot of work during the first part of spring term you can choose to write your paper for the June deadline; on the other hand if you know you will be busy writing other

papers and finals at the end of the term, you may want to choose to write it for the first deadline).

During WEEK 1 you will be asked to choose one of the above options sending an-email to the instructor (fforoni@uoregon.edu). Your e-mail should include your name and the unit you intend to write your paper for. Not sending the e-mail may produce a penalty on your paper grade. Only due to documented, unforeseen events will changing from one paper option to the other be allowed.

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 or more of your classmates in order to gain good feedback and suggestions. Remember that your work must be your own, but the insight of others is certainly admissible for improving your own work. Due to the size of the class, the instructors will not be able to proof-read papers.

Important: ALWAYS keep an electronic copy of your paper. Your peer editors are no more reliable than you, perhaps less so, and they may misplace or forget about your paper. In addition, e-mails may get lost or not be properly delivered. You are responsible for having your paper turned in by the deadline.

Formatting: The paper should be 7-10 pages long (include a front page with your name, university ID# and a title for the paper), in a double-spaced, 12 point font with serifs (such as Times New Roman). The margins 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 University ID# and the title of the paper. It is not possible to write a sufficiently thorough paper in less than 7 pages; if you find yourself out of things to say before 7 pages, you have likely missed an important part of your paper. Similarly, no student should need more than 10 pages to express their critique. If you find yourself running over, ask yourself whether every word you have written is relevant. Papers that ramble or go off-topic will not receive excellent grades.

COMMUNICATION

It is important that we communicate effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. Come to class and contribute; see the instructor during office hours (or by appointment); make sure that you check your E-mail and the class web page (on blackboard). 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 the instructor 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.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND CLASS TOPICS

	TOPICS
UNIT 1	
(March 29 – April 28)	
<i>Week 1</i>	Orientation; Social Psychology: Definition and Principles Conformity and Obedience
<i>Week 2</i>	Social Perception Attributions
<i>Week 3</i>	Social Cognition Attitudes
<i>Week 4</i>	Attitudes and Behavior and Attitude change Social Categorization
<i>Week 5</i>	Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination Midterm quiz/test
UNIT 2	
(May 3 – June 2)	
<i>Week 6</i>	Inter-group Dynamics
<i>Week 7</i>	Inter-group Conflict
<i>Week 8</i>	Conflict Resolution Persuasion
<i>Week 9</i>	Self/Other
<i>Week 10</i>	Decision Making

IMPORTANT DATES

March 29: First day of class
June 2: Last day of class

Deadline	Last day to:
March 27:	Drop this course (100% refund, no W recorded)
April 4:	Drop this course (85% refund, no W recorded)
April 6:	Add this course
April 10:	Withdraw from this course (85% refund, W recorded)
April 17:	Withdraw from this course (50% refund, W recorded)
April 24:	Withdraw from this course (25% refund, W recorded)
May 15:	Withdraw from this course (0% refund, W recorded)
May 15:	Change grading option for this course (to graded, or to pass/fail)

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