

Introduction to Social Psychology (PSY 456/556)

Fall Quarter, 2009

Lecture on Monday/ Wednesday, 5:30pm – 6:50pm, 142 Straub

Instructor: Joshua A. Weller, Ph.D.
Office: 342 Straub
Telephone: 541.346.4921 (psychology main office)
E-mail: **weller@uoregon.edu**
Office Hours: Monday, 2:00-5:00, or by appointment

Course Website available at: <https://blackboard.uoregon.edu>

Course Overview and Format

This course will introduce students to social psychology. Social Psychology is a scientific field that seeks to understand the nature and causes of individual behavior, thought, and emotion in social situations. The objective of this course is to familiarize students with important issues and theories in the area, as well as key research findings and the methods used to gain knowledge in the area. Specific topics will include attitudes, attributions, aggression, prejudice, stereotypes, attraction, perceptions of others, conformity, obedience, social influence, and altruism.

Course grades will be based on 2 multiple-choice examinations, 6 quizzes, and a paper.

Required Texts

All required readings/materials will come from three sources:

1. Gilovich, T., Keltner, D., & Nisbett, R. E. (2006). *Social Psychology*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company. This textbook is available for purchase at the University of Oregon Bookstore.
2. Journal articles that can be printed from the Course/Blackboard website, or from Psych Info.

Exams

There will be 2 exams consisting mostly of multiple-choice questions. Exam questions will come from both lecture, textbook, and assigned readings. Doing well on the exams requires that you learn from the text, readings, and the lectures. The final will contain several short answer/short essay questions. The final exam is cumulative in the sense that you will be required to integrate concepts which recur throughout the course. In other words, for the final, I won't draw a test question directly from the textbook that was in the reading for the first half of the course. However, you should be able to apply broad theoretical concepts (i.e. recurring themes throughout the class) to new material.

Graduate students and undergraduates will take different versions of the exams.

Exam Make-Ups: A make-up exam will be scheduled only if a student has a legitimate, university-sanctioned reason for missing the exam (see Student Handbook, which can be located through the University of Oregon website). If you can anticipate that you must miss an exam (e.g., participatory UO athletic event, religious holiday), contact me via phone or email at least one week prior to the exam. **If you are unable to take an examination on time due to illness or an emergency, notify me before the examination is scheduled to begin by calling the psychology office at 541.346.4921 (leave a message) and sending me an email message.** In other words, do not ask me to make-up an exam after the date unless there were **EXTREME** circumstances contributing to your absence (i.e. death of an immediate family member, hospitalization, etc). Please note that, in such cases, if you do not have documentation of such extreme circumstances, you will NOT be allowed to take the make-up exam and you will receive a 0 on the exam. Be prepared to take the make-up exam at the earliest possible date. When you come to take the make-up, you will need to bring a completed Explanatory Statement of Absence from Class Form and any relevant documentation.

Quizzes

There are a total of six quizzes that you will take during class. These will happen periodically throughout the semester and will cover the journal articles that you read in the course. The primary purpose of these quizzes is to encourage students to read and think about the readings and comprehension questions before attending class. Hence, when an article is assigned to be read, you can anticipate taking a quiz over that article at the beginning of the class. To receive credit for a quiz, you must attend the entire class in which the quiz is taken. I practice a zero-tolerance policy on this rule. **THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THIS IS IF YOU HAVE A DOCUMENTED EXCUSE THAT YOU HAVE INFORMED ME ABOUT BEFORE CLASS BEGINS.** Each quiz will be worth 5 points.

Quiz Make-Ups: A make-up quiz will be scheduled only if a student has a legitimate, university-sanctioned reason for missing the quiz (see Student Handbook) and only if the student follows the procedures listed here. The same protocol as exam make-up should be followed. Make-up quizzes must be completed within 5 days of the missed quiz, unless there is a documented university-sanctioned reason why the make-up quiz could not be taken by this deadline.

The Paper

The paper assignment will be described in detail during a lecture later in the quarter. Students will have approximately 4 weeks to complete the assignment. The paper assignment will be different for graduate and undergraduate students.

Special Requirement for Graduate Students

Psychology 556 students are expected to attend a group graduate-student meeting with the instructor early in the quarter (typically in the second or third week of the term). Graduate students who have registered for Psy 556 will be expected to submit more extensive written work than the undergraduates and to play a prominent role in the class presentation.

Additionally, graduate students will also be given an additional reading list during the second week of the class. You will receive one "take-home" response question per week. By Thursday evening of each week, you will receive a question from me via email. This question will be based on the readings for the upcoming week (but may also require that you link those readings to information from earlier readings). Sometimes the question will be rather open-ended, and will simply require that you develop and justify a reaction to the set of readings. Your reply will be due to me, as an email attachment, on Monday at 5:00pm--prior to our class discussion of the readings. Please make the subject line read "Social Psychology Response Week X." Over the course of the semester, I'll give you about 10 questions. You should hand in responses to 5 of these questions; your scores for these 5 responses will constitute your overall weekly-question grade. Your responses should be double spaced and 1-2 pages only.

Presentation. Students taking the course for graduate credit are also required to prepare and deliver a 5-10 minute based on your paper. This presentation will be worth 5% of the final grade in the course.

Calculation of Grades

Undergraduate Scoring. The maximum possible points that you can earn in this class is 190 points, derived from three sources:

<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>POINTS</u>
Exams, 60 points Exam 1, 70 points Final	130
Paper, 30 points	30
Quizzes, 5 points each	30
TOTAL	190

Graduate Scoring. The maximum possible points that you can earn in this class is 190 points, derived from three sources:

<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>POINTS</u>
Exams, 60 points Exam 1, 70 points Final	130
Paper, 30 points	30
Quizzes, 5 points each	30
Summaries 10 points each	50
Presentation 15 points	15
TOTAL	255

Grades will be based on the percentage of the total possible points that you earned.

Generally speaking, grades will be approximately based on the following:

A > 90% B > 80% C > 70% D > 60%

It is possible that this grading scale will be made more lenient (but never more difficult) at various locations in the distribution. However, it is best for students to assume that no changes will be made to this grading scale.

Notes

If you missed a class period and need notes, **it is your responsibility to obtain the notes from a classmate**. So, it is to your advantage to get to know your classmates. Please do not ask me for summaries of the important parts or notes of a missed class. I do not post lecture slides, nor will I send them to you via email.

Communication

Because this course is work-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 you check Blackboard and your Email several times a week. In my experience, there are few problems that cannot be solved by open and effective communication.

Getting Help

I am here to help with questions or concerns. Please don't hesitate to ask for help. Emails will be responded to within 24 hours. **Email is my preferred method of communication.**

Prerequisites

The Psychology Department has a hierarchical course structure that requires students to complete certain prerequisites before taking upper level classes. The prerequisites for this course are PSY 303, WR 121 and 122 or 123. Students who are registered for this course without meeting the prerequisite requirements may be administratively dropped from the course.

Extra Credit

There will be no extra credit opportunities in this course.

Grading Appeals

If you wish to appeal the scoring of a quiz or paper, you must do so in writing within two weeks of the date that grades for that quiz or paper were made available. Summarize the point of disagreement and cite specific evidence supporting your perspective. Submit your appeal to me and I will review it.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me during the first week of classes.

Please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability. Students without a documented disability who are experiencing learning difficulties are encouraged to consult Disabilities Services (164 Oregon Hall; 346-1155; disabsrv@uoregon.edu; <http://ds.uoregon.edu/>). If you have a non-documented disability, I encourage you to contact Disabilities Services.

Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own and *produced exclusively* for this course. Members of the university community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. To falsify the results of one's research, to present the words, ideas, data, or work of another as one's own, or to cheat on an examination corrupts the essential process by which knowledge is advanced. It is the official policy of the University of Oregon that all acts of alleged academic dishonesty by students be reported to the Director of Student Judicial Affairs in the Office of Students Life.

If you are ever unsure about whether a behavior constitutes cheating, please ask me or one of the teaching assistants. There is more information about plagiarism at: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>

Here is quote from that site:

Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes.

All writing assignments will be checked thoroughly with **anti-plagiarism software**. By enrolling in this course you grant the instructor permission to do so.

Using Blackboard

The web site for this course was constructed using "Blackboard" software. This allows the web site to be extensive and interactive. On the web site, you will find general announcements for the class, all documents for the course (including this syllabus), on-line discussions, links to relevant web sites, and more. We hope that this web site will be a useful tool for you in learning the material for this class, and in further exploring topics you find interesting. You can get to the course web site by going to <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>. If you need help logging in or using Blackboard, see <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu/local/usingbb/>. Also you can get help starting by going to the library Information Technology Center (ITC) and/or see <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/kitc/faq/blackboard.html#help>.

CLASSROOM ETTIQUETTE

Talking in Class and Other Distractions

In order to respect the rights of other students, please **do not talk** while I am lecturing. If only 5% of the class talks during class, it is equivalent to the racket generated at a reasonably sized party! Talking makes it hard for other students to hear the lecture. Arriving late, leaving early, personal grooming, physical acts of affection towards other classmates, snapping the pages of *The Emerald* and loud snoring distract me and interfere with my ability to present the material clearly. If you would really prefer to do these activities, please don't come to class (although keep in mind you are responsible for material covered in class). Even if you are not interested in what I am saying, other people in the class may be, and your actions will detract from my ability to provide a good learning experience for them. If I find your behavior extremely disruptive, I may have to call attention to you to get you to stop or to ask you to leave. Please don't make me do this.

Turn your cell phone ringers OFF before coming to class.

Do not even think about taking or making a call during class unless you suspect terrorists have entered the classroom or one of your classmates is dying. Do not receive or send text messages during class. Do not make me ask you to stow your cell phone. If I ask you to put away your phone more than once, I may ask you to withdraw from the course or give you a failing grade for the class and ask you not to return. If a phone call is so important that you have to take it during class time, it is important enough to skip class for it – don't come to class if there is a phone call you know you must take (but keep in mind you are responsible for the material you miss in class).

Classroom “Climate”

It is my goal (although not always an achievable one) that you feel comfortable and respected – both by me and your peers – in this class. Please let me know if I or other students make you feel uncomfortable; ideally, something can be changed so you will feel more comfortable. If you feel that you or someone else has been the victim of bias in this class, you may consider contacting the Bias Response Team:
<http://bias.uoregon.edu/index.html>

LECTURE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Class Date	TOPIC	READING
<u>Week 1</u>		
September 30 th	Introductions, what we do, how do we study social psychology? Research Psychology	Chapter 1
<u>Week 2</u>		
October 5 th	Research Psychology/The Self	Chapter 1; Chapter 5 Pelham et al. (2002)
October 7 th	Attraction & Relationships	Chapters 3 & 4; McKenna et al. (2002)
<u>Week 3</u>		
October 12 th	Social Cognition	Chapter 1 (pp. 19-22); Chapter 10
October 14 th	Heuristics & Biases	Chapter 10; Gilovich et al. (2000); Savitsky & Gilovich (2003)
<u>Week 4</u>		
October 19 th	Attribution & Social Perception	Chapter 10; Frank & Gilovich (1988)
October 21 st	Group Behavior	Chapter 2; Moorehead (1991)
<u>Week 5</u>		
October 26 th	Stereotypes, Prejudice, & Discrimination	Chapter 11; PAPER ASSIGNED
October 28 th	Exam # 1	EXAM # 1;
<u>Week 6</u>		
November 2 nd	Persuasion	Chapter 7; Cialdini et al. (1975)
November 4 th	Attitudes & Behavior	Chapter 8
<u>Week 7</u>		
November 9 th	Cognitive Dissonance	Chapter 8; Stone et al. (1994); GRAD: submit paper topic
November 11 th	Emotion	Chapter 12; Dutton and Aron (1974); Bechara et al. (1997); Slovic (2007)
<u>Week 8</u>		
November 16 th	Conformity	Chapter 6
November 18 th	Obedience	Chapter 6; Gibson article
<u>Week 9</u>		
November 23 rd	Bystander Intervention	Chapter 13 (pp. 535-550)
November 25 th	NO CLASS- Thanksgiving	WORK ON YOUR PAPER
<u>Week 10</u>		
November 30 th	Aggression & Conflict	Papers due by 5:00 PST Chapter 13 (pp.516-534); Chapter 14; Bushman & Anderson (2002)
December 2 nd	Graduate Student Presentations	
December 7th	FINAL EXAM, 7pm	

Important Hints on How to Get the Most Out of This Course

Attend Class

Highly motivated students who have superior study skills can learn alone most of what the book presents to you--enough to do quite well on exam questions that cover the textbook material. However, a considerable amount of information that is not in the textbook will be presented in class. Research has shown that one of the best predictors of grades in courses is class attendance, and even the brightest students gain more insight by attending classes regularly.

Study Chapters Early

You will learn best by reading/studying the assigned text before coming to class. I will generally assume that you are reading the assigned text and studying the information contained in it. Therefore, I will not bring up terms/concepts that are well defined in the book. Sometimes I will emphasize particular concepts that are covered in the book. However, lack of emphasis or coverage during class periods does not mean lack of importance of material in the book.

Read, Study, and Take Notes Actively

Research shows that many individuals read and write passively, that is, without thinking about the meaning of what they are covering. In reading and studying textbook-type material, everyone (instructors included) must read actively and as a result somewhat slowly. You must try to understand what you are trying to learn within the framework of what you have already learned. Research shows that learning is much more effective if new information is related to old information. Passively writing down what is on the overhead screen or what is discussed in class without thinking about it--about how it fits with previous material in earlier classes or earlier in that lecture--will not help you learn or understand the material.

Study the Summaries and Section Headings Before and While You Read

Summaries and headings help you mentally organize what you read. The authors did not just cite a bunch of research; they presented an organized framework of ideas and information. You should seek to discover and understand their organization. Research shows that information is learned best when it is part of an organized mental framework. Also, whenever you read about a research study, ask yourself: "What was the main point of the study?" and "How do the results support the main point?"

Alter Your Expectations for Studying

Research consistently shows that students greatly underestimate the effort and time it takes to do a quality job of learning the new and complex material that is a part of most courses. Academic experts generally agree that for a typical four-credit semester-long course, spending at least 8 hours per week outside of class working on learning is the norm for reasonable achievement.

Keep the Big Picture in Mind

Not only must you learn quite an amount of information that you may consider rather detailed, but you should also strive to understand the broader themes and context at all times. Keep in mind what you have learned in previous chapters and lectures. Themes work best when understood together rather than in isolation. In fact, individuals who, after a course is completed, have gone back and reread the text book, report considerably greater understanding of material partly because the context has changed (e.g., they perceive chapter 2 differently after having studied chapters 3,4).

If You Have Questions, Ask Them

Questions enrich class in general and are strongly encouraged.