

Course Syllabus, Spring 2012
Psychology 456: Monday and Wednesday 12 :00 – 1 :20
242 Gerlinger Hall

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Course Description: In the field of social psychology, we study the effects of the real or imagined presence of others on the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals. The questions asked by social psychologists have to do with our daily lives in the social world, and often seek to find answers to social mysteries. For example, why would a teenage boy confess to a murder he never committed? Why would someone join a cult that forces her to give away all her worldly possessions and cease all contact with friends and family? Why would a woman in her 20's be attracted to an elderly man? In this course, we will answer these questions and many others by studying the five major perspectives of social psychology. In the context of these perspectives, we will look at the features of the person, the situation, and the interaction between the person and the situation that govern social behavior.

Research about learning has shown that students learn and retain material better in a situation in which learning is active rather than passive, and cooperative rather than individual. I have incorporated some of the principles of active and cooperative learning into my class, and try to be sensitive to the various types of learning styles that might exist among my students. To this end, we will do active learning exercises in this class that involve your participation. We will also do some group work. Oftentimes these in-class active learning and group exercises will have associated class credit. You must be in class to receive this credit.

Course Objectives: Social psychology is the scientific study of the ways in which people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by their social environment. The aims of this course are:

- To familiarize you with the concepts and theories of social psychology.
- Help you recognize the influence of the environment on behavior, thoughts, and feelings.
- Give you the capacity to interpret research findings.

Required Readings: Weekly readings from the textbook will be required for all students. Additionally, students will be required to read supplemental journal articles for some of the sections. The supplemental readings will be made available online.

Text: Aronson, E., Wilson, T. D., & Akert, R. M. *Social Psychology* (6th Edition) Prentice Hall.

Course Requirements: Your grade for this class will be based on 3 things:

1. **Exams:** There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. The exams will include questions taken from the text, lecture, and the supplemental readings. There is no way to cover all of the information contained in the textbook during lecture, so doing well on the exams will require that you learn from the textbook, supplemental readings, and the lecture. The final exam will NOT be cumulative. Each exam will be worth 30% of the final grade.

Makeup Exams: It is important to be prepared and present for all scheduled exams. However, I recognize that there are some situations in which you simply cannot make it to an exam. In the case of a serious illness, emergency, religious observance, or university sponsored event, make up exams will be allowed. If you have a scheduled university sponsored event or religious observance, you must let me know well in advance of the listed exam date (at least 1 week) and we will arrange for you to take an exam before you leave. If you have a serious illness or an emergency, you must let me know prior to the exam (before 9:00am) and we will make arrangements for a make-up. Documentation that verifies the event (e.g., a note from a physician) will be required upon request. If you have questions about what type of documentation is required for a specific situation, contact me.

2. **Paper:** You will have one paper due during the term. You will select one of the supplemental readings, or another article from a peer-reviewed social psychology journal and write a short paper. In your paper, summarize the purpose of the study, the design of the study, the analyses used, and what the researchers found. (20% of grade).

You will be expected to read empirical papers (which will be available on reserve in electronic format through the Blackboard website under either "Supplemental Readings" or "Other Good Articles") and write a short paper (4-5 pages) about one of them. For the paper, you will be required to summarize the authors' findings (explain the authors' hypotheses, explain how they tested those hypotheses, and talk about their findings). Then, you will need to analyze the paper, identifying the strengths and weaknesses, and suggesting studies that could be done to address the weaknesses and limitations. More details on this assignment will be given as we progress. Additionally, you will submit a draft which will then be reviewed by another student and returned to you for editing. More details on the papers will be made available online.

3. **Quizzes:** You are required to read the chapter and supplemental reading for each section which will be tested with a weekly quiz available on Blackboard. The quizzes will be made available after class on Thursday and will be due by the following Sunday evening. The tests will be about 10-15 questions and will be timed (1.5 minutes per question). The quizzes will be worth 20% of your final grade.

4. **Attendance:** Attendance is not required but is strongly recommended. We will cover some material in class that is not in the textbook.

Grading: Your final grade in the course is based on your total points accumulated on the two tests, your paper, attendance, and in-class assignments, as described above. To summarize:

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|--|---------------------|
| Exams (120 points each) | = 240 points |
| Short papers (65 points for final draft 15 for first draft and review) | = 80 points |
| Quizzes (8 at 10 point each) | = 80 points |
| Total | = 400 points |

The following grid provides the letter grade associated with each percent.

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|----|----------|----|----------|----|----------|----|----------------|
| A | 93-100% | B | 83-86.9% | C | 73-76.9% | D | 63-66.9% |
| A- | 90-92.9% | B- | 80-82.9% | C- | 70-72.9% | D- | 60-62.9% |
| B+ | 87-89.9% | C+ | 77-79.9% | D+ | 67-69.9% | F | 59.9% or below |

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.

Cheating/plagiarism: Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams, copying answers off of other students during exams, having other students help you falsify your attendance, and plagiarizing of any kind will absolutely not be tolerated in this class. At the very least, you will receive a zero on the assignment. I encourage you to review the University policy on academic dishonesty; you are responsible for behaving in accordance with this policy and continued enrollment in this class will be considered implicit agreement that you have read and accepted the terms of that policy.

Class Etiquette & Norms:

- Arrive on time and stay for the entire class.
- Treat your fellow students and your instructors with respect.
 - Turn the ringer off on your cell phone during class.
- If you attend class, please be attentive (no texting, reading novels, web-surfing, etc).
 - Ask questions and speak up during class.
 - Stop by and see Jordan and Junaid during office hours.
- Attendance is not required; do not attend class at all if you cannot meet these norms.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Reading is to be completed **before** the first class for which it is listed

Note: Last date to drop courses without receiving a “W”: April 9th

Last date to drop courses with “W” or change to pass/no pass: May 20th

Week One

Textbook Reading: Chapter 1 - Introduction to Social Psychology

No supplemental readings.

Due: Complete Quiz #1 on Blackboard (outside of class) by midnight **Sunday, April 8th**. Quiz will show up on Blackboard Wednesday evening after class (all quizzes will appear on Wednesday and be due by Sunday at midnight).

Week Two

Textbook Reading: Chapter 2 - Methodology

No supplemental readings.

Due: Quiz #2 Sunday at midnight.

Week Three

Textbook Reading: Chapter 3 - Social Cognition

Supplemental Reading:

Correll, J., Park, B., Judd, C. M. & Wittenbrink, B. (2002). The police officer's dilemma: Using ethnicity to disambiguate potentially threatening individuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 1314-1329.

Jussim, L. (1986). Self-fulfilling prophecies: A theoretical and integrative review. *Psychological Review*, 93, 429-445.

Due: Quiz #3 Sunday at midnight.

Week Four

Textbook Reading: Chapter 4 - Social Perception

Supplemental Reading:

Bodenhausen, G. V., & Macrae, C. N. (2006). Putting a face on person perception. *Social Cognition*, 24, 511-515.

Due: Quiz #4 Sunday at midnight.

Week Five

Textbook Reading: Chapter 5 - Self-Knowledge

Supplemental Reading:

Gilovich, T., Medvec, V. H., & Savitsky, K. (2000). The spotlight effect in social judgment: An egocentric bias in estimates of the salience of one's own actions and appearance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 211-222.

Due: Quiz #5 Sunday at midnight.

Week Six

Monday: EXAM 1(Chapters 1-5):

Textbook Reading: Chapter 6 - Justification

Joule, R. V. & Azdia, T. (2003). Cognitive dissonance, double forced compliance, and commitment. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33, 565-571.

Due: Quiz #6 Sunday at midnight.

Week Seven

Textbook Reading: Chapter 8 - Conformity

Supplemental Reading:

Milgram, S. (1963). Behavioral study of obedience. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 667, 371-378.

Due: First Draft of Paper: Wednesday

Quiz #7 Sunday at midnight.

Week Eight

Textbook Reading: Chapter 10 - Attraction

Supplemental Reading:

Buss, D. M. (1985). Human mate selection. *American Scientist*, 73, 47-51.

Buss, D. M. & Barnes, M. (1986). Preferences in human mate selection. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50, 559-570.

Due: Return the Reviewed Copy of Paper: Wednesday

Quiz #8 Sunday at midnight.

Week Nine

Textbook Reading: Chapter 13 - Prejudice

Supplemental Readings:

Sherif, M. (1961). Experiments in group conflict.

Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. M. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African-Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 797-811.

Swim, J. K., Aiken, K. J., Hall, W. S., & Hunter, B. A. (1995). Sexism and racism: Old-fashioned and modern prejudices. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68, 199-214.

Due: Final Draft of Paper Due: Wednesday

Quiz #9 Sunday at midnight.

Week Ten

Textbook Reading: Chapter 11 - Prosocial Behavior

Supplemental Reading:

Latané, B., & Darley, J. M. (1968). Group inhibition of bystander intervention in emergencies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 10, 215-221.

Due: Quiz #10 Sunday at midnight.

FINALS WEEK

Thursday June 14, 10:15 a.m. FINAL EXAM (Chapters 6, 8, 10, 11, and 13) in 242 Gerlinger Hall