

# Social Psychology - PSY 456 (CRN 37721) Spring 2014

## Global Scholars Hall 117, MW 2:00-3:20pm

**Instructor:** Devin Howington

**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday immediately following class (**3:20-4:20**). I can answer questions and talk with students in the Global Scholars Hall (the lounge/cafeteria area), and also can walk over with students to my office in 232 Franklin if the student prefers that location.

**Email:** [deh@uoregon.edu](mailto:deh@uoregon.edu)

### Course Overview

Social psychology is the study of people in context – in other words, social psychologists are interested in the thoughts and behaviors of people as they are out and about in real-world situations: with a group of friends at a football game, meeting a stranger for the first time, listening to a speech by the President, and so on. Social psychology deals directly with the fact that people are not thinking or behaving in vacuums. In that way, it can be one of the most fascinating and relevant topics, because the material deals with processes that happen in your everyday life: wondering about how others see you; deciding whether to give anything to the homeless person on the corner today; why your friend might have shoved that guy on the basketball court, etc. This class will give you insights on why we do the things we do, or think the things we think, and all the many influences that our environment can have on us. It's my hope that this class will affect the way you see yourself and others interacting in the social world.

### Learning Goals

1. Develop an understanding of the central questions, issues, and topics in social psychology, and learn that social psychology is a field of *scientific inquiry*.
2. Be familiar with the range of methods used to investigate psychological questions.
3. Respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes, both when encountering situations in your own life and in the media.
4. Apply a psychological principle to an everyday problem; or take an everyday situation and identify the relevant psychological mechanisms/issues.
5. Weigh evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinnings of psychology as a discipline.

### Required Materials:

1. Textbook: Aronson, E., Wilson, T.D., & Akert, R.M. (2010). *Social psychology* (7th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
2. Your own personal iClicker (will be used for Participation grades). It would be best to get an iclicker2, but the old ones should still work. You can share an iClicker with a friend if the iClicker is used in different classes, but everyone in this class has to have their own unique iClicker (no sharing *within* this class).

### Course Organization and Requirements

#### Lectures

In general, the material in the lectures will not exactly match the material in the text, as I will be incorporating findings from more recent research. That being said, the topics I cover will generally mirror those in the text. I recommend that you read the assigned textbook chapter *before* class, as it will give you a solid introduction and framework to help you understand the lecture material. Also, repetition has been shown to be a great way to enhance retention!

In addition to lectures, there will occasionally be a film or in-class demonstration or activity to

help illustrate the social psychological topics we will be studying.

I strongly encourage discussion and questions. You are encouraged to participate in course discussions and to interrupt me when I lecture in order to ask a question or to share an insight. My vision for your learning experience is for you to be engaged and active learners during this class. I want you all to think about the material deeply and apply it to your everyday lives, and to facilitate that, I encourage discussion and questions during class time (and after). To that end:

### Participation Credit

To encourage class attendance, staying alert in an afternoon class, and for assessing how the material is getting across to you all in the lectures, I will be using iClickers to measure participation. There will be several chances to use the clickers throughout class, and there may occasionally be a handout or some written group activity that may be turned in for participation points. All you have to do is bring your clicker and click in for no fewer than all but one of the questions that day. **For full credit, you may miss one day of class, and you may miss one question per day to deal with clicker error/bathroom breaks. iClickers must be registered on Blackboard by Monday of Week 2**, and points will start counting for real then too.

### Exams

There will be 2 exams in this course: 1 midterm and 1 final. The exams will involve multiple-choice questions, and will cover only material since the previous exam (non-cumulative). As we delve into the material, I will shed some light on the types of questions that I will ask on the exams. Prior to the first exam, I will distribute a couple sample questions to give you a feel for what I will likely ask (note what kind of clicker questions I am asking too...). Make-up exams will be scheduled only in *exceptional* circumstances, for students with documented medical problems or emergencies.

### Paper

The paper will help me to make sure that you all are able to see a situation in everyday life and apply what we have learned to explain the behavior of others. You will get more details on the assignment in Week 3. **The paper is due at the end of Week 9 on SafeAssign (see the "Lecture/Assignment Schedule")**.

### Critical Thinking Assignments (CTAs)

I want to make sure that you are using critical and creative thinking when it comes to learning about and applying social psychology, so the way I will assess how you're doing on that goal is to do a Critical Thinking Assessment every other week. There will be a prompt posted on Blackboard **every other week** (first one in Week 2- see the "Lecture/Assignment Schedule") and I will expect a written response to that prompt- **due on those Fridays at 5:00pm via SafeAssign**. These assignments will be very short and will have guidelines for each prompt- write concisely! Overly long statements will get downgraded.

**The grading system will be as follows:** 0 (didn't turn it in, or turned in something wholly unrelated), 1 (turned it in, but didn't put in a good faith effort or didn't understand the concept, or made me read 2 pages of stuff), 2 (put in a good faith effort and said something reasonable about the prompt). Your lowest CTA grade will be dropped. My goal is for these to be fun topics to think about; hopefully you will think they are fun too!

### Extra credit

The process of empirical research is at the core of social psychology. To give you first-hand experience of how the research process works, I am offering **2% extra credit** by participating in two hours of research through the subject pool.

Alternatively, you can earn the same credit by writing a two-page critical summary of an empirical research paper from a social psychology journal (contact me for a list of approved

journals). You should choose one or the other option, as I am offering a **maximum** of 2% extra credit.

## Policies

### Late/missed assignments

Due dates for each assignment are listed in the "Lecture/Assignment Schedule." Late assignments will not be accepted; there are no make-ups for participation points or Critical Thinking Assignments.

### Cheating/plagiarism

Please do not engage in any behavior that you think might be considered Academic Misconduct. I am generally easy-going, but I take academic integrity very seriously. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Also, **I have to make a mandatory report to Academic Misconduct for every suspected instance.** It's my policy to give a 0 on the assignment that you were found to be cheating/copying/plagiarizing on/in; the penalty could be more severe for more serious infractions. The work you put in on your Critical Thinking Assignments, your paper, and your exams is all expected to be your own.

### Students with special needs

I want to create an inclusive learning environment for all my students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation, or if you need particular accommodations, please notify me as soon as possible. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).

## Grading

Midterm	25%
Final	25%
Paper	25%
Critical Thinking Assignments	15%
Participation	10%

The final grade assigned for the course should reflect the student's overall performance in the course, as described by the following guidelines:

A	<i>excellent</i> work, complete mastery of course material
B	<i>good</i> work, grasps most of the important concepts
C	<i>average</i> work, grasps many but not all aspects of course material
D	<i>poor</i> work, insufficient understanding of material
F	Failing

Grades will be assigned based on your total percentage points in the course:

GRADE	PERCENTAGE		GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A+	99-100%		C	72-77%
A	92-98%		C-	70-71%
A-	90-91%		D+	68-69%
B+	88-89%		D	62-67%
B	82-87%		D-	60-61%
B-	80-81%		F	59% and Below
C+	78-79%			

### Lecture/Assignment Schedule

Month	Day	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
March	31	Introduction: What is Social Psychology?	Chapter 1	
April	2	Methods in Social Psychology	Chapter 2	
	7	Social Cognition: Automaticity and Biases	Chapter 3	
	9	Self and Social Identity	Chapter 5	Critical Thinking Assign. (due Friday@5pm)
	14	Self Justification	Chapter 6	
	16	Attitudes & Attitude Change	Chapter 7	
	21	Attitudes & Attitude Change (2)		
	23	Persuasion & Conformity	Chapter 8	CTA (due Friday@5pm)
	28	Social Influence		
	30	<b>Midterm</b>		
May	5	Groups: Group Cognition	Chapter 9	
	7	Groups: Intergroup relations	Chapter 13	CTA (due Friday@5pm)
	12	Person Perception	Chapter 4	
	14	Guest Lecture*		
	19	Prejudice and Stereotyping	TBA**	
	21	Aggression	Chapter 12	CTA (due Friday@5pm)
	26	<b>Memorial Day- No Class!</b>		
	28	Helping & Altruism	Chapter 11	Paper due Friday May 30th @ 5pm
June	2	Happiness and Close Relationships	Chapter 10	
	4	Ecological Psychology- Applying Soc. Psych.	TBA**	CTA (due Friday@5pm)
	<b>10 (Tuesday) Final 3:15pm, 117 GSH</b>			

\*I'll have to miss this lecture, but you'll be getting a really great guest lecture (and you'll need to know that material for the test).

\*\*These readings will be one original article, which will be posted on Blackboard at least 2 weeks in advance of that class.