

Psychology 312 - Social Psychology Spring 2014

University of Illinois at Chicago

Tuesday and Thursday, 3:30 – 4:45

LCD 2

Call no. 14677 (3 Credit Hours)

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3pm and by appointment.

Teaching Assistants

Brittany Hanson (bhanso5@uic.edu) – Brittany will be your main contact for questions regarding exams.

Katherine Valenta (kvalen9@uic.edu) – Katherine will be a contact for paper questions

Another TA TBA

Text

Aronson, E., Wilson, T. D., & Akert, R. M. (2012). *Social Psychology, 8th Ed.*, Pearson Education. Upper Saddle River: New Jersey.

Course Goals and Description

Social psychology is the scientific study of the ways in which the social environment influences people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. In pursuit of this understanding, social psychology relies heavily on the scientific method. The primary goal of this course is to introduce you to both the theories and methods of social psychology. In addition, an interesting feature of social psychology is that many of the concepts you will learn apply to your everyday life. A secondary goal of this course is to help you understand how the social environment influences your behavior and the behavior of others around you. Consequently, it will be important to your success in this course that you not only have a basic understanding of the concepts discussed in the text and during lecture, but also how those concepts relate to the real world.

Requirements

Participation/ Minute Papers. Even though the class is fairly large, class participation and attendance is expected. During lecture there will be times where you will take 5 minutes to write a brief paragraph about a topic-relevant issue (you will respond to a thought question, no special preparation beyond reading that week's chapter will be necessary). These papers will be offered up to 10 times during the semester. The purpose of these papers is two-fold. First, these papers will give you an opportunity to think and write about the course material. Second, these papers can only be completed during class, will not be announced in advance, and there will be no make-up opportunity for minute papers. Thus it is important that you attend class regularly so that you do not miss any opportunities to complete the assignments. However, recognizing that people sometimes have to miss class, I will drop one of your minute papers. Minute papers will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Basically, if you are present when a paper is offered and write a thoughtful paragraph you will receive a pass.

Exams. Exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Questions will require that you have a good understanding of the concepts and theories discussed in class, as well as evidence to support this understanding. Please note: The exam dates are provided in the syllabus. You are expected to show up for the scheduled exams. A total of 4 exams will be offered throughout the semester. Of the 4 exams, only the final will be cumulative. You may drop your lowest exam grade (including the final, if you wish). I will drop your lowest exam for several reasons. The primary reason one exam will be dropped is that it eliminates the need for make-up exams. **Make-up exams will not be given under any circumstances.** You may know in advance that you will be out of town on a particular exam day, or be sick or oversleep on the day of the exam. If this were to occur, you would not need to worry about missing the exam because that exam will be dropped. A second reason I drop the lowest exam is that everybody has a bad day now and then. If you happened to take an exam on a day you were not prepared and you were not satisfied with your score, you could take the final exam. If the score on your final is better than one of your previous exams, the earlier exam would be dropped from your final grade calculation. However, this can only happen if you take the first three scheduled exams. In addition, if you are happy with your first three exam scores, you are not required to take the final.

Readings. You will be expected to have read the required chapters by the time the section exam is offered. You may read the text before or after the pertinent lecture. The exam will be written based on the assumption that you have read the material presented in the text. I **highly** recommend that you do the reading as we go along rather than trying to cram the reading in at the last minute in preparation for an exam.

Term Paper. In addition to exams and minute papers you are required to write a 5-7 page APA-style paper that will comprise 15% of your final grade. In the paper, you will summarize two recent empirical research articles on the same social psychological research topic (e.g., prejudice, helping). These articles will come from top-tier journals in social psychology (Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, and/or Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin).

All papers must be formatted with one-inch margins, using 12 point Times New Roman font. Although there is no length requirement, the goals of the paper can usually be accomplished in five to seven double-spaced pages. You will be evaluated on your ability to carefully summarize the research articles and connect it back to the class material. Additionally, you will be graded on the clarity of your summary and the correct use of APA style, spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

Papers must be turned in on time (see below for paper due date), but can be turned in at any point in the semester prior to the due date. Papers turned in after the due date will be graded down 10% each day it is late.

Grades

Letter grades will be based on the following scale:

A – 100 - 89.5%

B – 89.4 - 79.5%

C – 79.4 - 69.5%

D – 69.4 – 59.5%

E – 59.4% and below

Your final grade will be weighted in the following way:

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Three exams | 80% |
| Paper | 15% |
| Minute papers | 5% |
| ----- | |
| Total | 100% |

Miscellaneous:

When you are in class, I ask that you be courteous to me as well as your fellow students. **Please do not have conversations with or write notes to fellow students during lecture. In addition, please do not listen to your MP3 player, send text messages, or engage in similar distracting behaviors.** You may feel like you are an anonymous student in a class and that the instructor doesn't notice. Instructors do notice these things. I find these kinds of behaviors distracting, and it ultimately disrupts the class. If I ask that you stop doing some behavior and you persist, I will ask you to leave class. In extreme cases, I will ask you not to come back, and you will have to forfeit any points you receive for attending lecture.

It will be your responsibility to keep track of your scores in Blackboard. If you notice that a score has been incorrectly entered into Blackboard, you must show the original paper with the correct grade to your TA by Monday of finals week.

In fairness to the vast majority of students who take their college career seriously, **no form of cheating will be tolerated. If you cheat on any exam or assignment in this class, you will fail the entire class and I will file official judicial charges against you immediately with the Dean of Students, who will place a notice about the incident in your permanent record.** There will be no exceptions to this policy.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, looking on others' tests or letting them look on yours during a test, copying or giving others test answers, and plagiarism which includes copying the words of a fellow student or any other author in your papers, copying even short phrases from written work that you are using as a reference (even if you cite it properly), handing in work that you have handed in for another class, handing in papers you've gotten from the internet or from other students, etc.

All violations of student conduct or academic integrity will be handled according to UIC's student conduct policy: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/studentconduct.html>

Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Please contact ODS at (312) 413-2103 (voice) or (312) 413-0123 (TTY). Information about reasonable accommodations is found at http://www.uic.edu/depts/oa/disability_resources/faq/accommodations.html.

University policy on incomplete grades is very strict. The professor will grant an incomplete grade only under the most extreme circumstances. **Do not request an incomplete unless the following conditions apply (taken from the undergraduate catalogue):**

Course work is incomplete when a student fails to submit all required assignments or is absent from the final examination; incomplete course work will normally result in a failing grade. The IN (incomplete) grade may be assigned in lieu of a grade only when all the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student

is unable to complete all course work due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor; (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due. The instructor must submit an Incomplete report with the final grade roster for the IN to be recorded. This report is a contract for the student to complete the course work with that instructor or one designated by the department executive officer in the way described and by the time indicated on the report. In resolving the IN, the student may not register for the course a second time, but must follow the procedures detailed on the report. An IN must be removed by the end of the student's first semester or summer session in residence subsequent to the occurrence, or, if not in residence, no later than one calendar year after the occurrence. When the student submits the work, the instructor will grade it and change the IN to the appropriate grade. If an undergraduate fails to meet the stated conditions, the instructor will assign an E for the final grade.

Students who miss class are responsible for all notes, announcements, and handouts for that class.

Note that you will be graded according to the grading criteria listed above. **Please do not ask to be bumped up to the next highest grade at the end of the semester** (e.g., ask me for a C in the course when you have a 67.7% in the course). I will not do this. The number one factor that puts students in this situation is missing class. I have a drop policy because I understand that sometimes students must miss class. However, if you are the type of student who frequently misses classes for any reason (e.g., work, family responsibilities, etc.), I recommend that you drop my course and take another course in which attendance is less likely to affect your grades.

With this said, **if you have any problems or concerns throughout the class, please come see us during our office hours, before it is too late at the end of the semester.** I am happy to work with you during the semester to help facilitate your understanding of the course material. Please use office hours whenever possible, but I am willing to make appointments if your schedule makes it impossible to make office hours.

Note that you can also email me, however, **please understand that I receive many e-mails in a given day.** Each semester I teach up to three classes and have as many as 300-400 students. At this point I am unable to respond to all of the emails I receive. Provided you ask a reasonable question and articulate yourself clearly in your message, I will respond. If what you ask is a good question that is relevant to the rest of the class, I will frequently address your question in class instead of responding to the e-mail.

Finally, note that, although e-mail may seem private and secure, sending an e-mail is roughly like sending a postcard through the regular mail. Anyone who desires to take a look, and, in the case of email, has some technical knowledge, can do so. While your TAs and I will keep any information you send us via e-mail private, there is no guarantee that the information you send is secure and no one else would be able to read it. This is not likely to be a concern in most instances, but may be important to consider when contacting me regarding certain topics. If you would like to discuss a sensitive topic, it would be best to see me during office hours, after class, or by appointment.

Tentative Course Schedule

Note: This topic schedule is tentative; topics may take more or less time to cover depending on class understanding of various topics. It is your responsibility to track these changes. Therefore, you must attend class every day to stay on top of any changes that might occur.

| Week # | Date ¹ | A, W, & A Chapter | Lecture Topic |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | 1/13 | CH 1, CH 2 | Introduction |
| 2 | 1/20 | CH 3 | Methodology Social Cognition |
| 3 | 1/27 | CH 4 | Social Cognition (Cont.) Social Perception |
| 4 | 2/3 | CH 5 | Self Knowledge |
| 5 | 2/10 | CH 6 | Self Justification |
| 6 | 2/17 | CH 7 | EXAM 1 – Tuesday, February 18 Attitudes and Persuasion |
| 7 | 2/24 | CH 8 | Attitudes and Persuasion Conformity |
| 8 | 3/3 | CH 8 | Conformity (Cont.) |
| 9 | 3/10 | CH 9 | Group Processes |
| 10 | 3/17 | CH 10 | Attraction EXAM 2 – Thursday, March 20 |
| SB | 3/24 | ----- | No Class |
| 11 | 3/31 | CH 11 | Prosocial Behavior Paper due Friday April 4 |
| 12 | 4/7 | CH 12 | Aggression |
| 13 | 4/14 | CH 13 | Prejudice |
| 14 | 4/21 | CH 14,15,16 (skim) | Application of Social Psychology |
| 15 | 4/28 | ----- | EXAM 3 – Tuesday, April 29 |
| Final Exams | 5/5 | ----- | FINAL EXAM -- 1:00-3:00 p.m. Friday, May 9 |

¹The date corresponds to the Monday of that week (e.g., Week 1 begins on Monday, 1/13)