
PSY 340: Social Psychology, Spring 2008

Tuesday/Thursdays from 9:30-10:45, Room AL 105

"Start with a phenomenon" Roger Brown

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS:

Broadly speaking the goal of this course is to introduce you to social psychology and to the methods social psychologists use to examine everyday human behavior. Upon completion of this course you should have a basic understanding of:

1. How social psychologists answer questions about social behavior.
2. How we process information about other people.
3. The social nature of the self-concept and self-presentational behaviors.
4. The associations between attitudes and behavior.
5. Variables that influence message processing and persuasion.
6. How others elicit conformity and obedience.
7. When and why we are likely to help others.
8. Situational determinants of aggressive behavior.
9. The origin and effects of stereotypes and prejudice (and how these can be reduced).
10. Variables that influence intergroup conflict.
11. How groups influence the judgments made by individuals in social situations.
12. The distinctions between automatic and controlled processes.

COURSE MATERIALS:

The textbook (Myers, 2005. *Social Psychology*, 9th edition) is required for this course. It can be purchased at the SDSU Bookstore (Aztec Shops). The CD-ROM and Study Guide are optional. From time to time I will be talking about research that is not covered, or not well covered, in the book. Do not panic, if you attend lecture then you will receive all the information that you need to answer any questions that may appear on the exams. If you are interested in getting a copy of the articles, then please let me know. Again, reading the articles is not necessary for the exam.

COPIES OF LECTURE SLIDES AND LECTURE FORMAT:

Copies of the PowerPoint slides will be available on the Blackboard site under Course Documents (**NOTE:** These slides are a basic framework for that day’s lecture and will not serve as a substitute for the lecture itself). The only way to ensure that you receive all the information is to attend the lecture and fill in the gaps in the slides. By doing this I hope to encourage you to listen and get involved in the lecture rather than passively following along. As a consequence, you should be able to think at a more abstract and/or theoretical level about the material discussed in class. In addition to the lecture slides there will be a number of in-class exercises, videos, and demonstrations that will highlight and reinforce particular topics. By using a variety of media and discussion aids it is my aim that the “psychology of everyday life” will come alive.

CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE:

Learning is a collaborative process, thus I encourage you to be an active participant in class and I will do my best to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to this process. Accordingly, you should feel comfortable asking questions and contributing to class discussions. I expect everyone to show respect for each other and to refrain from actions that might disturb other students in the class. Beepers and cell phones **MUST** be turned off during class time.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS:

Students who need special accommodations should speak to me directly. Please **DO NOT** wait until the first exam to make these arrangements. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services (619-594-6473, Calpulli Center, Suite 3101), then please do so before speaking to me.

ATTENDANCE FOR EXAMS AND LECTURES:

You will not be permitted to take an exam if you arrive more than fifteen (15) minutes after the exam has started. There will be **NO EXCEPTIONS** to this policy! Out of respect for your fellow classmates and me, please do your best to be on time for the lectures. If you are late, then enter as quietly as possible without speaking to your neighbors about the things you have missed so far. These types of discussion should occur outside of class. Finally, you are not required to attend all classes, but if you do miss a lecture make sure to get the notes from a classmate because the exams will cover material that was only discussed in lecture.

QUICK VIEW OF THE EXAM SCHEDULE:

Midterm 1	Feb. 12	Chapters 1, 3, 7
Midterm 2	Mar. 6	Chapters 2, 4, 6, 8
Midterm 3	Apr. 10	Chapters 10, 11, 13, 15
Midterm 4	May 6	Chapters 5, 9, 12
Optional Final Exam	May 13	Comprehensive (begins at 10:30 AM)

EXAM INFORMATION:

The four midterms will include material from the assigned textbook chapters and associated lectures, including any demonstrations or videos. Basically anything is fair game as long as it was covered in the book or during lecture. Bring a scantron (form NO-19641, it is a half-page blue sheet) and a No. 2 pencil to each exam. Other answer sheets **CANNOT** be used. All the midterms and final exam will be multiple-choice, and will contain 35 questions. Your final grade

is based on your four highest exam grades, so it is in your best interest to take all four midterms and the final exam so that you can drop your lowest grade. If you miss any of the midterms or final exam (however, you should NOT miss more than one exam), then your grade is simply based on the four exams that you did take. There are NO make-up exams for this course!

NOTE: If you are taking part in an official University activity that requires you to be away from campus on a given exam date then you can make arrangements with me to take the exam on the same date as the rest of the class. Please see me PRIOR to the first exam (Feb. 12) if you need to make such arrangements for any of the exams. If you DO NOT make such arrangements BEFORE the first exam then I will assume that you do not need any special arrangements.

FINAL EXAM:

The final exam is comprehensive. That means anything that was covered during the semester is fair game for the final exam. A word to the wise: If you keep up with your reading and attend lecture on a regular basis, then the final exam should be fairly straightforward. As is true for all exams the best strategy is to stay up to date on the readings and your lecture notes.

GRADING PROCEDURES:

Letter grades will be assigned on the total points from your four BEST exam grades. There is a total of 140 points possible for this course. So, to calculate your grade for the course all you will need to do is add up your four best exam grades (plus any extra credit you might earn). You can also use the percentage ranges to figure out what your letter grade is for each of the exams.

128 - 140 =	A	91% - 100%
122 - 127 =	A-	87% - 90%
116 - 121 =	B+	83% - 86%
110 - 115 =	B	79% - 82%
105 - 109 =	B-	75% - 78%
99 - 104 =	C+	71% - 74%
94 - 98 =	C	67% - 70%
88 - 93 =	C-	63% - 66%
83 - 87 =	D+	59% - 62%
77 - 82 =	D	55% - 58%
71 - 76 =	D-	51% - 54%
0 - 70 =	F	0% - 50%

POSTING GRADES:

As soon as possible after each exam I will post the grades. Grades will be posted in the Gradebook section on the Blackboard site, and I will notify everyone by email when the grades are posted. This posting will provide a record of your exam performance to date.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Cheating on examinations will result in disciplinary action. Claiming credit for a class activity that you did not complete is also a form of academic dishonesty and will result in disciplinary action. If you are unsure about what constitutes academic dishonesty then please ASK me before you do anything that could result in disciplinary action.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES:

For this course you will have an opportunity to earn extra credit points. Of course you do not need to take part in any or all of these extra credit opportunities, you may simply choose the ones that are of interest to you. You can earn up to a maximum of 6 extra credit points. All extra credit opportunities must be completed by 5:00 PM, May 11. I will NOT accept any extra credit after that date. Below you will find more details about each of these extra credit opportunities.

(1) Attending a Social Psychology Talk (maximum of 3 points): One aspect of being an academic social psychologist is giving formal research presentations. These presentations are a way for us to tell an audience about our research that may be less constrained than our academic papers. In other words it is a chance to use our story telling talents to make our research come alive to an audience. As is the case at many schools our psychology department has a regular *Social Psychology Speaker Series* for which we bring in speakers from local universities as well as from universities all over the United States and abroad to talk about their research. In order to earn extra credit for this exercise you must attend one of these talks (generally scheduled on every other Monday throughout the semester from 12:00-1:00 PM in room LS-101) and then afterwards write a 2-page paper summarizing the talk as well as providing some of your own insight into the research that was presented. Your paper MUST be in 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. I will post a list of the speakers for this semester on the course website as soon as it is available. I will also make announcements in class on the Thursday before each talk. Please email me your paper.

(2) Watching a Movie (maximum of 3 points): Movies are an easy way to spot, analyze, and discuss the “psychology of everyday life”. That is, movies often highlight or utilize many social psychological principles that are covered in this course, thus by watching your favorite movie, or any movie for that matter, you should be able to identify a number of the topics, issues, and/or phenomena discussed in this course. In order to earn extra credit points for this exercise you will need to write a 2-page paper detailing 3 social psychological principles (e.g., “foot in the door”, “fundamental attribution error”, “group think”) portrayed in any movie of your choosing. To earn all 3 points you need to identify and describe clearly how the movie portrayed a particular principle via plot or character development, dialogue or through some type of behavior. You will receive 1 point for each principle (given that it meets the above mentioned criteria). Your paper MUST be in 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. Please email me your paper.

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Date	Lecture Topic (Chapter)	Pages
Jan. 22	Course Overview and Introduction to Social Psychology (Chapter 1)	3-16
Jan. 24	Research Methods and Classic Experiments	17-29
Jan. 29	Judgments and Heuristics (Chapter 3)	75-98
Jan. 31	Attributions and Social Beliefs	98-117
Feb. 5	Persuasion and Social Pressures (Chapter 7)	223-259
Feb. 7	Videos: <i>The Power of the Situation</i> and <i>Constructing Social Reality</i>	no reading
Feb. 12	Midterm 1, Chapters 1, 3, 7	
Feb. 14	Conformity and Obedience (Chapter 6)	187-221
Feb. 19	Attitudes and Behavior (Chapter 4)	120-136
Feb. 21	Reasons for Attitudes and Attitude Change	136-149
Feb. 26	Self Knowledge (Chapter 2)	33-51
Feb. 28	Self-Esteem and Self-Biases	51-73
Mar. 4	Group Influence (Chapter 8)	261-297
Mar. 6	Midterm 2, Chapters 2, 4, 6, 8	
Mar. 11	Aggression and Intergroup Conflict (Chapter 10)	343-354
Mar. 13	Influences on Aggression	354-379
Mar. 18	Attraction and Relationships (Chapter 11)	381-407
Mar. 25	Love, Jealousy, and Relationships	407-425
Mar. 27	Conflict and Peacemaking (Chapter 13)	467-505
Apr. 8	Social Psychology and the Law (Chapter 15)	541-566
Apr. 10	Midterm 3, Chapters 10, 11, 13, 15	
Apr. 15	Video: <i>The Angry Eye</i>	no reading
Apr. 17	Stereotyping and Prejudice (Chapter 9)	301-341
Apr. 22	Stereotyping and automaticity	301-341
Apr. 24	Culture and Gender Roles (Chapter 5)	153-171
Apr. 29	Gender Issues	171-185
May 1	Helping Behavior and Altruism (Chapter 12)	427-465
May 6	Midterm 4, Chapters 5, 9, 12	
May 13	Optional Comprehensive Final Exam (10:30-12:30, AL-105)	