

Social Psychologists study how people think about, influence, and relate to one another. An introductory social psychology course surveys the major theories and research in the field. Any introductory course also reflects the interests and expertise of the instructor. My goal is to offer you a “taste” of what social psychologists do and why they do it. The course should also provide you with new insights on your own social world.

The course consists of readings, lectures, and experimental demonstrations. The text is full of information. In the lectures, I attempt to provide perspective, demonstrate research, and discuss what I think are some of the more important and interesting issues. I hope that there will be plenty of give-and-take during the lectures. The experimental demonstrations are designed to provide you with direct experience in how social psychology is conducted. The information collected will be used to illustrate material in the lectures and text. Any information that you provide will be completely confidential and anonymous. Participation is voluntary and you receive bonus points for participating.

Make an appointment if you would like to meet with me outside of class time. You can arrange an appointment by emailing me. I am happy to answer general questions about the course, the psychology program at Wloo, and graduate school. You can also meet with the teaching assistants. The teaching assistants can help you prepare for exams and understand your exam grades. It is best to arrange an appointment via email directly with one of the TAs.

Course Requirements and Grading

Requirements

Term Tests

You will take four midterms during the semester. Each test will contain 30 multiple choice questions, which you will have 40 minutes to complete. The tests will cover material that is presented in lectures and text, and are **not** cumulative. In general, there will be no make-up exams, but in cases of severe illness (with a doctor’s note) or other extenuating circumstances a make-up exam will be offered with my prior approval. There will be no final exam.

Optional Paper

You can write a short paper applying what you have learned in the course. The essay is optional. If you do not submit an essay, each midterm will be worth 25%. Your final grade will be the sum of your four midterm grades plus any bonus points for participating in the experimental demonstrations. **If you do submit an essay, the essay grade cannot lower your final grade but can raise it.** If it is to your benefit, we will replace your lowest midterm grade with your essay grade. We will do the replacement only if it raises your grade.

The paper should be about 2000 words (which roughly translates into 7 double-spaced pages with reasonable fonts and margins, but pay attention to the word count and not the page count). Here is what the paper should be about:

You have a friend who has two children, a 12-year old and a 10-year-old, who do not get along. They constantly argue and refuse to share their possessions. Your friend hears that you have taken a course in social psychology and are now an expert in interpersonal relations. She asks you for advice. In your essay, tell us what advice you would offer. ***Justify your recommendations by showing how it is supported by research and theory in social psychology.*** That is, briefly describe relevant research and theory and directly connect it to your suggestions. You should be able to find all of the information you need in the text and lectures. Provide a citation (e.g., a page number in the text or a lecture number) for each suggestion that you make. Your paper will be evaluated in terms of the number of suggestions you make (**offer at least 6 suggestions**) and the justification that you provide for each suggestion. Justify your suggestions by clearly linking your advice to information—theory and/or research—learned in the course.

A hard copy of the paper will be due by 12 noon, Monday December 11. No extensions will be granted.

Experimental Demonstrations

The demonstrations will be posted on the website throughout the term. You can participate at any point prior to the deadline specified for each demonstration. You will receive bonus points for participating (see below) by the deadline, but your participation is entirely voluntary. By participating you will learn more about how social psychology research is conducted and you will provide data that can be discussed in the relevant lecture. Your responses will be anonymous and confidential and only group averages will be presented in the lectures.

Grading

Each midterm will be worth 25% of your grade. You can replace one midterm grade with your grade on the optional paper. You will receive .5 bonus points for each experimental demonstration in which you participate by the specified deadline.

I assume that all the work that you submit will be your own work and will not tolerate plagiarism. As you probably know the Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as “the act of presenting the ideas, words or other intellectual property of another as one’s own.” This means among other things that you will not submit someone else’s work, copy someone else’s work, or cheat in any other way. It means positively that you will cite work properly. You should read Policy #71 in the Undergraduate Calendar for a full discussion of these matters.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Topic	Readings
Monday	9/11	Introduction & Research Methods	Chapter 1
Wed	9/13	Introduction Cont'd	
Monday	9/18	The Self in a Social World	Chapter 2
Wed	9/20	The Self in a Social World	
Mon	9/25	Social Evaluation Theories	p. 43- 45, 193-195, 323-324
Wed	9/27	Social Evaluation Theories	
Mon	10/2	Midterm 1 Social Beliefs and Judgments	Chapter 3
Wed	10/4	Social Beliefs and Judgments	
Mon	10/9	No Class (Thanksgiving)	
Wed	10/11	Behavior and Attitudes	Chapter 4
Mon	10/16	Behavior and Attitudes	
Wed	10/18	Culture, Language, Gender	Chapter 5

Mon	10/23	Culture, Language, Gender	
Wed	10/25	Midterm 2 Conformity	Chapter 6 & pages 260-273
Mon	10/30	Conformity	
Wed	11/1	Persuasion	Chapter 7
Mon	11/6	Prejudice	Chapter 12
Wed	11/8	Prejudice	
Mon	11/13	Midterm 3 Aggression, Ethnocentrism, & Peacemaking	Chapters 13
Wed	11/15	Aggression, Ethnocentrism, & Peacemaking	
Mon	11/20	Vengeance and Forgiving Social Psychological Justice Theories	Experimental Demo
Wed	11/22	Social Psychology and the Justice System	Module B (504-519)
Mon	11/27	Liking Loving and Relating	Chapter 11
Wed	11/29	Liking and Loving and Relating	
Mon	12/4	Midterm 4	