

**Social Cognition
Psychology 353**

Spring 2011

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Readings:

Text: Social Cognition: Making Sense of People

Author: Z. Kunda

Journal articles listed on the schedule

The journal articles will be available on UW-ACE.

Course Description and Objectives

As the title of the course suggests, this class will deal with social phenomena and focus on the cognitive aspects of these phenomena. Although social cognition is a blend of both social psychology and cognitive psychology, as I teach it, it is more closely allied with social psychology. We will examine how people's thoughts affect the way they interact with the world and how people's interactions with the world affect their thoughts.

I have seven goals for this course:

1. That you will gain some understanding of basic concepts and theory in social cognition.
2. That you will understand how the processing of information affects our understanding of the world
3. That you will learn how perceptions of ourselves and others are shaped by our thought processes and motivations.

4. That you gain some appreciation for how cultural factors affect our thoughts and perceptions of ourselves and others.
5. That you will gain some ability to apply principles from the class to experiences in your life and that you see in the media.
6. That you will learn the basics of research methodology and will be able to differentiate a good study from a bad study.
7. That you will learn to read and understand primary source material.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

Requirements

1. **Tests** - There will be two tests in the course--midterm exams on February 9th on April 4th. Both exams will be part multiple choice, part short answer, and part essay. They will cover material from lecture and from the readings. You should note that doing the readings – particularly the journal articles will be crucial for success on the tests. Neither exam will be cumulative. In general, there will be no make-up exams, but in cases of severe illness or other extenuating circumstances I will deal with make up exams on a case by case basis. There will also be a final exam. This exam will be cumulative. If you do better on the final exam than your lowest midterm, your score on the final exam will replace your worst test performance. You can also take the final exam to replace an exam that you missed during the semester with the final counting as both the missed midterm and as the final.
2. **Example portfolio** - You should collect a set of examples of real-life illustrations of phenomena that you have learned about in class. These examples should be from the media (TV, newspapers, magazines, etc.). For each example you need to briefly define the phenomenon that your example relates to and explain exactly how your example maps onto it. You should be able to do this in 1/2 a page and you should not take more that one double space page.

Please don't wait until the end of the term to construct your portfolio – this will almost inevitably have a negative impact on your grade. You should work on your portfolio across the semester. You should collect 4 examples must have a copy of the article if it comes from print media or a citation of where you saw the example if it comes from television or another non-print media. The portfolio is due March 23rd in class.

3. **Research Experience Marks**

Information and Guidelines

Experiential learning is considered an integral part of the undergraduate program in Psychology. Research participation is one example of this, article review is another. A number of undergraduate courses have been expanded to include opportunities for Psychology students to earn grades while gaining research experience.

Since experiential learning is highly valued in the Department of Psychology, students may earn a **"bonus" grade of up to 4%** in this course through research experience. Course work will make up 100% of the final mark and a "bonus" of up to 4% may be earned and will be added to the final grade if/as needed to bring your final grade up to 100%.

The two options for earning research experience grades (participation in research and article review) are described below. Students may complete any combination of these options to earn research experience grades.

Option 1: Participation in Psychology Research

Research participation is coordinated by the Research Experiences Group (REG). Psychology students may volunteer as research participants in lab and/or online (web-based) studies conducted by students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Participation enables students to learn first-hand about psychology research and related concepts. Many students report that participation in research is both an educational and interesting experience. Please be assured that all Psychology studies have undergone prior ethics review and clearance through the Office of Research Ethics.

Educational focus of participation in research

To maximize the educational benefits of participating in research, students will receive feedback information following their participation in each study detailing the following elements:

- Purpose or objectives of the study
- Dependent and independent variables
- Expected results
- References for at least two related research articles
- Provisions to ensure confidentiality of data
- Contact information of the researcher should the student have further questions about the study
- Contact information for the Director of the Office of Research Ethics should the student wish to learn more about the general ethical issues surrounding research with human participants, or specific questions or concerns about the study in which s/he participated.

Participation is worth 0.5 participation credits (grade percentage points) for each half-hour of participation. Researchers will record student's participation and will advise the course instructor of the total credits earned by each student at the end of the term.

Study scheduling, participation and grade assignment is managed using the SONA online system. All students enrolled in this course have been set up with a SONA account. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you get an early start on your studies. For detailed instructions on when and how access your SONA account and for a list of important dates and deadlines please, as soon as possible, click on:

<http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~regadmin/regparticipant/sonainfo/#SonaSignUp>

**** Please do not ask the Course Instructor or REG Coordinator for information unless you have first thoroughly read the information provided on this website.****

More information about the REG program is available at:

<http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~regadmin/regparticipant/>

Option 2: Article Review as an alternative to participation in research

Students are not required to participate in research, and not all students wish to do so. As an alternative, students may opt to gain research experience by writing short reviews (1½ to 2 pages) of research articles relevant to the course. The course instructor will specify a suitable source of articles for this course (i.e., scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, other printed media). *You must contact your TA to get approval for the article you have chosen before writing the review.* Each review article counts as one percentage point. To receive credit, you must follow specific guidelines. The article review must:

- **Be submitted before the last lecture. Late submissions will NOT be accepted under ANY circumstances.**
- Be typed
- Fully identify the title, author(s), source and date of the article. A copy of the article must be attached.
- Identify the psychological concepts in the article and indicate the pages in the textbook that are applicable. Critically evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article. If inappropriate or incorrect, identify the error and its implications for the validity of the article. You may find, for example, misleading headings, faulty research procedures, alternative explanations that are ignored, failures to distinguish factual findings from opinions, faulty statements of cause-effect relations, errors in reasoning, etc. Provide examples whenever possible.
- Clearly evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article.
- Keep a copy of your review in the unlikely event we misplace the original.

Grading:

The midterm exams will each be worth 25% of your grade, and the final exam will be worth 35% of your grade. The example portfolio will worth 15% of your grade and research participation will be worth up to 4% in bonus marks for our final grade.

Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/> for more information.]

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm>.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>.

Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html
Academic Integrity Office (UW): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Topic	Reading
Monday	5/2	Introduction	Chapter 1
Wednesday	5/4	History & Research Methods	
Monday	5/9	Concepts	Chapter 2
Wednesday	5/11	Concepts (cont.)	
Monday	5/16	Heuristics	Chapter 3
Wednesday	5/18	Heuristics (cont.)	Kahneman & Tversky (1973)
Monday	5/23	no class Victoria Day	
Wednesday	5/25	Hypothesis Testing	Chapter 4
Monday	5/30	Hypothesis Testing (cont.)	Snyder & Swan (1978)
Wednesday	6/1	Automatic Processes	Chapter 7
Monday	6/6	Automatic Processes (cont.)	Cesario, Plaks, & Higgins (2006)
Wednesday	6/8	Test #1 - Midterm	
Monday	6/13	Memory	Chapter 5
Wednesday	6/15	Memory (cont.)	Libby, Eibach, & Gilovich (2005)
Monday	6/20	Hot Cognition	Chapter 6
Wednesday	6/22	Hot Cognition (cont.)	Santioso, Kunda, & Fong (1990)
Monday	6/27	Stereotypes	Chapter 8
Wednesday	6/29	Stereotypes (cont.)	Logel, et al. (2009)
Monday	7/4	Person Perception	Chapter 9
Wednesday	7/6	Person Perception (cont.) (Example Portfolio due)	Morewedge, Preston, & Wegner (2007)
Monday	7/11	The Self	Chapter 10
Wednesday	7/13	The Self (cont.)	Murray, Leder, Derrick, & Holmes (2008)

Monday	7/18	Culture	Chapter 11
Wednesday	7/20	Culture (cont.)	Kim & Sherman (2007)
Monday	7/25	Test #2	

Final Exam to be scheduled during exam period