

Introduction to Social Psychology: Psychology 260, Section 005
SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Instructor: Bethany Kok
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Office Hours: To be determined pending class vote, and by appointment

Course Web Page: <http://sakaipilot.unc.edu/> (login with UNC ONYEN, find PSYC 260 page)

Required Text:

Aronson, E., Wilson, T.D., & Akert, R.M. (2005). *Social Psychology* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Available as print or e-book.

Course Introduction and Description:

This course is intended to provide you with an overview of the main perspectives, theories, and research methodologies that typify contemporary social psychology. Topics include stereotyping and prejudice, pro-social behavior and social cognition. As with any survey course, we will not cover every aspect of the field, nor will we be able to study any aspect in depth. Rather, this course is intended to prepare you for more advanced study on topics in social psychology and related fields that are of interest to you.

When your time in this course has been completed, you will be able to:

- Apply social psychological theories and research to your own life.
- Devise and test hypotheses about social psychological behavior using the scientific method.
- Critically analyze explanations of social behavior presented by the media, friends or “folk wisdom.”

Structure of the Course

Exams: We will have three exams throughout the semester. None of the exams will be cumulative; that is, each exam will cover only the material presented since the previous exam. For each exam, roughly 80% of the material will be taken from the lecture material, and the remainder will be taken from your texts and anything else that we do in class (e.g., films, discussions, etc.).

Assignments: You will be responsible for keeping up an online journal, or blog, and writing one methods paper throughout the semester.

Blog: Your blog is a record of your thoughts as you progress through this course. Your classmates and I will be able to read and comment on your blog, but it will not be available to people outside the class. **You will be expected to write a minimum of one paragraph per week and to comment on a minimum of two of your classmates’ blog entries or comments each week.** In your blog, you can link to YouTube videos or articles or any media online and comment on their relevance to the course, discuss topics in which you agree or disagree with the social psychological findings we have discussed, propose new theories of your own to explain social psychological phenomena, and discuss your ideas with your classmates. I will keep a blog as well, and provide blogging prompts and ideas to help keep things flowing. Blogs can be accessed through the course website on Sakai.

Methods Paper: You will design and carry out a small correlational, experimental or observational study as part of a group, culminating in a 7 to 8-page paper, written as a group, describing what you did, what you found and how your findings relate to social psychology.

More details for both the blog and the methods paper will follow, and due dates are on the course calendar.

Attendance: Although I will not be taking attendance, coming to class on a regular basis will be critical to your success in this course. Please note that approximately 80% of the information on the exams will come from the information discussed in class, which may or may not be included in your textbook.

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Policies Concerning Make-up Exams and Late Papers

Make-up exams: The policy of this course is that ***no make-up exams will be given***. However, if extreme and verifiable circumstances arise in your life that require you to miss an exam, such as a serious illness/hospitalization that can be officially documented, an effort will be made to allow you to make up the points you missed. This will most likely take one of two forms: 1) You will be required to write an essay exam administered by me at a time we agree on, or 2) you will be required to write a 5-page paper on a topic I assign you.

Athletes, musicians, or others with UNC-related obligations that require absence from class on an exam day should notify me *immediately* with your schedule and verification from your coach or other university official so that arrangements can be made. Exams are given on the day they are scheduled on your course calendar.

Late Papers: No papers or blog entries will be accepted after the last day of class, April 27th, except in the event of extreme and verifiable circumstances (such as serious illness/hospitalization) that can be officially documented.

Grading Criteria

Exam 1 (2/11)	20%
Exam 2 (3/20)	20%
Exam 3 (5/4)	20%
Bloggng checks (2/6, 3/6, 4/3, 4/24)	20%
Methods paper (4/27)	20%
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TOTAL	100%

Office Hours

Please feel free to visit me during office hours or set up an appointment if you have any questions or wish to discuss any topics in more depth. I will be happy to talk with you!

Special Needs

Students with special conditions as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act who need test or other course materials furnished in an alternate format should *notify me as soon as possible*. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Department of Disability Services (DDS) or Learning Disability Services (LDS). LDS may be reached at (919) 962-7227 or through the web at <http://www.unc.edu/depts/lds>. DDS may be reached at (919) 962-8300 (V/T), by email at disabilityservices@unc.edu, or through the web at <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu>. Please let me know as early as possible if you require accommodation – we can definitely work something out!

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Honor Code

It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student, or academic personnel acting in an official capacity. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. All work must be your own. All cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the honor court. If you are uncertain about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please ask me to avoid any confusion.

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Course Calendar

Date	Topic	Assignment	
January	12	Introduction and Overview of Course	
	14	Introduction to Social Psychology	Chapter 1
	16	Methods	Chapter 2
	19	No Class	
	21	Methods	
	23	Methods/Methods Paper(MP) Introduction	
	26	Social Cognition	Chapter 3
	28	Social Cognition	
	30	Social Cognition	
February	2	Social Perception	Chapter 4 *Annotated bib due
	4	Social Perception	
	6	No Class	*1st blog check
	9	Social Perception	
	11	EXAM #1	
	13	Self-Knowledge	Chapter 5
	16	Self-Knowledge	
	18	Self-Knowledge	
	20	Dissonance and Decision-Making	Chapter 6
	23	Dissonance and Decision-Making	
	25	Dissonance and Decision-Making	
	27	Attitudes	Chapter 7 *MP proposal due
March	2	Attitudes	
	4	Attitudes	
	6	Conformity	Chapter 8 *2nd blog check
	9	No Class – Spring Break	
	11	No Class – Spring Break	
	13	No Class – Spring Break	
	16	Conformity	

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	18	Conformity	
	20	EXAM #2	
	23	Group Processes	Chapter 9
	25	Group Processes	
	27	Group Processes	
	30	Data Collection Day	
April	1	Relationships	Chapter 10
	3	Relationships	*3rd blog check
	6	Relationships	
	8	Aggression	Chapter 12
	10	No Class- Easter Holiday	
	13	Aggression	
	15	Aggression	
	17	Prejudice	Chapter 13
	20	Prejudice	
	22	Prejudice	
	24	Helping	Chapter 11 *Final blog check
	27	Helping	*Methods paper due

EXAM #3: Monday, May 4, 8:00 am

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Unit Goals

Introduction

- Name the basic unit of psychological observation
- Explain how social psychology differs from other areas of psychology.
- Give examples of the two basic needs that motivate individuals.

Methods

- Define a “hypothesis.”
- Enumerate the benefits and drawbacks of the three methods that can be used to test hypotheses.
- Interpret correlations and explain their limitations.
- Define “independent” and “dependent” variables.
- Define “internal” and “external” validity.
- Explain the difference between “random sampling” and “random assignment to conditions” and the role of each in conducting research.

Social Cognition

- Name the two types of social cognition and the properties of each: when they occur, whether they can be controlled and whether they require effort to use.
- Explain what schemas are, why we use them, and how they influence cognition.
- Explain what heuristics are, why we use them, and how they influence cognition.
- Give an example of counterfactual thinking.
- Explain the paradox of thought suppression.

Social Perception

- Describe an implicit personality theory that you hold.
- Define the correspondence bias and give two reasons why it occurs.
- Describe how information about “the person” is processed differently than information about “the situation” and how this affects explanations of our own and others’ behavior.
- What does “belief in a just world” mean? What sorts of behavior does it cause?

Self-Knowledge

- Explain the relationships among self-concept, self-awareness, self-schema and self-regulation. Which of these concepts must come first, and which are a consequence of earlier concepts? Are these concepts unique to human beings?
- Does self-concept differ across cultures? In what way?
- Compare and contrast the three ways we learn about ourselves, utilizing the relevant theories.
- Compare and contrast the two-factor theory of emotion with the appraisal theory of emotion. Describe a situation in which the two theories would predict different emotional outcomes.
- Explain how comparisons to others affect self-esteem.

Dissonance and Decision-Making

- Describe three ways people attempt to reduce dissonance.
- Describe the conditions under which you will not experience dissonance when engaging in attitude-inconsistent behaviors.
- Describe the most effective type of punishment to ensure long-term change.

Attitudes

- Name the three components of an attitude.
- Compare and contrast the two “paths” in the elaboration likelihood method of persuasion.
- Explain the role of emotions in forming attitudes.
- How can attitudes be changed, or how can people be persuaded? Specify what component of the attitude is targeted, and whether the change is long or short-term.

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- What techniques exist to avoid being persuaded?
- Under what conditions do attitudes predict behavior?

Conformity

- Compare and contrast the Asch and Sherif conformity studies: Type of conformity, internal vs. external change, long-term effects.
- Describe the Milgram study: design, results, implications and ethical issues. Why did people initially conform and continue to conform?

Group Processes

- Describe the conditions under which a person would experience: deindividuation, social loafing, and social facilitation.
- How does groupthink occur? How can groupthink be avoided?
- Provide the defining features of social dilemmas and the necessary conditions for a social dilemma to be resolved.

Relationships

- Name four factors that enhance interpersonal liking.
- Compare and contrast equity theory with social exchange theory. Under what circumstances does each theory predict a person will be satisfied with their relationship?
- Explain *liking* from the perspective of an evolutionary psychologist. What is it, why does it happen, and what promotes it?
- Explain the behaviors (of the individual and his/her parents) that characterize the three types of attachment style.
- Describe the ideal “break-up,” using the four stages of Duck’s model and your understanding of break-up/breaker roles.

Aggression

- Compare and contrast the positions of Hobbes, Rousseau, Freud and evolutionary psychologists on the existence of inborn human aggression.
- Name relevant brain structures and chemicals and the roles they play in aggression.
- Explain the conditions in which aggressive tendencies translate to aggressive behavior.
- Give five ways violence in the media affects behavior.
- Describe the best and worst ways to cope with frustration and aggression.

Prejudice

- Describe the affective, behavioral and cognitive elements of prejudice.
- Explain the social cognitive causes of prejudice: schemas, automatic and controlled cognition, the need for self-esteem, etc.
- Explain how self-fulfilling prophecies function in the context of prejudice.
- Provide two reasons why it is difficult to conduct research on racist or sexist attitudes today.
- Name the six conditions that must be present to reduce prejudice between two groups

Helping

- Name four reasons why people help others.
- Explain the factors (personal and situational) that make others more likely to help.
- Explain how the bystander effect comes to occur: what can go wrong at each of the five steps to helping.
- Describe an intervention that would make others more likely to help in the future.

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