



Course Social Psychology: Social Thinking and Influence (2015-2016)

Code / Version PSYC1080 (100)

Total Hours 45

Credits 3

PreRequisite(s)

CoRequisite(s)

Course Description

Social psychology is the scientific study of how people think about, influence and relate to one another. Students will be introduced to theories and research concerning social thinking. Topics related to this concept include the development of our 'social self', how we explain our own behaviour and the behaviour of others, our self-fulfilling beliefs, and the relation between our attitudes and behaviours. Students will also be introduced to theories and research concerning social influence. Topics include the relation between culture and gender roles, conformity, persuasion and group influence. Throughout the course, the methods used by social psychologists to study social thinking and social influence will be addressed. Emphasis will be placed on the application of social psychological principles to our understanding of everyday behaviour. This course is designed to meet the themes of social understanding and personal development.

PLAR Eligible: Yes

Course Outcomes

Successful completion of this course will enable the student to:

1. Discuss how social psychologists conduct research.
2. Analyze how we know ourselves and others by identifying features of the social environment.
3. Explain how gender and culture impact thinking about ourselves and others.
4. Describe how the self impacts our behaviour in a social environment.
5. Explain how social thinking is prone to bias and error.
6. Discuss the relation between behaviour and attitudes.
7. Explain the impact of the social environment on conformity and obedience.
8. Analyze the factors that impact persuasion and resistance to persuasion.
9. Explore features of groups that impact an individual's decision making and behaviour.

Essential Employability Skills addressed in this course			Taught	Reinforced	Assessed
Communication	ⁿ	Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience		X	X
	ⁿ	Respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication		X	
Numeracy	ⁿ	Execute mathematical operations accurately			
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	ⁿ	Apply a systematic approach to solve problems		X	
	ⁿ	Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems		X	X
Information Management	ⁿ	Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems		X	X
	ⁿ	Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources			X
Interpersonal	ⁿ	Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others		X	



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Essential Employability Skills addressed in this course			Taught	Reinforced	Assessed
Interpersonal	ⁿ	Interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals		X	
Personal	ⁿ	Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects		X	X
	ⁿ	Take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions, and consequences		X	

General Education Themes addressed in this course				X
Arts in Society	ⁿ	Provides individuals with an understanding to recognize and evaluate how artistic expression enhances their cultural and self-awareness.		
Civic Life	ⁿ	Provides and individual with knowledge of Civil Life in relation to diverse communities at the local, national, and global levels, and an awareness of international issues and the effects of these on Canada, and on Canada's place in the international community.		
Personal Understanding	ⁿ	Provides individuals with the skills for life-long understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological and psychological entities.		X
Science and Technology	ⁿ	Provides an understanding of the behaviour of matter and energy which gives them a foundation for further scientific study and the creation of broader understanding about natural phenomena.		
Social and Cultural Understanding	ⁿ	Provides an awareness gained from historical contexts and current patterns and precedents of an individual's place within contemporary cultural and society.		

Unit Outcomes

Successful completion of the following units will enable the student to:

1.0 Introducing Social Psychology

- 1.1 Identify similarities and differences between social psychology and other disciplines that study human nature.
- 1.2 Explain how social psychology, as a scientific discipline, is different from a "common sense" understanding of behaviour.
- 1.3 Describe different research methods and their advantages and disadvantages.
- 1.4 Identify ethical standards that govern social psychological research.

2.0 The Social Self

- 2.1 Describe the nature of self-concept development and discuss how our beliefs about ourselves influence our thoughts and actions.
- 2.2 Identify factors that influence our self-concept.
- 2.3 Examine factors that influence our self-esteem and the link between self-esteem and thoughts and behaviours.
- 2.4 Describe different ways we manage the impressions that other people have of us.

3.0 The Self, Gender, and Culture.

- 3.1 Evaluate how culture influences our self-concept.
- 3.2 Compare and contrast collectivism and individualism.
- 3.3 Describe how gender roles impact our thinking about ourselves.

4.0 Self Serving Bias

- 4.1 Describe examples of the self-serving bias and its consequences.
- 4.2 Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the self-serving bias.

5.0 Perceiving Others

- 5.1 Understand the attribution theory, distinguishing between internal and external attributions.



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- 5.2 Define the fundamental attribution error and explain why it occurs.
 - 5.3 Explain how preconceptions can control our interpretations and memories.
 - 5.4 Describe how we use heuristics in processing information.
 - 5.5 Describe biases in thinking and its effect on perception of others.
 - 5.6 Describe how to overcome biases in thinking.
 - 6.0 Behaviour and Attitudes
 - 6.1 Define an attitude and identify its components.
 - 6.2 Explain when attitudes are more likely to influence behaviour.
 - 6.3 Explain when behaviour is more likely to influence attitudes.
 - 6.4 Explain various reasons for the attitudes-follow-behaviour phenomenon.
 - 6.5 Describe the principles of compliance
 - 6.6 Explain dissonance theory by giving practical examples.
 - 7.0 Conformity and Obedience
 - 7.1 Describe the Solomon Asch experiment on conformity.
 - 7.2 Describe factors which influence conformity.
 - 7.3 Describe Milgram's classic experiment on obedience.
 - 7.4 Describe the features that encourage obedience.
 - 7.5 Examine methods to resist conformity and obedience.
 - 8.0 Persuasion
 - 8.1 Describe the central and peripheral routes to persuasion and explain their differences.
 - 8.2 Explain the factors that contribute to persuasive communication.
 - 8.3 Describe examples of the successful use of persuasion.
 - 8.4 Describe the features of a "cult".
 - 8.5 Describe the features of the cult conversion process and explain its effectiveness.
 - 8.6 Explain how an individual can resist persuasion through reactance, asserting uniqueness, and attitude inoculation.
 - 9.0 Group Influence
 - 9.1 Evaluate how the presence of others affects performance.
 - 9.2 Define "social loafing" and discuss why it occurs.
 - 9.3 Describe "deindividuation" and its effect on behaviour.
 - 9.4 Explain group polarization or the "risky shift" phenomenon.
 - 9.5 Examine the causes, symptoms, consequences, and prevention of "groupthink".
 - 9.6 Identify the factors that strengthen minority influence.
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Required Student Resources

David G. Myers & Steven M. Smith. Exploring Social Psychology (4th Cdn.). Toronto: McGraw-Hill, Ryerson.

Students may purchase the e-version of this text through the bookstore.

Optional Student Resources

Evaluation



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The minimum passing grade for this course is 55 (D).

In order to successfully complete this course, the student is required to meet the following evaluation criteria:

Test #1	20.00
Test #2	20.00
Test #3	20.00
Assignment	15.00
Team Project	25.00
	<hr/>
	100.00 %

Other

Conestoga College is committed to providing academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Accessibility Services Office.

Prepared By Kerry Townson

School Liberal Studies

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