

Social Psychology

Sociology 3710: Section A - Fall 2008

Instructor: Dr. Mark Patrick George

Class Times: Monday & Wednesday 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.

Classroom: University Center 1144

Office: University Center 1129

Office Phone: 229-249-4976

Office Hours: M/W 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. & Tues. 12:30 -1:30 p.m. or by appointment

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Required Text: *Social Psychology, Sociological Perspectives*, David Rohall, Melissa Milkie and Jeffery W. Lucas. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

* Additional required readings are posted on WebCT.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the sociological subfield of Social Psychology. As “microsociology,” Sociological Social Psychologists concern themselves primarily with understanding how social contexts and other social forces affect human behavior, thoughts, and emotions. Unlike Psychologists who emphasize internal cognitive/emotional processes and personality factors, Sociologists who specialize in Social Psychology are more interested in examining how group structures, group processes, and social settings shape the human experience. They also explore how human behavior in turn sustains and alters those same group structures, group processes, and social settings. With that in mind, this course examines human behavior, thought, and emotion through three broad Social Psychological perspectives. Those include Symbolic Interactionism, Social Structural analyses, and finally, Group Process approaches. Areas we will cover include; the exploration of the “self” and personal identity; how socialization processes change over life course; the emergence and theories behind social deviance; how mental illness is defined and explained; how individuals acquire their beliefs and values; the role of emotions in social life; and lastly, how meaning, group processes, and social structure encourage and inhibit collective social behavior.

Course Objectives

Upon completing this course students will;

- 1) Be able to articulate and discuss major Social Psychological theorists and theories.
- 2) Be able to apply an assortment of Social Psychological theories to their daily lives and interactions.
- 3) Heighten their ability to employ their “sociological imagination” by being able to explain how various social factors both shape micro level interactions as well as how those factors are also affected by said micro level human interactions.
- 4) Improve their critical thinking and communicative skills as they discuss course content and complete assorted writing assignments.

Course Requirements

Be warned. This course is **reading intensive**. If you are someone that does not love to read this is probably not the course for you. In addition to reading daily, students' other responsibilities include the following requirements.

Exams: There will be three exams during the course of the semester. Each will consist of a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions. The average of these exams will account for 40% of your final grade. Make-up exams will be given only if a university accepted excuse is provided ahead of time. Failure to do so will result in a grade of zero (0) for the missed exam. Any excused make-up exams given will not follow the format of regularly scheduled tests. Instead, all make-up exams will be essay format.

Reading Quizzes: Throughout the course, beginning the second week of classes, random reading quizzes will be given. Of the eight reading quizzes you will take, two of your lowest grades will be dropped. The average of the six remaining scores will account for 30% (30 points) of your final grade. Given that two of your lowest scores are dropped, no make-ups will be provided for missed quizzes. Since I use quizzes to record attendance on the days they are given, you should inform me after class if arrive in class late and miss the quiz. Otherwise you may be counted absent for that day.

Reflection & Application Papers: Students will be responsible for writing 5 “reflection & application” papers based on a question or social scenario that will be provided in class. Each of these assignments will require students to apply the information we cover in class to their daily lives or a specific social context. Papers are to be between 2-3 pages long. They should be double spaced (12 point Times or Times New Roman font), use one inch margins, and include a separate title page where you will put your name and other identifying information. I will not grade papers that do not follow these guidelines. I will also not grade papers that are poorly written or grammatically problematic. Papers that don't follow the guidelines or that are poorly written (i.e. organization, spelling errors, grammatical errors, etc.) will result in a 0 (zero). If you are someone who struggles with writing I strongly suggest getting assistance from the Student Success Center prior to handing any assignments in to me. Each of these papers will count 3 points for a total of 15 points or 15% of your final grade. Papers are due at the beginning of class on the days listed in the reading schedule. No late papers will be accepted.

Attendance and Class Participation: Please note that this course revolves around the readings, class discussion, lecture, videos, and other relevant information. Therefore your attendance, punctuality, preparedness, and participation are essential, as well as expected. This means you are expected to come to class having read the assignments and ready to discuss them. Your presence in class, preparedness, and participation will also account for a total of 15% (15 points) of your final grade. I define participation as the active and regular involvement in class discussions and exercises. Students with good attendance and who regularly participate, without having to be called upon, will receive all 15 of these points. Students with good attendance, who participate occasionally, without having to be called upon, will receive 11 of these points. Students with good attendance who never participate will receive 7.5 of these points.

Keep in mind that attendance will be taken randomly. Given that life happens, I allow for 3 unexcused absences during the semester. However, at the point you have 4 unexcused absences your final grade will be lowered by 10 points. At the point you have 5 unexcused absences your final grade will be lowered by 20 points. At the point you have 6 unexcused absences you will be withdrawn from the course. If you have a passing course average at the point you reach 6 unexcused absences, and only if it is prior to the midterm point (10/9), you will be assigned a W. If you have a failing grade average you will receive a WF. All withdrawals after the withdrawal deadline (10/9), regardless of your standing in the course, will result in a WF. Please refer to "Policy on Attendance" in the University catalogue for established standards. Remember, you are also responsible for any and all material missed because of any absences. Please check with the instructor and/or your classmates for that information.

Total Grade Break Down: Average of Exams = 40 possible pts.
Average of Reading Quizzes = 30 possible pts.
Application Papers = 15 possible pts.
Attendance/Participation = 15 possible pts.
Total Possible Points = 100 pts.

**Final Grade: A = 90-100 pts., B = 80-89 pts., C = 70-79 pts., D = 60-69 pts.,
F = 0-59 pts.**

**** Cell Phones/Text Messaging/Laptops:** Please turn OFF (sound & vibrate) all cell phones and all other forms of technology (i.e. mp3 players, microwave ovens, etc.) prior to the beginning of class. Receiving or sending text messages/phone calls during class will result in a 3 point deduction from your final grade (for the first offense). Subsequent occurrences will result in a 5 point deduction (from your final grade) for each offense.

Academic Honesty: I strongly adhere to University policy regarding academic honesty. Therefore any form of academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating, *plagiarism, downloading papers, etc.) will result in an F for the course and possible further University action. Please see undergraduate handbook for further information about University standards.
* Plagiarism involves claiming someone else's ideas/thoughts/writing as your own instead of appropriately citing and giving that person credit for their ideas/thoughts/writing

Students with Disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability must contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in room 1115 Nevins Hall. The phone numbers are 245-2498 (voice) and 219-1348 (tty).

Tentative Course Schedule

Dynamics and issues raised in class will likely affect the pace of the class. With that in mind, the following is a tentative outline of the material we will cover. Please note that readings may be added as the course progresses.

Week 9

Mon. 10/13 – **Fall Break – No Class**

Wed. 10/15 - **Exam #2**

Week 10

*Mon. 10/20 - Chapter 7: The Social Psychology of Deviance (pgs. 175-203)

* Reflection/Application Paper #2 Due

Wed. 10/22 - Chapter 7 – Continued & Video: Lost Children of Rockdale County

Week 11

Mon. 10/27 - Chapter 8: Mental Health and Illness (pgs. 205-228)

Wed. 10/29 - Chapter 8: - Continued & * Excerpt from Thomas Szasz's, *The Myth of Mental Illness*

Week 12

* Mon. 11/3 – Guest Speaker

* Reflection/Application Paper #3 Due

Wed. 11/5 - Chapter 9: Attitudes, Values, and Behaviors (pgs. 229-253)

Week 13

Mon. 11/10 - * Excerpt from W.E.B. Dubois's *The Souls of Black Folks*

Wed. 11/12 – Video: TBA

Week 14

*Mon. 11/17 - Chapter 10: The Sociology of Sentiments and Emotions (pgs. 255-278)

* Reflection/Application Paper #4 Due

Wed. 11/19 - * Goffman, Erving. 1956. "Embarrassment and Social Organization." *The American Journal of Sociology* 62:264-71.

Week 15

Mon. 11/24 – * Cahill, Spencer and Robin Eggleston. 1994. "Managing Emotions in Public: The Case of Wheelchair Users." *Social Psychological Quarterly* 57:300-312.

Wed. 11/26 – **Holiday: No Class**

Week 16

* Mon. 12/1 - Chapter 11: Collective Behavior (pgs. 279-301)

* Reflection/Application Paper #5 Due

Wed. 12/3 - Video: The Weather Underground

Week 17

Mon. 12/8 - Wrap & Review

Fri. 12/12 - (5:00- 7:00 p.m.) - Exam #3

Week 1

Mon 8/18 - Introductions & Review Course Objectives and Expectations

Wed. 8/20 – Chapter 1: Introduction to Social Psychology (pgs. 3-25)

Week 2

Mon. 8/25 - Chapter 2: Perspectives in Sociological Social Psychology (pgs.27-25)

Wed. 8/27 – Chapter 2: Continued.

Week 3

Mon. 9/1 – Labor Day: No Class

Wed. 9/3 - Chapter 3: Studying People (pgs. 55-80)

Week 4

Mon. 9/8 – **Exam #1**

The Individual in Society

Wed. 9/10 – Chapter 4: The Social Psychology of Stratification (pgs. 81-115)

Week 5

Mon. 9/15 - Chapter 4 continued & Candance West and Don H. Zimmerman.

1987. "Doing Gender." *Gender and Society* 1:125-151.

Wed. 9/17 – Video: Gender Socialization

Week 6

Self and Identity

* Mon. 9/22 – Chapter 5: Self and Identity (pgs. 117-142)

* Reflection/Application Paper #1 Due

Wed. 9/24 - Chapter 5 - Continued

Week 7

Mon. 9/29 - * Excerpt from George Herbert Meade's *Mind, Self and Society*

Wed. 10/1 - * Nagel, Joanne. 1995. "American Indian Ethnic
Renewal: Politics and the Resurgence of Identity." *American Sociological
Review*. 60:947-865

Waters, Mary. 1995. "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only," in *Origins and
Destinies: Immigration, Race and Ethnicity in America*. Belmont, CA:
Wadsworth Publishing.

Week 8

Mon. 10/6 - Chapter 6: Socialization Over the Life Course (pgs. 143-173)

Wed. 10/8 - Chapter 6 & *Milkie, Melissa, 1990. "Social Comparisons,
Reflected Appraisals, and Mass Media: The Impact of Pervasive Beauty
Ideals on Black and White Girls' Self-Concepts." *Social Psychological
Quarterly* 60:190-210.

* Thurs. 10/9 – Last Day to Withdraw from Course