

Las Positas College
3000 Campus Hill Drive
Livermore, CA 94551-7650
(925) 424-1000
(925) 443-0742 (Fax)

Course Outline for PSYC 3

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Effective: Fall 2009

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

PSYC 3 — INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY — 3.00 units

This course will introduce theories and concepts that explain individual behavior in social settings. The topics include research methods, social perception, social cognition, beliefs, prejudice/discrimination, interpersonal relationships, aggression, and group behavior. Strongly recommended: Psychology 1. 3 hours.

3.00 Units Lecture

Prerequisite

PSYC 1 - General Psychology

Grading Methods:

Optional

Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT:

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering the course a student should be able to:

A. PSYC1

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. define social psychology and apply the principles of social psychology to real life situations
2. explain the role of nonverbal communication and impression formation in social perception
3. describe the role of explicit and implicit processing in schemas, attributions, and other cognitions
4. explain attitude formation, cognitive dissonance, and ways to change attitudes
5. evaluate the personal and cultural factors that alter self-concept, self-esteem, and perceived self-control
6. discuss how gender and culture influence principles in social psychology, such as social roles
7. discuss the causes of prejudice and discrimination
8. summarize the causes of attraction
9. discuss the factors that influence the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of close relationships
10. synthesize research on conformity, compliance, and obedience
11. explain the personal and situational causes of helping behavior
12. evaluate the theories concerning the causes of aggression
13. contrast the costs and benefits of group membership

V. CONTENT:

- A. Introduction to social psychology
 1. Origins and development of social psychology
 2. Discuss the contributions of people that come from a variety of backgrounds
 3. Research methods in social psychology
 4. Review of APA ethical principles
- B. Social identity
 1. Self-concept
 2. Influences of gender and culture on social identity
 3. Self-esteem and perceived self-control
- C. Social perception
 1. Nonverbal communication
 2. Impression formation
- D. Social cognition
 1. Explicit and implicit processing
 2. Schemas and stereotypes
 3. Attribution theories and attributional errors

4. Confirmation biases
- E. Attitudes and attitude change
 1. Components of attitudes
 2. How attitudes influence behavior
 3. Theory of cognitive dissonance
 4. Changing attitudes through persuasion
 5. Resistance to persuasion
- F. Prejudice and discrimination
 1. Origins of prejudice and discrimination
 2. Types of discrimination (i.e. sexism, racism, and ageism)
 3. Personal and institutional discrimination
 4. Reducing prejudiced attitudes
- G. Attraction and close relationships
 1. The need to belong and initial attraction
 2. Theories explaining close relationships
 3. Heterosexual, gay, and lesbian romantic relationships
 4. Dissolution of relationships
- H. Social influence
 1. Compliance
 2. Conformity
 3. Obedience
- I. Group processes
 1. Benefits and costs of belonging to groups
 2. Social facilitation, social loafing, and deindividuation
 3. Groupthink and group polarization
 4. Theories of group leadership
- J. Prosocial behavior
 1. Theoretical explanations for prosocial behavior
 2. Factors influencing prosocial behavior
 3. Responding to an emergency
- K. Aggression
 1. Types of aggression
 2. Theoretical explanations for aggression
 3. Social and personal influences of aggression
 4. Prevention and regulation of aggression
- L. Applied social psychology
 1. Psychology and the law
 2. Organizational psychology
 3. Health psychology
 4. Conflict, cooperation, and peace

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Demonstration** - Demonstrations and simulations
- B. Application of concepts to personal experiences
- C. **Lecture** - Lectures on major themes and concepts
- D. **Student Presentations** -
- E. **Discussion** - Discussion and problem solving of significant or controversial issues
- F. **Written exercises and case studies** - Written assignments
- G. **Audio-visual Activity** - Video and/or CD-ROM excerpts
- H. Readings from texts, supplementary materials, primary source materials

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Lecture 1. Group indoctrination B. Readings 1. Module 17: Indoctrination and Inoculation (pp 177-189) in Myers, Exploring Social Psychology. C. Class discussion 1. How do cults make use of persuasion, conformity, obedience, and other techniques to indoctrinate members? 2. How do the social groups you belong to make use of these same techniques? D. Writing projects 1. Identify characteristics in one social group you observe that increase group solidarity and commitment. You should find groups by examining friends, family, religious organizations, sports, clubs, employment, school, characters on television, MySpace/chat room/online gaming friends, or any other group. Select a single group that demonstrates as many of the characteristics as possible. Write an essay (700-1400 words) that discusses the following: 2. Provide a brief description of the members of the group including the number of group members, those that seem to lead the group (active/talkative/persuasive), those that express disagreement, and those that support the leader(s). 3. Describe the characteristics that you have observed in the group. 4. Are the characteristics helpful or harmful to individual group members? Are the characteristics helpful or harmful to the identity/solidarity of the group?

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Research Projects
3. Papers
4. Oral Presentation
5. Projects
6. Class Participation
7. Final Public Performance
8. Other:
 - a. Participation in class discussion or quizzes
 - b. Midterm exams, presentations, or projects
 - c. Research or opinion papers
 - d. Final exam, presentation, or project

B. **Frequency**

1. Multiple discussions or quizzes
2. Minimum of two midterm exams, projects, or presentations
3. Several research or opinion papers (at least 25% of final grade)
4. Final exam, presentation, or project

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Myers, David *Exploring Social Psychology*. 4th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2007.
2. Aronson, Eliot, Wilson, Timothy & Akert, Robin *Social Psychology*. 6th ed., Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2007.
3. Kassir, Saul, Fein, Steven, & Markus, Hazel Rose *Social Psychology*. 7th ed., Houghton-Mifflin, 2008.
4. Aronson, E. *Readings About the Social Animal*. 9th ed., Worth Publishers, 2003.
5. Bordens, Kenneth .A. & Horowitz, Irwin. A. *Social Psychology*. 3rd ed., Freeload Press, Inc., 2008.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: