

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Spring 2020

MEETING TIMES/LOCATION:

Monday/Thursday 12:30-1:50pm in Bonseigneur Classroom

COURSE INSTRUCTOR:

Catherine Cottrell
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Phone: 941-487-4699
Office hours: Thursday 2-4pm; also, by appointment

TEACHING ASSISTANTS:

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TEXTBOOK/READINGS:

The Science of Social Psychology. Noba Project. (available on class Google drive)

There will also be required primary readings for each unit. (available on class Google drive)

OVERVIEW OF COURSE:

In one sense, we are all social psychologists. Each day, we seek to understand the thoughts, emotions, and behavior of others, as well as our own. *Why did he tell that sexist joke? Why did I agree to buy a two-year subscription to a magazine I don't even like? Why did she risk her life to save the child stranded in the burning house?* In this course, we will explore how social and personality factors influence human thought, feeling, and behavior. We will examine such issues with a scientific, critical eye, and will focus on developing an appreciation for the scientific tools required to understand complex social phenomena. More than some other sciences, social psychology is directly and clearly relevant to your daily life. As such, we will aim to regularly apply course material to the "real world."

INTRODUCTORY ASSIGNMENT:

One of my favorite parts of teaching is getting to know my students better. To help me with this, please bring an 8.5" X 11" sheet of paper to the next class on which you provide the following:

- (1) A recent picture of you: Please include instructions on which is you if the photo includes many people.
- (2) Your full name (including the name you prefer to be called), your pronouns, your email address, your year in school, and AOC(s)
- (3) A brief explanation of why you are taking this course
- (4) Something interesting/unique about you: Make it something that distinguishes you from others – this will help me remember you!
- (5) Anything else that I should know about you

EVALUATION:

- (1) **Attendance/participation:** I expect that you will conscientiously attend class and actively participate in discussions. I will track attendance; this information will be noted in evaluations.

(2) **Exams:** There will be three exams. Each exam will be non-cumulative and will consist of short answer and essay questions. Lectures, class discussions, and readings are all fair game. I have a strong preference for application-based questions. That is, I expect you to understand course concepts well enough to apply them in new situations. This requires your knowledge to extend beyond simple memorization of terms and definitions. Although this emphasis on application can be challenging, I think it is critically important for a field—like social psychology—focused on understanding everyday human behavior. If you can apply course material to new situations, then you (and I) can be confident that you have truly learned it.

(3) **Application papers:** Each student will regularly complete an application paper. The purpose of these brief papers is to give you an opportunity to apply social psychology to your everyday life. The principles of social psychology can be observed everyday, everywhere, and in every domain of life. The material of this course should extend far beyond our classroom on Monday and Thursday afternoons! Take a look at your surroundings, whether it's another class, your family dinner table, or the local grocery store. Observe others' behavior, and note your own thoughts, feelings, and behavior, too. Then, use the social psychological principles from class and the readings to better understand your social environment and your role in it. Each application paper should be approximately two double-spaced pages; provide a brief summary of the social phenomenon you observed, describe the relevant social psychological construct/principle, connect your observed phenomenon to the construct/principle, and comment on your thoughts about the phenomenon and its relevant social psychological concepts. These papers will be due to Canvas by noon on the due dates listed below. Come to class prepared to discuss your observations and interpretations with the class. From time to time, I may ask you to focus the application paper on a particular topic; I will announce those instances in class.

(4) **Final paper:** For the final paper, you will continue applying social psychology to the world outside our classroom. Your task will be to identify a problem that you see in the world and then use social psychological theory/research to present possible solutions to that problem. You will receive additional details about this assignment later in the term.

GENERAL CLASS POLICIES:

- * Laptop use is not permitted during class.
- * Because I often distribute course information via email, you must check your NCF email on a regular basis (at least daily).
- * All assignments must be typed, double-spaced, proofread, and spell-checked.
- * All assignments must be submitted via Canvas.
- * Late assignments may not be accepted.
- * If I choose to accept a late assignment, I will mention the lateness in evaluations.

SOME ADDITIONAL NOTES:

(1) It is your responsibility to complete the relevant readings **prior** to class meetings. This will allow us to cover more material in greater depth, and will facilitate classroom discussions and tasks. Another piece of advice: Don't fall behind in the coursework. You will encounter challenging material and tasks this semester, and you should expect to dedicate time to mastering the course objectives.

(2) If you require disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible. Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Office of Student Disability Services. This office will establish your eligibility and work with me to fulfill any requested accommodations. All information regarding disability will remain confidential.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE:	TOPIC :	READING:
Mon., Jan. 27 Thurs., Jan. 30	Course Overview; Syllabus Review Introduction to social psychology	Ch. 1
Mon., Feb. 3 Thurs., Feb. 6	Research methods/Ethics Research methods/Ethics	Ch. 2
Mon., Feb. 10 Thurs., Feb. 13	The replication crisis Social cognition	Ch. 3 Ch. 4
Mon., Feb. 17 Thurs., Feb. 20	Social cognition; APPLICATION #1 DUE The self; Social comparison	Ch. 5 & 6
Mon., Feb. 24 Thurs., Feb. 27	EXAM 1 Emotions	Ch. 7
Mon., March 2 Thurs., March 5	Social influence Social influence	Ch. 8
Mon., March 9 Thurs., March 12	Persuasion Persuasion; APPLICATION #2 DUE	Ch. 9
Mon., March 16 Thurs., March 19	NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK	
Mon., March 23 Thurs., March 26	Group processes Prejudice	Ch. 10 Ch. 11
Mon., March 30 Thurs., April 2	EXAM 2 Prejudice	
Mon., April 5 Thurs., April 9	Aggression; APPLICATION #3 DUE Aggression	Ch. 12
Mon., April 13 Thurs., April 16	Prosocial behavior Prosocial behavior	Ch. 13
Mon., April 20 Thurs., April 23	NO CLASS (BACC DAY) Attraction; APPLICATION #4 DUE	Ch. 14
Mon., April 27 Thurs., April 30	Close relationships EXAM 3	Ch. 15
Mon., May 4	Wrap-up; FINAL PAPER DUE	