

Syllabus
Psychology 33: Introduction to Social Psychology
Spring Semester 2004

Class meets: T-R, Gardner 105

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Course Web Page: <http://blackboard.unc.edu> (then login with your UNC onyen and find the PSYC 33 page)

Texts:

1) Aronson, Wilson, & Akert (2004). *Social psychology* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (AWA)

2) Pettijohn (Ed.). (1998). *Sources: Notable selections in social psychology* (2nd ed.). Guilford, CT: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill. (P)

Additional Readings:

A few additional journal articles also will be assigned throughout the semester (see the course calendar).

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. 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.

Social psychology is an often-misunderstood field. Therefore, one of the first things we will discuss is what differentiates social psychology from other fields, such as sociology, philosophy, and social work. We will also discuss what differentiates social psychology from other sub-disciplines within psychology. One final piece of introductory material is that we will focus on why psychological research is *scientific*, in the same way that biology, physics, astronomy, and chemistry are scientific disciplines. What makes a discipline scientific is the method of experimentation and hypothesis testing by which answers to theoretical questions are discovered. Some consider psychology to be a “soft” science, whereas the other disciplines I just mentioned are considered “hard” sciences. On the contrary, I hope to show you that, if anything, psychology is the “harder” science in that understanding and predicting human behavior is perhaps the most challenging undertaking one could pursue. As one prominent scholar put it, “*The stellar universe is not so difficult of comprehension as the real actions of other people.*” (Marcel Proust, 1923)

In sum, the primary objectives of this course are: (1) that you gain an introductory understanding of social psychological theory and research; (2) that you learn to think scientifically about the questions addressed in social psychological work; (3) that you come to appreciate the similarities and differences between social psychology and other sub-disciplines within psychology; and (4) that you come to appreciate how the questions that social psychologists address are applicable in the situations we encounter in our everyday lives.

Structure of the Course

Course time primarily will be spent on lecture material and discussion. Given the large enrollment in this course, it will not be possible to spend appreciable time on group activities and intimate discussion. That said, I expect each of you to come to class each day prepared to answer questions and discuss the material. That means you will be expected to keep up with the reading and to be responsive in class when discussion is called for. We will have three exams throughout the semester, plus a final exam. The first three exams will not be cumulative; that is, each exam will cover only the material presented since the previous exam. The final exam will be partially cumulative, in that approximately

70% of the questions will be taken from the material presented following Exam 3, and 30% will cover basic principles learned throughout the semester. Exams will be multiple choice and each question will be worth 1 point. Exams 1-3 will contain 40 questions, and the final will contain 60 questions. For each exam, roughly 60%-70% of the material will be taken from the lecture material, and the remainder will be taken from your texts, other readings, and anything else that we do in class (e.g., films, videos, discussions, etc.). Therefore, although I will not make a regular practice of taking attendance, coming to class on a regular basis will be critical to your success in this course. In addition, there will be a few short in-class exercises or activities for which you can earn some participation credit. This credit can be earned *only* if you are in class on the day in question (i.e., you cannot make-up this credit).

Policies Concerning Absences and Make-ups

Absences from class. Coming to class is optional in the same way that being a student at UNC (as opposed to anything else you might do instead) is optional. I do not need or want to know about why you missed class, *regardless of the reason*. In other words, please *do not* email me to apologize for missing class or to explain yourself. However, missing class – and anything you feel you must do to make up for missing a day, including getting notes, discovering what was covered, etc. – is *your* responsibility alone. I will not provide you with my notes or lecture slides. Rather, I suggest that you become acquainted with at least one other person in class so that you might be able to copy the lecture notes from that person, in the event that you miss a class. In any case, missing class regularly is likely to result in a poor grade, so I suggest that you not do this.

Make-up exams. I hope I can make this extremely clear from the start: The policy of this course is that ***no make-up exams will be given***. Make-up exams are a headache for everyone involved, especially your instructor. They require special scheduling, specialized questions and format, and generally are not fair to other students in the class. 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 documented and verified with the Dean of Students, 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 at my discretion, or 2) you will be required to write a 15-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.

I want to emphasize that the general policy of this course is that make-up exams are not an option. As such, I will not consider reasons of personal convenience (e.g., wanting to leave town early for a long weekend or break; needing to catch up on sleep; your best friend has free round-trip tickets for you to go to Costa Rica and your flight leaves the morning of exam day) to be valid. (Note: I have heard each of these reasons before – I did not make these up.) In such cases, you must choose between competing desires (e.g., the desire to do well in this course and the desire to have extra vacation days). I also do not allow early exams. Exams are given on the day they are scheduled on your course calendar. In the event that this needs to change, I will notify you in advance.

Grading Criteria

Exam 1	20%	(50 points)
Exam 2	20%	(50 points)
Exam 3	20%	(50 points)
Final Exam	30%	(75 points)
<u>In-class activities & participation</u>	10%	(25 points)
TOTAL	100%	(250 points)

In terms of what you can do to ensure a good grade and a good experience in this class, my best advice is to keep up with the readings. I know that doing so can sometimes be a challenge, but given that we cannot cover everything in class, you will be responsible for the assigned readings also. In addition, please feel free to visit me or one of the teaching assistants during office hours or set up an appointment if you need any clarification about the issues we will be discussing.

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.

Course Calendar

(Note: Readings marked with an asterisk (*) will be made available in PDF format from the course web page (blackboard.unc.edu) then log on with your onyen and password and go to the PSYC 33 page)

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Lecture topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
<u>Week 1</u>		
1/8	Introduction and overview of the course	AWA Chapter 1; P 1.1 (Allport)
<u>Week 2</u>		
1/13	What social psychology is (and is not)	Epstein (1997)*
1/15	The Person and the Situation	
<u>Week 3</u>		
1/20	Methods in Social Psychology, I	AWA Chapter 2
1/22	Methods in Social Psychology, II	P 1.2 (Nicks et al.)
<u>Week 4</u>		
1/27	Social cognition, I	AWA Chapter 3
1/29	Social cognition, II	Myers (2004) Ch. 8*
<u>Week 5</u>		
2/3	Exam 1 (covering AWA 1-3, readings, lectures, thru 1/29)	
2/5	Person perception: Explaining others' behavior (and our own)	AWA Chapter 4
<u>Week 6</u>		
2/10	Person perception: Impression formation	P 2.1 (Kelley)
2/12	The self: Who am I?	AWA Chapter 5; P 3.2 (Brewer)
<u>Week 7</u>		
2/17	Social Comparison	P 2.2 (Festinger)
2/19	Self-justification: Cognitive Dissonance Theory	AWA Chapter 6; P 6.1 (Festinger & Carlsmith)
<u>Week 8</u>		
2/24	Exam 2 (Covers AWA 4-6, readings, lectures thru 2/19)	
2/26	Attitudes: Form and function	AWA Chapter 7;
<u>Week 9</u>		
3/2	Persuasion: Theories and methods of attitude change	P 5.1 (Ajzen & Fishbein); P 6.2 (Petty & Cacioppo)
3/4	Social Influence	AWA Chapter 8
<u>Week 10</u>		
3/9	Spring Break (NO CLASS)	
3/11		
<u>Week 11</u>		
3/16	Compliance and conformity	P 10.1 (Milgram); P 10.2 (Freedman & Fraser)
3/18	Social Groups: Norms and roles	AWA Chapter 9
<u>Week 12</u>		
3/23	Social Groups: Cooperation and competition	Axelrod, 1984*
3/25	Interpersonal attraction	AWA Chapter 10; P 8.3 (Cunningham)

Week 13

3/30 Romantic relationships P 9.3 (Hazan & Shaver); P 8.2 (Buss)
4/1 **Exam 3** (Covering AWA 7-10, readings, lectures, thru 3/30)

Week 14

4/6 Prosocial Behavior: Why do we help? AWA Chapter 11 (pp. 387-410);
P 12.1 (Darley & Latane)
4/8 Aggression: Why do we hurt? AWA Chapter 12

Week 15

4/13 Aggression: Situational influences P 13.2 (Huesmann); Anderson (2000)*
4/15 Intergroup attitudes: Prejudice, stereotyping, & discrimination AWA Chapter 13; P 7.1 (Allport)

Week 16

4/20 Social Neuroscience: Integrating social and biological approaches Bartholow et al. (2001)*; Willingham & Dunn (2003)*
4/22 **REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM & TEQs**

5/4 **Final Exam – 12:00pm in our regular classroom**
(Roughly 75% of the final exam questions will be taken from material covered between 4/6 and 4/22; the remainder will be comprehensive)

Note. All readings are to be completed prior to the respective class meeting date for which they are assigned.