Psychology 315
Introduction to Social Psychology
Fall 2010
9:00-10:00, MWF
Brown 118

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This course provides a broad overview of the theories, principles, and methods of social psychology. The emphasis of the course is on the scientific understanding of normal everyday behavior and the application of social psychology to important social problems. Topics to be discussed include forming impressions of others, self-control, falling in and out of love, the impact of the media on our attitudes about products and politicians, human aggression, stereotyping and prejudice, altruism, and the influence of groups on individual behavior. The course will be a blend of lecture and guided discussion, with student participation highly encouraged.

Text


Course Web Site

The course has a web site at http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~mjstrube/psych315.html. On this web site you will find the course syllabus, copies of PowerPoint presentations used during lectures, exam scores and grades, handouts, and announcements.

Grading

Grades will be based on (a) four multiple-choice exams, each worth 50 points, (b) four brief homework assignments, each worth 10 points, and (c) research participation (or its alternative), worth 6 points. The maximum number of points available in the class is 246. The minimum point totals required for each final grade are as follows: A = 228, A- = 221, B+ = 213, B = 203, B- = 196, C+ = 189, C = 179, C- = 171, D+ = 164, D = 154, D- = 147. If you are taking the course on the Credit/No Credit option, you must receive at least a C- to receive credit for the course. Attendance is not required in this course, but it is highly recommended. Students are responsible for all material presented in the textbook and during lectures. The lectures will expand upon major themes covered in the book, so it is important to read the assigned chapters before class. Material not covered by the textbook will also be introduced during lectures.
Given the difficulty of constructing fair make-up exams, no make-ups will be allowed. However, the final exam in the course is optional and can be used to replace an exam missed due to illness or other circumstances. If all four regular exams are taken, the final exam can be used to replace the lowest regular exam score.

The homework assignments are intended to encourage students to recognize social psychology in their daily lives. For each assignment, students will find an example of a social psychological principle or phenomenon discussed in class or in the textbook. These examples can come from nearly any source (e.g., cartoons, newspaper or magazine articles, blogs, YouTube videos, etc.). Each example is to be accompanied by a brief (no more than 1 page), double-spaced and typed description of the principle being illustrated.

As part of the requirements for this course, you are to participate in 6 hours of posted experiments. This is akin to a laboratory requirement in other sciences and serves to acquaint you with the methods and issues of contemporary psychology. Each hour of experimental participation is worth 1 point, for a total of 6 maximum points. The announcements page on the course website contains links to information that explains how to sign up for and participate in experiments. If you would rather not earn credit through participation in research, you have two other options. First, you may write a short (1 page, double-spaced) paper. Each paper is worth 1 point and thus each paper can be used to replace one hour of your required experiments. You have the option of writing as few or as many papers as you wish (i.e., the papers and participation in experiments can be used in combination). A description of guidelines for the papers is posted on the announcements page of the course website. All papers are due on the last day of class. A second option is to attend departmental colloquia. These are one-hour talks that typically are on Mondays from 4-5 pm. The colloquium schedule is posted on the department website (http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~psych/Colloquia/). Space for these talks is limited and you must sign up for these in advance (see the research participation link on the department website: http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~psych/). Note that there are an insufficient number of these talks to satisfy the entire requirement, so plan accordingly.

If you feel strongly that your grade on an exam or homework assignment is unfair, you have the right to appeal. Write a note stating (a) what exam item or homework assignment you are questioning and (b) your rationale for the appeal. Appeals must be submitted within one week of the particular grade (exam or homework) being posted to the course website. All appeals are to be made to the instructor, not the teaching assistant.

It should go without saying that students will be expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Should you require a more formal reminder, please consult the university policies at http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html

Schedule of Topics

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<td>September 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Methods in Social Psychology (Ch. 1)</td>
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September 20th  
Exam 1; Homework Assignment 1 Due
September 22nd  
Choices and Actions: The Self in Control (Ch. 4)
September 24th  
Choices and Actions: The Self in Control (Ch. 4)
September 27th  
Choices and Actions: The Self in Control (Ch. 4)
September 29th  
Social Cognition (Ch. 5)
October 1st  
Social Cognition (Ch. 5)
October 4th  
Social Cognition (Ch. 5)
October 6th  
Emotion and Affect (Ch. 6)
October 8th  
Emotion and Affect (Ch. 6)
October 11th  
Emotion and Affect (Ch. 6)
October 13th  
Attitudes, Beliefs, and Consistency (Ch. 7)
October 15th  
Fall Break, No class
October 18th  
Attitudes, Beliefs, and Consistency (Ch. 7)
October 20th  
Attitudes, Beliefs, and Consistency (Ch. 7)
October 22nd  
Exam 2; Homework Assignment 2 Due
October 25th  
Social Influence and Persuasion (Ch. 8)
October 27th  
Social Influence and Persuasion (Ch. 8)
October 29th  
Social Influence and Persuasion (Ch. 8)
November 1st  
Prosocial Behavior: Doing What’s Best for Others (Ch. 9)
November 3rd  
Prosocial Behavior: Doing What’s Best for Others (Ch. 9)
November 5th  
Aggression and Antisocial Behavior (Ch. 10)
November 8th  
Aggression and Antisocial Behavior (Ch. 10)
November 10th  
Aggression and Antisocial Behavior (Ch. 10)
November 12th  
Exam 3; Homework Assignment 3 Due
November 15th  
Attraction and Exclusion (Ch. 11)
November 17th  
Attraction and Exclusion (Ch. 11)
November 19th  
Close Relationships: Passion, Intimacy, and Sexuality (Ch. 12)
November 22nd  
Close Relationships: Passion, Intimacy, and Sexuality (Ch. 12)
November 24th  
Thanksgiving Break
November 26th  
Thanksgiving Break
November 29th  
Prejudice and Intergroup Relations (Ch. 13)
December 1st  
Prejudice and Intergroup Relations (Ch. 13)
December 3rd  
Prejudice and Intergroup Relations (Ch. 13)
December 6th  
Groups (Ch. 14)
December 8th  
Groups (Ch. 14)
December 10th  
Exam 4; Homework Assignment 4 Due

All research participation and alternatives must be completed
Final Exam (8:00 AM-10:00 AM, Location TBA)

This schedule and the procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.