

Syllabus -Advanced Topics in Social Psychology

Psychology 623, Sec. 01: Call #: 4915

Time : Tue 5-8 pm

Instructor: Jeff Aspelmeier, Ph.D.

Office: 402 Russell Hall Office hours: Mon.- Fri. 3:00 - 4:00

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Spring 2003
Russell Hall, Rm 427

Course Objectives:

The student will be engaged in a series of activities designed to develop understanding of concepts, theories, and research related to social psychology. Through class readings, discussions, and other components for evaluation (below), the student will be acquainted with current and classic issues, research and methodology in social psychology.

Class Mechanics :

Class sessions: Class attendance is not required (though it is a very good idea to come to class). *If you do not come to class, you remain responsible for all material covered in class and for any announcements made in class.* Part of the class before each exam will be given over to questions.

Evaluation:

The student's progress in meeting course objectives will be inferred from performance on the following numbered components.

1. Exams: Exams will be primarily a take home essay format. There will be two exams total, each covering approximately 1/2 of the material (i.e. the final is not cumulative). Exam questions will be based on readings and class discussions. Take home exams, must be returned to the instructor by the due date. Any exam submitted within one week after the due date will be graded for 1/2 credit. Any exam, turned in more than one week after the due date, will be awarded 0 pts.

Any student caught cheating will automatically fail the course and may be subject to more severe penalties, according to University regulations (so do us both a favor and don't cheat).

Make-up exams: Make-up tests will be all or mostly essay. If a student misses an exam and has an adequate *written* excuse, s/he may take a make-up exam (the instructor reserves the right to decide on the adequacy of excuses). If an exam is missed and no make-up is taken, a zero will be given for that exam. ***See me at once if you miss an exam for any reason, or when you anticipate missing an exam.*** You must see me, in person, in my office for this.

2. Weekly Assignments: Every class session a Question Paper is due. The Question Paper should consist of 2 **thoughtful** questions that you write based on the reading that is assigned for that day (see Tentative Course Outline). In your questions be sure to include the following elements:

- A clear statement concerning what aspects of the reading to which the question refers.
- A clear statement of the question.
- Your thoughts on how the question might best be answered.

A copy (keep one for your self to use during class) of your question paper is due at the beginning of class. 12 question papers are due before the end of the semester. Every Question paper is worth 4 points Late question papers will not be accepted.

3. Research Proposal: (100 pts: Due 4/11): Each student will submit a 8-10 page (excluding title page, abstract, references, appendices, tables, figures) research proposal that describes an original study addressing a topic in Social Psychology. The proposal should be typed, double spaced, 12 pt type face, with 1 inch margins and show evidence of proofreading and revision. This paper must conform to the style described in the fourth edition of The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. A minimum of 8-10 references should be used in the proposal.

4. Class Facilitation : (50 pts: At any point during the Course): In cooperation with the instructor, each student will select a course topic that they would be interested in selecting 4 articles for and directing class discussion for that week. The student will be responsible for selecting the articles, obtaining the articles, and making the articles available for distribution (either via library reserves, web posting, or some other workable arrangement). Students should be prepared to lead discussion, provide background information on the topic, and help break down the logic of the studies/theories presented. Handout are not required, but may be useful for other students and for presenters.

Summary of Evaluation:

Exams: 200 points

Weekly Assignment:	48 points
Research Proposal:	100 points
Class Facilitation:	50 points

Total	398 points

Grades: Grades are based on an absolute system with the minimum percentages for each letter grade as follows: D=60%, C=70%, B= 80%, A= 90%.

Special needs Students:

Any student with physical or learning disabilities in this course should contact the instructor the first week of the semester to discuss whatever accommodations are necessary to facilitate the student's learning and performance. It is the student's responsibility to contact me if you have special needs. I have no way of knowing what your needs are until you communicate them to me.

Lecture and Reading Outline:

This outline can only be an approximate guide, since dates for particular lecture topics are only approximations; material may be added or deleted. The dates and material for the exams will be as listed, however, unless changes are absolutely necessary. If changes affecting exams are made, they will be announced in class as soon as possible. Lecture dates in this outline are used to identify lecture topics to be covered on exams. On the class day immediately before an exam, there will be time for questions, etc.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Lecture Topics</u>
Week 1	1/6-1/10	History
Week 2	1/13-1/17	Persuasion
Week 3	1/20-1/24	Attribution
Week 4	1/27-1/31	Cognitive Dissonance & Self Perception / Social Comparison theory
Week 5	2/3-2/7	Conformity & Obedience
Week 6	2/10-2/14	Social Cognition: Cognition in Social Psychology, Heuristics, Schema's..
Week 7	2/17-2/21	Prejudice: Groups, Stereotypes, Illusory Correlations
Week 8	2/24-2/28	Relationships: Social Support / Romantic Relationships (adult attachment) (Exam I)
Week 9	3/3-3/7	Terror Management Theory / Social Constructionism
Week 10	3/10-3/14	Spring Break No Class
Week 11	3/17-3/21	?
Week 12	3/24-3/28	?
Week 13	3/31-4/4	?
Week 14	4/7-4/11	?
Week 15	4/14-4/18	?
Week 16	4/21-4/25	?
Week 17	finals	

Other possible topics (not an exhaustive list)

Self - Self presentation/Self Monitoring Theory: Self Schema's, Self Image/esteem/efficacy;

Behavior Confirmation effects (the self-fulfilling prophesy)

Gender - Measurement, Gender Schema Theory, Gender Roles, Media & Body Image, Gender Stereotypes / Rape Myth Acceptance

Aggression - Drugs & Aggression, Frustration/Aggression Hypothesis, Political Aggression (Terrorism), Aggression & Media

Prosocial Behavior - Helping, Bystander Intervention, Empathy/Altruism Hypothesis

Group Processes - Group Think, Social Facilitation vs. Social Loafing, Group Conflict, Fairness

Attraction - Interpersonal attraction, Similarity vs. Matching Hypotheses

Close Relationships- Marriage Stability and Failure, Friendship

Cross Cultural Studies