

Psychology 340

Advanced Social Psychology

Fall 2008

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Class meets on M and W 11:25am –12:40pm

Office hours: MW 1:30-3pm; F 8:30-10:30am

A survey of the major theoretical and empirical research in social psychology, including person perception and social cognition, attitudes and persuasion, prejudice and stereotyping, interpersonal attraction, and helping behavior. Some theoretical applications will be discussed, as will methodological approaches to social psychological questions and problems. Students will complete research projects and writing assignments.

Course Goals:

1. To introduce you to theory, methods, and research in social psychology.
2. To teach you to think like a social psychologist when analyzing human behavior.
3. To help you develop research skills for conducting social psychological studies.
4. To help you share social psychological ideas with others in writing, presentation, and discussion.

Required Readings:

Cooper, J. (2007). *Cognitive Dissonance: Fifty Years of a Classic Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dunn, D. S. (2009). *Research Methods for Social Psychology*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell

Lesko, W. (Ed.). (2009). *Readings in Social Psychology: General, Classic, and Contemporary Selections (7th ed.)*. New York: Pearson.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation. Our class is a small seminar. Your active, engaged, and on-going participation is essential to the success of the class. To that end, I will be taking role daily. An undue number of absences will lower your final course grade.

Leading class discussion. Each student will lead class discussion of assigned readings at least once during the semester but no more than three times (student led discussion classes are noted in the syllabus by an *). When you lead class discussion, you should prepare comments on the material, create a list of *discussion questions* on the reading (to be submitted to me the class *before* your discussion). If necessary, two people may lead the discussion of the same reading.

Write 5 or so discussion questions based on the text reading assigned for the day you present and the approved article you selected for the class to read. *Your questions must be submitted to me at least ONE CLASS in advance of the day you are scheduled to lead discussion.* You may email them to me. When leading class, do not summarize what we all read, rather, draw our attention to key issues, place the topic in the larger context of social psychology, explain why the topic is an important one, and so on. Please do not read to us—*talk to us, with us.*

Examinations. There are two exams, an in-class midterm on Wednesday, October 3rd and a take-home final exam (due date to be announced later). Both exams will be comprised of essay questions relating to class readings and discussions. We will discuss the format of each test in detail during class. A missed exam will be recorded as a zero (0) grade. Make-up exams will be given at my discretion, and valid evidence for the absence will be required (e.g., emergency, documented medical excuse).

Group research projects. We will form research groups of 3 students each. You and the members of your group will propose and then conduct a social psychology research project (e.g., an experiment, a field study) where variables are manipulated and measured. Before doing so, your group will decide on a topic area and formulate a testable hypothesis. Working as a team, your group will search the relevant literature, develop a hypothesis and research design, create independent and dependent variables, seek permission from the Human Subjects Committee to conduct the experiment, recruit participants, and collect and analyze the resulting data.

Individual research paper. Each student will use the shared materials created and collected by his or her group to write an APA style empirical paper summarizing what was done, found, and interpreting its meaning in light of social psychological theory. I will read and comment on rough drafts of your paper, the final version of which is due on Monday, December 8th. Your APA style paper should be 5 – 6 pages in length, excluding the Title, Abstract, and References pages, as well as any tables or figures.

Plagiarism and cheating. Your work must be your own. The College has a detailed plagiarism policy. I assume you are already familiar with it. I am happy to

discuss it with you if you have questions. I will follow it to the letter. Please visit: <http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic2.htm> to view the policy.

Disability accommodations. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director for Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (campus extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Office of Learning Services.

Grading. Final grades will be weighted as follows:

Midterm exam (in class)	= 15%
Final exam (take home)	= 15%
Class participation	= 20%
Leading class discussion	= 15%
Group project	= 15%
APA style research paper	= 20%

I will use the following grading scale for course work:

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Grade Range</i>
A	100	95-100
A-	92	90-94
B+	88	87-89
B	85	83-86
B-	81	80-82
C+	78	77-79
C	75	73-76
C-	71	70-72
D+	68	67-69
D	65	63-66
D-	61	60-62
F	0	0-59

Office hours. My office hours at Moravian for Fall 2008 are:

Monday	1:30pm – 3pm
Wednesday	1:30pm - 3pm
Friday	8:30am - 10:30am

When necessary appointments for other times may be scheduled.

Note about the syllabus. Readings should be completed before class on the dates noted herein. I reserve the right to alter the syllabus should the need arise.

C = Cooper's *Cognitive Dissonance*

D = Dunn's *Research Methods for Social Psychology*

L = Lesko's *Readings in Social Psychology*

Other readings indicated by complete reference and placed on reserve in Reeves Library

Class Schedule for Fall 2008

* = Assigned Student Led Discussion

M Aug 25 Organizational Meeting – Research Group Assignments

Introducing Social Psychology

W Aug 27 Introducing Social Psychology Article 1 in L
Discuss possible research topic ideas
Sign-up for in class presentations

M Sep 1 *Labor Day – No Class Meeting*

W Sep 3 Research Review Ch 1 in D
Come to class with topic ideas

M Sep 8 Topic Selection Ch 2 in D
Group presentations of topic ideas,
topic refinement and revision based on class discussion

In Depth Review of Classic Theory and Research: Cognitive Dissonance

W Sep 10 Cognitive Dissonance I. Chs. 1 – 4 in C
Finalize Topics

M Sep 15 Cognitive Dissonance II. Chs. 5 – 8 in C

W Sep 17 Ethics and Social Psychology Ch 3 in D
 Article 2* in L

M Sep 22 Social Perception Articles 5* & 6* in L
Co-authored (group) draft of IRB form due in class

W Sep 24 Basic Experimental Design Ch 4 in D
Submit IRB form

M Sep 29 Social Cognition Articles 7*, 8*, & 9*

W Oct 1 **Midterm Exam** (In Class)

F Oct 3	Midterm Point of the Semester	
Sa Oct 4 – Tu Oct 7	Fall Recess	
W Oct 8	Alternatives to Experimentation <i>Begin data collection once IRB is approved</i>	Ch 5 in D
M Oct 13	Prejudice & Discrimination	Articles 16* & 17*
W Oct 15	Developing Surveys & Questionnaires	Ch 6 in D
M Oct 20	Interpersonal Attraction	Articles 20* & 21*
W Oct 22	Independent Variables	Ch 7 in D
M Oct 27	Close Relationships	Articles 23* & 24*
W Oct 29	Dependent Variables	Ch 8 in D
M Nov 3	Social Influence	Articles 25* & 26*
Tu Nov 4	Election Day – VOTE!	
W Nov 5	Social Influence and Abu Graib Film: <i>Ghosts of Abu Graib</i>	Fiske et al. reading Article 27*
M Nov 10	Validity and Realism	Ch 9 in D
W Nov 12	Helping or Prosocial Behavior	Articles 29* & 30*
M Nov 17	Conducting Research	Ch 10 in D
W Nov 19	Aggression	Articles 32* & 33*
M Nov 24	Data Analysis	Ch 11 in D
Tu Nov 25 – Su Nov 30	Thanksgiving Break	
M Dec 1	Applied Social Psychology	Articles 39*, 41*, & 42*
W Dec 3	Writing Workshop <i>Bring APA style draft of your paper to class (5 copies)</i>	No Reading Assignment

M Dec 8 Presenting Social Psychological Research Ch 12 in D
Project Paper Due
*Take Home **Final Exam** Available*

W Dec 10 Last Class – Wrap Up

F Dec 12, M Dec 15 – F Dec 19 ***Final Exam Period***

*** Due Date for **Take Home Final Exam** TBA

Have a great break. I am on sabbatical during the spring term of 2009, thus, I will not be on campus very often, doing advising, etc.