

Psychology 340

Advanced Social Psychology

Spring 2010

Dana S. Dunn, PhD
Hurd Academic Complex 231
(610) 861-1562
dunn@moravian.edu

Class meets on M and W 8:55am –10:05pm

Office hours: M 10:15-11:15am; W 2-3pm; 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.

Required Books:

Dunn, D. S. (2008). *Research Methods for Social Psychology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell – ISBN: 978-1-4051-4980-8 (hardback)

Festinger, L., et al. (2009). *When prophecy fails*. London: Pinter & Martin Ltd. ISBN-13: 978-1905177196 (paper)

Zimbardo, P. (2008). *The Lucifer effect: Understanding how good people turn evil*. New York: Random House. ISBN: 978-0812974447 (paper)

Milgram, S. (2004). *Obedience to authority*. New York: Harper. ISBN: 0-06-073728-X (paper)

Recommended book (optional):

Dunn, D. S. (2011). *A Short Guide to Writing about Psychology* (3rd ed.). New York: Pearson. (paper)

There are a few readings (noted in the class schedule) that are on Reserve in Reeves Library. You may also download copies from PsycINFO.

Learning Goals and Outcomes for this Course

Research Methods in Psychology

Describe the basic characteristics of the science of psychology.

Explain different research methods used by psychologists.

Evaluate the appropriateness of conclusions derived from psychological research

Design and conduct basic studies to address psychological questions using appropriate research methods.

Follow the APA Ethics Code in the treatment of human participants in the design, data collection, interpretation, and reporting of psychological research.

Generalize research conclusions appropriately based on the parameters of particular research methods.

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.

Short papers. You will write three short papers (3 or so pages, typed and double-spaced) based on three of the books we will be reading this semester. The due dates for the papers are noted in the course schedule. The paper topics are provided later in this syllabus.

Examinations. There are two exams, an in-class midterm on Wednesday, February 24th and a take-home final exam (due on Wednesday, May 5th). 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 2- 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) on some aspect of **social influence** 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.

Group or individual research paper. Students can write a group paper (satisfactorily demonstrating that each member of the group contributed approximately equally to the final product) or each member of a group can write an individual research paper. Each student will use the shared materials created and collected by the class to write his or her own 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 must be submitted for a grade in class on Monday, April 26th.

Data analyses for research projects. Although we will discuss how to plan data analyses for your research projects, I will assume you are familiar with data entry and analyses using statistical software, generally SPSS. You should begin to think about, discuss, and plan the analysis of your data as soon as you develop a research design. SPSS is available online in the College's computer classrooms. If you have access to other statistical software, you may use it as long as you inform me in advance. Be sure that when you report the results of your analyses that you do so using APA style (for guidelines, see chapter 11 in D, chapters 6 and 8 in Dunn [2011], and/or the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* [APA, 2010]). Be sure that you report the values of any test statistics, their accompanying degrees of freedom, significance levels, and so on.

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.

Grading. Final grades will be weighted as follows:

Midterm exam (in class)	= 20%
Final exam (take home)	= 20%
Class participation	= 20%
Short papers	= 15%
Group work	= 5%
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 2007 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.

M = Milgram's *Obedience to Authority*

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

FRS = Festinger, Riecken, & Schachter's *When Prophecy Fails*

Z = Zimbardo's *The Lucifer Effect*

Other readings indicated by complete reference (download copy from PsycINFO)

Class Schedule for Spring 2010

Theme: Social Influence

M Jan 18	Organizational Meeting <i>Introducing Social Psychology & Social Influence</i>	
W Jan 20	Introducing Social Influence Techniques and Tactics	
M Jan 25	Social Influence and Dissonance I	Chs 1-4 in FRS
W Jan 27	<i>No Class Meeting</i> Research Review <i>Complete AL 1a, p. 17</i>	Ch 1 in D
M Feb 1	Social Influence and Dissonance II Topic Selection <i>Complete AL 2a, p. 33</i> <i>Come to Class with Topic Ideas</i>	Chs 5 – Epilogue in FRS Ch 2 in D
W Feb 3	Refine Social Influence Topic Ideas <i>Report on library research due</i>	
<i>In Depth Review of Classic Theory and Research: Conformity and Obedience</i>		
M Feb 8	Creating Social Pressure in the lab <i>Short paper 1 due</i>	Asch (Reserve)
W Feb 10	Obedience	Chs 1 – 8 in M
M Feb 15	Obedience	Chs 9 – 15 in M
W Feb 17	Obedience to Authority DVD	
M Feb 22	Research Ethics <i>Short paper 2 due</i>	Ch 3 in D

W Feb 24	Midterm Exam	
F Feb 26	Midterm Point of the Semester	
M Mar 1	Milgram's Critics <i>Co-authored draft of IRB form due in class</i>	Baumrind & Milgram (Reserve)
W Mar 3	Replication of Milgram <i>Complete AL 4a, p. 83</i> <i>Draft of Introduction due</i>	Burger (Reserve) Ch 4 in D
Sa Mar 6 – Su Oct 14	Spring Break	
	Social Influence and Evil?	
M Mar 15	Defining Evil <i>Co-authored draft of Method due</i>	Ch 1 in Z
W Mar 17	The Prison Experiment	Chs 2 – 5 in Z
M Mar 22	<i>No Class Meeting</i> Alternatives to Experiments <i>Complete AL 7a, 7b, pps. 196, 201</i> <i>Complete AL 8a, p. 217</i>	Ch 5 in D
W Mar 24	The Prison Experiment con't	Chs 6 – 8 in Z Ch 6 in D
M Mar 29	The Prison Experiment con't	Ch 9 – 11 in Z Ch 7 in D
W Mar 31	Prison Experiment Film DVs	Ch 8 in D
Th Apr 1	Last Day for Course Withdrawal with "W"	
F Apr 2 – M Apr 5	Easter Recess	
W Apr 7	Conformity revisited Data Analysis <i>Complete AL 11a, p. 289</i> Short paper 3 due	Chs 12- 13 in Z Ch 11 in D
M Apr 12	Abu Ghraib <i>Draft of Results Due</i>	Ch 14 in Z Fiske et al (Reserve)

W Apr 14	Ghosts of Abu Ghraid DVD Presenting Research <i>Draft of Discussion Due</i>	Ch 12 in D
M Apr 19	<i>No Class Meeting</i> Work on Your Paper	
W Apr 21	Finish Zimbardo <i>Complete Draft (multiple copies)</i> <i>For In Class Writing Workshop due</i>	Ch 15 - 16
M Apr 26	<i>Project Paper due</i> <i>Take Home Final Exam Available in class</i>	
W Apr 28	Last Class – Wrap Up	
Sa May 1	Last Day of Classes	
M May 3 – Sa May 8	<i>Final Exams</i>	

***** Due Date for Take Home Final Exam is Wednesday, May 5th at 1:30pm—I will accept the Final Exam anytime after it is handed out on Monday, April 26th.**

Other Readings (On Reserve or Accessible via PsycINFO)

- Asch, S. (1955, November). Opinions and social pressure. *Scientific American*, 31- 35.
- Baumrind, D. (1964). Some thoughts on the ethics of research: After reading “Milgram’s Behavioral Study of Obedience.” *American Psychologist*, 19(6), 421-423.
- Burger, J. M. (2009). Replicating Milgram: Would people still obey today? *American Psychologist*, 64, 1-11.
- Fiske, S. T., Harris, L. T., & Cuddy, A. J. C. (2004). Why ordinary people torture enemy prisoners. *Science*, 306 (5701), 1482-1483.
- Milgram, S. (1974). Issues in the study of obedience: A reply to Baumrind. *American Psychologist*, 19(11), 848-852.

Short Paper Assignments

1. Define and describe the nature of social influence exhibited by the “seekers” in *When Prophecy Fails*. What factors motivated them to join the group and to radically change their lives in the process? Pick one situation or example of social influence from the book and discuss it in detail. Could this sort of influence affect people today? Why or why not?
2. What is the nature of social influence found in the Asch study and in Milgram’s obedience experiment? Compare and contrast the nature of the social pressure/influence found in each situation. What makes either form of social influence different from that found in *When Prophecy Fails*? Do we experience compliance and obedience pressures in daily life? If so, when? Are the consequences of these forms of influence positive, negative, or both?
3. Define and describe the nature of social influence found in the Zimbardo prison study. Are people evil—or are situations “evil”? Or is it both? What makes this influence different from the examples we have seen in *When Prophecy Fails*, the Asch study, and the obedience to authority experiments?