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Spring 2016

Psychology 340 – Social Psychology

Semester Topic: Money, Materialism, Well-being, and Happiness.

Most people accept the folk wisdom found in the phrase “money won’t buy you happiness,” and yet many continue to pursue higher incomes and more material acquisitions, from iPhones to expensive cars, nonetheless. Research in social psychology and positive psychology demonstrate quite clearly that beyond certain points, more money and more stuff do not lead to greater happiness, well-being, contentment, or satisfaction. But there is some good news: Recent research reveals that *how you spend* your money can lead to positive feelings. In this class, we will begin with an overview of social psychology and the spend most of the semester exploring the downside of materialism as well as the particular ways that money can (and cannot) lead to happiness, either for ourselves or others. The class will also design and conduct a study on some aspect of money, materialism, spending, and well-being. We will choose the research topic and then design and execute the research together.

Class meets on M and W (11:45am – 12:55pm) in PPHAC 232

Required books:

- Dunn, D. S. (2012). *Research methods for social psychology* (2nd ed). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. **ISBN-13:** 978-1118406052
- Dunn, E. W., & Norton, M. (2014). *Happy money: The science of happier spending*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster. **ISBN-13:** 978-1451665079
- Kasser, T. (2003). *The high price of materialism*. Cambridge, MA: Bradford. **ISBN-13:** 978-0262611978

Optional/Recommended

- Dunn, D. S. (2010). *A short guide to writing about psychology*. New York, NY: Pearson. **ISBN-13:** 978-0205752812

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 possibly 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.

Examinations. There are two exams, an in-class midterm on **Monday, February 29th** and a take-home final exam (available in class on **Wednesday, April 20th** and due on a **To-Be-Announced Date**). 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).

Research paper. Each student (individually or in a team of 2 or 3) will write an APA-style research paper (a) summarizing the theory, methods, and research findings concerning a topic related to the class; (b) a research proposal outlining in a detail an empirical study concerning the class topic; (c) a paper describing an empirical study conducted by you (or your team). The paper is due on **Wednesday, April 20th** at the start of class.

Short papers. There are two short reflection papers, one on tracking your expenses for a week and a second on planning your prosocial donations for the future. Both are 1 to 2 pages in length. Due dates are noted in the syllabus. Each is worth 5% of your final grade.

The Writing Center. The Writing Center, located on the second floor of Zinzendorf Hall, is there to support the efforts of all writers at Moravian College. The tutors there are students who are good, experienced writers and who are professionally trained to help you improve your writing. They will go over an essay draft with you and guide your understanding of how you might improve that draft. You could also drop by to pick up some of the free handouts on virtually every part of writing: getting started, writing a thesis, developing paragraphs, eliminating wordiness, using commas, and the like. The Writing Center is generally open Monday-Thursday afternoons and Sunday evenings during the semester. The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.

Disability issues. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact the Academic Support Center, located on the first floor of Monocacy Hall (extension 1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

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)	= 25%
Class participation	= 20%
APA style research paper	= 25%
Reflection papers (5% each)	= 10%

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 spring 2016 are:

Monday & Wednesday	By Appointment
Tuesday & Thursday	1:30-3:00pm
Friday	8:30-10:30am

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.

Course Schedule

*** Available via PsycINFO

Week One – Organizational Meeting and Introducing Social Psychology

M Jan 18 – Organizational Meeting

Begin keeping a log of your expenses: Where does your money go? Keep a list of everything you buy/consume or need to pay for during the next 8 days. Then, writing a 1-2 page reflection paper on where your money goes. Were there any surprises?

W Jan 20 – Social Psychology I: Main Theories and Perspectives

Week Two – Social Psychology and Research Methods

M Jan 25 – Social Psychology II: Main Theories and Perspectives

Final Day for Course Changes

W Jan 27 – Research Review – **Bring your *Expense Log/Where My Money Goes*** paper to class and be prepared to discuss it.

Read Chapter 1 in Dunn

Week Three – Materialism and Happy Money

M Feb 1 – Mixed Messages and Personal Well-Being

Read Chapters 1 and 2 in Kasser

W Feb 3 – Happy Money

Read Prologue and Chapter 1 in Dunn & Norton

Week Four – Materialism and Happy Money

M Feb 8 – Psychological Needs

Read Chapter 3 in Kasser

W Feb 10 – Insecurity

Read Chapter 4 in Kasser

Week Five – Make It a Treat and More Methods

M Feb 15 – Read Chapter 2 in Dunn & Norton

W Feb 17 – Brainstorming Topics and Research Ethics

Read Chapters 2 and 3 in Dunn

Week Six – Experimental Design – I am out of town this week—Do the assigned readings and study for the Midterm Exam.

M Feb 22 – Basic experimental design and Alternative methods

Read Chapters 4 and 5 in Dunn

W Feb 24 – Fragile Self-Worth and Poor Relationships

Read Chapters 5 and 6 in Kasser

F Feb 26 *Midterm Point of the Semester*

Week Seven – Midterm Exam and Happy Money

M Feb 29 *Midterm Exam*

W Mar 2 – The Chains of Materialism and Family, Community, and the Earth

Read Chapters 7 and 8 in Kasser

Spring break Sat March 5 – Su March 13

Week Eight – Happy Money

M Mar 14 – Buy Time

Read Chapter 3 in Dunn & Norton

W Mar 16 – Pay Now, Consume Later

Read Chapter 4 in Dunn & Norton

Week Nine – More Methods

M Mar 21 – Developing Questionnaires & Surveys and Independent Variables

Read Chapters 6 and 7 in Dunn

W Mar 23 – Dependent Variables and Validity

Read Chapters 8 and 9 in Dunn

Easter Break – Th Mar 24th - Su Mar 27th

Week Ten – Materialism and Happy Money

M Mar 28 – Materialism

Read Chapter 9 and Epilogue in Kasser

Kushlev, K., Dunn, E. W., & Lucas, R. E. (2015). Higher income is associated with less daily sadness but not more daily happiness. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 6(5), 483-489. doi: 10.1177/1948550614568161

W Mar 30 – Invest in Others

Read Chapter 5 in Dunn & Norton

F Apr 1 ***Last Day for Course Withdrawal with a W***

Week Eleven – Happy Money, Prosocial Contributions, and Having Too Little

M Apr 4

Read Epilogue in Dunn & Norton

Future Donation paper: Write a 1 – 2 page reflection paper wherein you discuss where you will consider donation money in the future and why (unless you don't intend to ever contribute to any charity). How will your donations help yourself and your cause? How will you know? *Due in class today—be prepared to discuss your paper.*

W Apr 6 –

Read these articles:

Olivola, C., & Shafir, E. (2013). The martyrdom effect: When pain and effort increase prosocial contributions. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, 26, 91-105.

Shah, A. J., Mullainathan, S., & Shafir, E. (2012). Some consequences of having too little. *Science*, 338, 682-685.

Week Twelve – Having Too Much?

M Apr 11 –

Quoidbach, J., Dunn, E. W., Hansenne, M., & Bustin, G. (2015). The price of abundance: How a wealth of experiences impoverishes savoring. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(3), 393-404. doi: 10.1177/0146167214566189

W Apr 13 –

Quoidbach, J., Dunn, E. W., Petrides, K. V., & Mikolajczak, M. (2010). Money giveth, money taketh away: The dual effect of wealth on happiness. *Psychological Science*, 21, 759-763.

Week Thirteen – Practical Research Matters

M Apr 18 – Doing Research

Read Chapter 10 in Dunn

W Apr 20 – Data Analysis – PAPER DUE IN CLASS

Read Chapter 11 in Dunn

*The Take Home Final Exam will be passed out this week.

Week Fourteen – Discussion of Papers & Conclusions

M Apr 25

W Apr 27 Conclusions/Last Class

Classes end Sat Apr 30

Final Examinations: May 3 - May 8, Sunday – Friday

Due date for the Take Home Final Exam- no later than Tuesday, May 3rd at 3pm in my office.

Have a relaxing summer. See you in August 2016—congratulations to the graduates!