Social Psychology

Class code
PSYCH-UA 9032 – 001

Instructor Details
Dr. Tim Marsh
tam6@nyu.edu
Consultations by Appointment
Please allow at least 24 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails.

Class Details
Fall 2015

Social Psychology

Thursdays, 3:00pm – 6:00pm
September 3 to December 10
Room 302
NYU Sydney Academic Centre

Prerequisites
PSYCH-UA 9001 Introduction to Psychology

Class Description
This course advances the understanding of major principles and findings of social psychology. This course will specifically discuss four main areas: (1) the science of social psychology; (2) the individual within the social world; (3) the impact individuals have on another individual or group; and (4) social relationships.

The course will be in lecture format, but class discussion and participation is expected. Therefore, preparation prior to each class is necessary.

Desired Outcomes
By the end of the course, students should be able to:
1. Critically understand the major methods of research in social psychology
2. Describe, explain and evaluate research studies examining core areas of social psychology
3. Recognise and evaluate social, cultural, spiritual and other types of diversity
4. Apply psychological concepts, theories and research findings to solve problems in everyday life and in society

Assessment
Course grades are based on class participation (10%), 1 midterm paper (20%), 1 oral presentation (10%), 2 exams (20% each) and a final paper (20%).
EXAMS: 29 October (Session 8) during the first half of class, and Wednesday 16 December 10.00am-12.00pm (Exam Week) All exams will consist of multiple-choice, true and false, and short answer questions.

PAPER 1: Critique of the literature (Due 1 October – Session 5)
For this paper, you will choose a topic within social psychology from a set of options given to you by your instructor and review some of the most recent literature. You should use at least 3 sources (research articles). Your paper should identify a prevailing research question, review the major recent research findings, and identify some strengths and weaknesses of research in this field. This should not just simply be a summary of each study, but rather an overall review of how the selected studies contribute to the common topic – what are the overall ideas/findings/methods that define the inquiry?

Your sources should be research articles from peer-reviewed journals (accessed through the university library portal), not websites or information from unreliable sources such as Wikipedia.

Proof read before submitting your papers. It should be free of spelling or grammatical errors. Your paper should be clear, concise and organized. Papers should be no more than 3 pages double-spaced typed pages of text, excluding title page and references. Use 12-point font in Times New Roman. Use 1-inch margins on top, bottom and sides of each page. Papers that do not follow these criteria will not be read or graded.

ORAL PRESENTATION: Social processes in everyday life (Presented on November 12 and 19 - Sessions 10 and 11)
These will be completed in small groups of approximately 3 students.
Select a newspaper article (print or digital) reporting on a social interaction between individuals and/or groups to present on.

You will need to (1) briefly present and summarize this reported social interaction, before (2) identifying and explaining a principle, concept or theory from social psychology that could help to account for the reported interaction. The identified principle, concept or theory does not need to be “the correct” or even a complete explanation of the interaction; you only need to be able to explain its potential involvement. Finally, you are to (3) outline the design of a study that empirically tests your proposed explanation. Your experiment should aim to examine the identified principle (etc.) in a context that is ecologically valid for the social situation.

You will be given a strict 7 minutes to speak followed by a brief question time. You will be able to use power point slides during your presentation, but these should add to, and not simply repeat, what you are saying.

FINAL PAPER: Social psychology within plays or movies (Due 3 December – Session 13)
More information about the assignment will be given during Session 8. The final paper will be no more than 5 pages (double spaced, 12-pt font).
Failure to submit or fulfil any required course component will result in failure of the class.

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Excellent performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course; all work includes clear, logical explanations, insight, and original thought and reasoning.

**Grade B:** Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics; all work includes general analysis and coherent explanations showing some independent reasoning, reading and research.

**Grade C:** Satisfactory performance with some broad explanation and reasoning; the work will typically demonstrate an understanding of the course on a basic level.

**Grade D:** Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course’s topics; work lacks satisfactory insight, analysis or reasoned explanations.

**Grade F:** Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Work is weak, unfinished or unsubmitted.

**Grade Conversions**

Your total numerical score, calculated from the components listed above, correspond to the following letter grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>86-89</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>82-85</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>40-53</td>
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**Submission of Work**

*Should work be submitted as a hard copy, or electronically?*

Unless otherwise specified, all written work must be submitted as a hard copy. The majority of written assignments must also be submitted electronically via NYU Classes. All in-class presentations must be completed during class time.

*Who may submit a student’s work?*

Each student’s assigned work must be handed in personally by that student. The student may not nominate another person to act on his/her behalf.

*When and where should the work be submitted?*

The hard copy of any written work must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of class on the date the work is due. If the assignment due date falls outside of class time, work must be submitted to the Staff Member on duty in Room 2.04 during prescribed Office Hours (11:30am-12:30pm and 2:30-3:30pm Mon-Thu), or by appointment with the Academic Programs Coordinator. Each submitted item of work received in Room 2.04 will be date and
time stamped in the presence of the student. Work submitted in Room 2.04 will not be considered “received” unless formally stamped.

**What is the Process for Late Submission of Work?**

After the due date, work may only be submitted under the following conditions:

- Late work, even if an extension has been granted, must be submitted in person by appointment with the Academic Programs Coordinator. Each submitted item of work must be date and time stamped in order to be considered “received”.
- Work submitted after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100-point scale (for the assignment) for each day the work is late. Written work submitted beyond five weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension receives a mark of zero, and the student is not entitled to feedback for that piece of work.
- Because failure to submit or fulfil any required course component will result in failure of the course, it is crucial for students to submit every assignment even when it will receive a mark of zero. Early departure from the program therefore places the student at risk of failing the course.

**Plagiarism Policy**

The academic standards of New York University apply to all coursework at NYU Sydney. NYU Sydney policies are in accordance with New York University’s plagiarism policy. The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism are severe and are dealt with by the Director, NYU Sydney, not your instructor. Your home school will be notified and you will be dealt with according to the standards of that school. The codes of conduct and academic standards for NYU’s various schools and colleges are outlined in the respective school’s academic resources.

**Attendance Policy**

Study abroad at Global Academic Centres is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centres is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students’ semester grades. The class roster will be marked in the first five minutes of class and anyone who arrives after this time will be considered absent. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalized by a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to two unexcused absences. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.
Classroom Expectations

This is a seminar subject and requires the active participation of all students. It also requires engaged discussion, including listening to and respecting other points of view. Your behaviour in class should respect your classmates’ desire to learn. It is important for you to focus your full attention on the class, for the entire class period.

- Arrive to class on time.
- Once you are in class, you are expected to stay until class ends. Leaving to make or take phone calls, to meet with classmates, or to go to an interview, is not acceptable behaviour.
- Phones, digital music players, and any other communications or sound devices are not to be used during class. That means no phone calls, no texting, no social media, no email, and no internet browsing at any time during class.
- Laptop computers and tablets are not to be used during class except in rare instances for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor.
- The only material you should be reading in class is material assigned for that class. Reading anything else, such as newspapers or magazines, or doing work from another class, is not acceptable.
- Class may not be recorded in any fashion – audio, video, or otherwise – without permission in writing from the instructor.

Religious Observance

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their professor and the Assistant Director, Academic Programs in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose.

Provisions to students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Centre for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

Required Texts


Internet Research Guidelines

Students are strongly encouraged to use ‘Psychinfo’ via the NYU electronic library: https://home.nyu.edu/cgi-bin/ISng.pl?current_tab=221
The oral presentations and written assignment should be based on journal articles, which makes Psychinfo very important.

**Session 1  An introduction to Social Psychology**

*Thursday September 3*

**Topics:**
- Introducing social psychology
- Why social psychology is better than intuition
- Characterizing situations and construal
- Milgram’s Obedience study

**Required Reading:**

**Session 2  The Science of Social Psychology**

*Thursday September 10*

**Topics:**
- Research and data collection methods
- Statistics: comparing groups and looking for associations
- Critical thinking and alternative explanations
- The importance of replicating research conceptually and directly.

**Required Reading:**

**Session 3  The Individual in the Social World**

*Thursday September 17*

**Topics:**
- Self-knowledge and self-esteem
- Regulating and controlling the self
- Evaluating and presenting the self
- Rejection and ostracism
Required Reading:

Session 4  Understanding Others
Thursday September 24

Topics:
- Appearance, dispositions, attributions
- Errors and biases, culture and attributions
- Intelligence, culture and achievement

Required Reading:

Session 5  Social Judgement and Moral Decision Making
Thursday October 1

Topics:
- Prior knowledge; reason, intuition, heuristics
- The effect of affect on social judgements
- Moral decision making

Required Reading:

Assignment: Paper 1 due (20%)

FALL BREAK: October 5 - 9

Session 6  Attitudes, Behaviour and Rationalization
Thursday October 15

Topics:
- Predicting behaviour from attitudes, and vice versa
- Self-perception, broader rationalization
Required Reading:


Note: There's a lot of uncommon statistics in here. Make your best effort to read through the analyses, but focus more on the conceptual elements of the reading.

Session 7  Influencing Others

Thursday October 22

Topics:

- Social influence
- Characterizing, universality, social relations
- Social cognition, mind and body, happiness

Required Reading:


Session 8  Emotion

Thursday October 29

*Exam 1 (20%): First half of class*

Topics:

- Theories of emotions

Required Reading:


Session 9  Persuasion and Advertising

Thursday November 5

Topics:

- Basics, functions, attitude change
- The media, resistance to persuasion
Required Reading:


Note: Don’t worry too much about understanding the technical details under the “Data acquisition and analysis” subheading.

*Assignment: Discussion about Final Paper*

**Session 10  Relationships (Part 1)**
Thursday November 12

*Assignment: Oral Presentations Part 1 (total 10%): First half of class*

Topics:

- Proximity, similarity
- Physical attractiveness, integration

*Required Reading:*


**Session 11  Relationships (Part 2)**
Thursday November 19

*Assignment: Oral Presentations Part 2 (total 10%): First half of class*

Topics:

- Importance, origins, ways
- Romantic relationships
- Relationship maintenance
- Relationship breakdown

*Required Reading:*

Session 12    Stereotyping, Stigma, Prejudice and Discrimination
Thursday November 26

Topics:
• Intergroup bias, economic and motivational perspectives
• Cognitive perspective, being stigmatized, reducing stereotyping

Required Reading:

Session 13    Help, Hurting and Cooperation
Thursday December 3

Topics:
• Altruism, cooperation
• Situational factors and health
• Aggression
• Free riding

Required Reading:

Assignment: Final Paper Due (20%)

Session 14    Groups
Thursday December 10

Topics:
• Social facilitation and de-individuation
• Self-awareness and individuation, group decision making

Required Reading:

Final Exam (20%): Wednesday 16 December 10.00am-12.00pm (Exam Week)
Your Instructor

Dr. Tim Marsh (Ph.D., Macquarie University) completed his Ph.D. in Psychology in 2013. His primary research interests concern the evolved cognitive mechanisms underpinning modern intergroup prejudice, and their role in general moral psychology.

He has taught and assessed both undergraduate and postgraduate psychology subjects, including introductory, social, biological and personality psychology, in addition to research methods, statistics and thesis preparation. He has also taught in interdisciplinary topics, specifically concerning the application of psychology in various health professions. His current research interests include exploring the role of outgroup bias and discrete coalition cues play in adaptively negotiating group decision tasks. He is also collaborating with researchers in the field of education, to design interventions intended to help educators understand and negotiate the conflicting moral values in their students.