Social Psychology

**Class code**
PSYCH-UA 9032 – 001

**Instructor Details**
Dr. Luisa Batalha  
luisa.batalha@nyu.edu  
Consultations by Appointment  
Please allow at least 24 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails.

**Class Details**
Spring 2015  
Social Psychology  
Wednesday, 3:00 – 6:00pm  
February 4 to May 13  
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
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: 1 April (Session 8) during the first half of class, and Tuesday 19 May 3.00-5.00 pm (Exam Week) All exams will consist of multiple-choice, true and false, and short answer questions.

PAPER 1: Critique of the literature (Due 4 March – 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 the most recent literature. You should use at least 3-5 sources (research articles). Your paper should identify the main research question, review the major research findings, and identify 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 all studies – what are the overall ideas/findings/methods used to make these findings/messages.

Your sources should be research articles from peer-reviewed journals, 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 April 15 and 22 - Sessions 10 and 11) These will be completed in small groups of 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 6 May – 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 fulfill 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**

A grading rubric will be provided and distributed in class.

**Late Submission of Work**

Written work due in class must be submitted to your instructor during class time.

Late work should be submitted in person to the Academic Coordinator during regular office hours (9:00am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday). In the absence of the Academic Coordinator, another member of the administrative staff can accept the work in person. The NYUS staff will mark down the date and time of submission in the presence of the student. Students must also submit an electronic copy of late written work to Turn-It-In within 24 hours.

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 (5) weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

**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 be penalised with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade for every week of classes missed.**

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. Repeated absences will result in harsher penalties, including 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.**

### 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

Wednesday 4 February

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

Wednesday 11 February

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

Wednesday 18 February

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**

*Wednesday 25 February*

**Topics:**

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

**Required Reading:**


**Session 5  Social Judgement and Moral Decision Making**

*Wednesday 4 March*

**Topics:**

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

**Required Reading:**


*Assignment: Paper 1 due (20%)*

**Session 6  Attitudes, Behaviour and Rationlisation**

*Wednesday 11 March*

**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.

**SPRING BREAK 16-20 March**

**Session 7  Influencing Others**

**Wednesday 25 March**

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

**Required Reading:**

**Session 8  Emotion**

**Wednesday 1 April**

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

**Topics:**
- Theories of emotions

**Required Reading:**

**Session 9  Persuasion and Advertising**

**Wednesday 8 April**

**Topics:**
- Basics, functions, attitude change
- The media, resistance to persuasion

**Required Reading:**
- Gilovich, Keltner, & Nisbett (2012). *Social Psychology (3rd Ed).* Chapter 8

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)**
**Wednesday 15 April**

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

Topics:
- Proximity, similarity
- Physical attractiveness, integration

**Required Reading:**

**Session 11 Relationships (Part 2)**
**Wednesday 22 April**

**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**
**Wednesday 29 April**

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

Required Reading:

Session 13  Help, Hurting and Cooperation

Wednesday 6 May

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

Required Reading:

Assignment: Final Paper Due (20%)

Session 14  Groups

Wednesday 13 May

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

Required Reading:

Final Exam (20%): Tuesday 19 May 3:00-5:00pm

Your Instructor
Dr. Luisa Batalha completed her Ph.D. in Psychology at Uppsala University in Sweden in 2008. Following her PhD she was awarded a postdoctoral research grant from the Swedish Research Council to conduct research at the Australian National University in Canberra, where she have been working ever since. Her main area of interest is social psychology and her research has mainly revolved around the understanding of prejudice. She is also very interested in climate change and how psychology can contribute to the
understanding of environmentally sustainable behaviour. She has also made detours into political science, more specifically, deliberative democracy, and social neuroscience.