Course Title

Social Psychology

Course Number
PSYCH-UA.9032

Instructor Contact Information
Lysann Zander
lysann.zander@nyu.edu

Course Details
Monday, 5:00pm-7:45pm
NYUB, Room "Pankow"

Prerequisites
Prerequisite for NYU Students: PSYCH-UA 1/Introduction to Psychology

Units earned
4 points

Course Description
The science of social psychology is concerned with understanding how others – be they actual or imagined – influence our affects, cognitions, and behavior. In this class we will learn about social psychology as a science, its methods (Lecture 2), core concepts, current problems, and challenges (Lecture 1 and 2). We will do so by covering theories and research in the broad range of topics social psychology has to offer. These include how people perceive themselves and others (Lecture 3, 4 and 5), as well as how people explain their own and others’ behavior (Lecture 6). We will learn about the role of emotions in our social life and relationships (Lecture 6), how we develop our attitudes and how they relate to our behavior (Lecture 7). We will learn about how people influence and persuade each other – for example by using media (Lecture 8) – and when and why they become attracted to each other (Lecture 9). We will also discuss groups, their dynamics, decisions, and leadership in groups (Lecture 10), as well as when and why we become aggressive, act altruistically, help, and cooperate (Lecture 11). Another important topic will be the nature and consequences of stereotypes and prejudice in situations in which more than one social group is present and salient (Lecture 12). Finally, we will explore how stereotypes and prejudice can be overcome in applied contexts, i.e., schools, universities, and other professional environments (Lecture 13).
Course Objective

The course Social Psychology is designed to not only introduce you to essential theories and research in the field of social psychology, but also to develop your skills as sophisticated learners of psychological science. By the end of this course you will not only be acquainted with the major theories and topics of social psychology, but also be more adept in critically examining claims people make and be able to apply your social-psychological knowledge to understanding psychological phenomena in the real world. We will practice efficiently summarizing research from social-psychological authors. National and international guests will give you insights into their latest social-psychological research activities.

Assessment Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class Quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Reading Response Papers</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Class Participation. Class Participation counts 15%, see NYU Attendance Policy below. The success of our seminar crucially depends on everyone’s preparation and active participation.

Exams and Quizzes. The midterm exam has 25 Questions and counts 15% of the total grade (50 min. duration). The final exam has 45 questions and counts 35% of the total grade (90 min. duration). The midterm and final are multiple-choice tests. The quizzes are in True/False format. While the quizzes are not cumulative, the final exam is and will cover all topics. Both the quizzes and the final include questions about book chapters, but not about the optional readings. Your highest quiz grade will be doubled and your lowest quiz grade will be dropped from your course average, which means you can miss one quiz (and only one quiz) without penalty. If you know in advance that you must miss a quiz for some reason, notify me as soon as possible.

Make-up exams will only be granted in cases where an absence was unavoidable and excused. Reasonable excuses include a serious family emergency (e.g., death) or illness with a doctor's note – please inform me in advance, if possible. Every week when there is not a test, a short in-class quiz will be given at the beginning of class.

Reading Response Paper. 1 page max. In this assignment you are asked to react to either a study described in the book (for the respective chapter) or one of the complementary reading articles due for the upcoming class. In these reading response papers you can improve or master your ability to critically evaluate research or systematically interconnect material previously covered in the course with current research studies. The response paper should start with a brief summary of the chapter and the study / result you found most fascinating, intriguing, or perplexing. Write about the way the result has been obtained, critique it [e.g., What are the author's presumptions and theses? Why is the finding seminal or important? How does it relate to other findings? Do the findings hold only for a particular group of people or culture, are they generalizable?]. Next, identify what research step you'd like to see next. Finally, draw a connection to another topic previously covered in class. If you wish, you can formulate a precise and apt example from “real life” that further illustrates or contradicts the finding. In this way, the reading response paper is more than a summary of what you have read. I strongly encourage working in groups to discuss your response papers (and the course material generally) and prepare for exams. However, you should write and hand in your own
response papers separately. All response papers should be typed and sent to me per email by Monday at 10am at the latest so that I have time to review them before class. When you submit your paper electronically, name it with the number of the response_TOPIC (RR1-10) of the paper, your last (family) name, and your first name, e.g., RR8_AggressionCooperation_Zander_Lysann. Be prepared to briefly present (2 min) your core idea in class.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

**Assessment Expectations**

Grades are calculated as straight percentages. They will appear on NYU Classes under “Gradebook.”

**Grade A:** The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in his/her work. The student writes comprehensive essays / answers to exam questions and his/her work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.

**Grade B:** The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

**Grade C:** The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.

**Grade D:** The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research.

**Grade F:** The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible.

**Grade Conversion**

Your instructor may choose to use one of the two following scales:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alternatively:

- A= 4.0
- B+= 3.3
- B = 3.0
- B- = 2.7
- C+= 2.3
- C = 2.0
- C- = 1.7
- D+ = 1.3
- D = 1.0
- F = 0.0

**Attendance Policy**

Participation in all classes is essential for your academic success, especially in NYU Berlin’s content courses that, unlike most courses at NYU NY, meet only once per week in a double-session for three hours. Your attendance in both content and language courses is required and will be checked at each class meeting. As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance, or emergencies. If you want the reasons for your absence to be treated confidentially and not shared with your professor, please approach NYUB's Director or Wellness Counselor. Your professor or NYUB's administration may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from the Director or Wellness Counselor.
Unexcused absences affect students’ grades: In content courses each unexcused absence (equaling one week’s worth of classes) leads to a deduction of 2% of the overall grade and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Three unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. As in the German Language classes three (consecutive or non-consecutive) unexcused absences (equaling one week’s worth of classes) lead to a 2% deduction of the overall grade. Five unexcused absences may lead to a Fail in that course. Furthermore, faculty is also entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival to class or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Being more than 15 minutes late for class counts as an unexcused absence. Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Exams, tests, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor’s note as documentation. It is the student’s responsibility to produce this doctor’s note; until this doctor’s note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F.

**Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays**

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent because of any religious observance should notify the Director or Assistant Director for Academics in advance of the anticipated absence. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Director or Assistant Director will re-schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments.

**Late Submission of Work**

1. Reading Response Papers are due 10am on Monday (before class) so that it can be integrated in the class discussion.

2. Late work should be submitted in person to the instructor or to the Assistant Director for Academics, who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff may also personally accept the work, and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

3. Unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of the Director or Assistant Director), work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late.

4. Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 weekdays following the session date fails and is given a zero.

5. End of semester essays must be submitted on time (not applicable in this class).

6. Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

7. Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

**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.
Proper referencing of your sources avoids plagiarism (see as one possible help the NYU library guide to referencing styles: [http://nyu.libguides.com/citations](http://nyu.libguides.com/citations)).

NYUB takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the instructor. Your instructor may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For a summary of NYU Global's academic policies please see: [www.nyu.edu/global/academic-policies](http://www.nyu.edu/global/academic-policies).

**Required Text**


Books can be bought at Saint Georges in Wörther Straße 27 near NYUB. Note that you can buy this book as an e-book at about **a third the price** compared to the hardcover. Go to [http://www.nortonebooks.com/](http://www.nortonebooks.com/).

**Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)**


**NYU Classes** has most materials for this class. You can access Classes through your NYU Home web site. (That’s at [http://home.nyu.edu](http://home.nyu.edu). If you haven’t activated your home page, go to [http://start.nyu.edu](http://start.nyu.edu).) If you are officially registered for this course, it should show up on your NYU Home page under “Academics,” then “NYU Classes.” Going to the links for this course will give you online access to:

1. The class syllabus (i.e., this document), as an MS Word document, under “Resources.”
2. The PowerPoint version of each lecture, under the Assignment for that day.
3. Optional and research readings, as pdf files under the Assignment for that day.
4. Announcements about the course, as needed.
5. Various other resources.
6. Your grades on papers and exams.
7. Anything else we discover we want to use it for.

**Internet Research Guidelines**

**The Web for Research:** Generally, “information” available on the web is no more reliable than “information” in *The National Enquirer*. You have to know something about the source’s reliability. Part of learning to be a critical thinker is learning to tell the difference between reliable and unreliable sources. Some sources, such as scholarly references accessed through PsycInfo, a database on the Bobst Library website, are great. (I use this all the time myself.) Others, like Wikipedia, are adequate if you really don’t care that much if everything is accurate, but you just want to know something (often right but sometimes wrong) about the
topic. So don’t use Wikipedia for research for this course. Only use Google and Google if you know what you’re looking for and at.

**W. W. Norton (the textbook publisher) Websites** have several useful features. http://www.wwnorton.com/college/psych/social-psych3 is a free website with review materials, quizzes, and video podcasts for each chapter. There are links to current news items and book reviews, and other material designed to connect the chapter materials to things of interest. We encourage you to use this stuff, because it will consolidate your learning and raise interesting questions.

http://www.nortonebooks.com/ is where this textbook can be found as an e-book, at about a third of the price!

**TIME TABLE: SESSIONS AND TOPICS, QUIZZES, READINGS**

* indicates that Reading Response Papers are due

**Session 1 – Mon, 31 Aug 2015: Introduction**
Syllabus, classroom culture (feedback, discussions), introducing ourselves and social psychology.

**Session 2 – Mon, 7 Sep 2015: Methods of Social Psychology**
Why research? How to conduct research, useful concepts, ethics.

*Essential Reading:* Preface (pp. vii-xii), Ch. 1, pp. 3-37, Ch. 2, pp. 40-61 (whole chapter).

*Optional Reading:*
-- read the abstract, introduction, discussion, and skim Appendix for future reference; a summary of major findings in the field.

**Session – Mon 14 Sep 2015 +++ NO CLASS! Moved to Oct 1 (Guest Lecture), Session 5! +++**

**Session 3 – Mon 21 Sep 2015: Social Cognition and Person Perception (RR1)**

How do we process information? How do we perceive persons?
Top-down processing; reason, intuition, and heuristics

*Essential Reading:*
Ch. 4 pp. 106-149 (RR1)

*Quiz: Methods*

*Optional Reading:*


**Session 4 – Mon, 28 Sep 2015: The Social Self I (RR2)**

How do we see ourselves? How is what we think about ourselves related to others in our social environment?

*Essential Reading:* Ch. 3, pp. 64-103, up to Motives driving Self-Evaluation


*Quiz:* Social Cognition and Person Perception

*Optional Reading:*


**Session 5 – Thu, 1 Oct 2015: The Social Self II**

with Guest Michael Dufner, Assistant Professor, Universität Leipzig

**Invited Talk:** “Great, Greater, Me: The Narcissistic Ego and its Interplay with Social Life”

*Essential Reading:*


*Optional Reading:*


**Session 6 – Mon, 5 Oct 2015: Social Attribution (RR3)**

Single acts or dispositions? How do we form attributions? What errors and biases characterize our attributions? Are there cultural differences?

*Essential Reading:* Ch. 5, pp. 152-193

*Quiz:* Social Self
Optional Reading:

**Session 7 – Mon, 12 Oct 2015: Midterm Exam**
After: Classroom Activity, Mindmapping

+++ October 17-25, Fall Break, No Class +++

*Session 8 – Mon, 26 Oct 2015: Emotions (RR4)*
Are emotions universal? What are basic emotions? How do they affect our social relations (and vice versa)? What is the nature of happiness?

*Essential Reading: Ch. 6, pp. 194-229.*

*Quiz: Attribution*

*Optional Reading:*

*Session 9 – Mon, 2 Nov 2015: Social Influence and Persuasion (RR5)*
How do we persuade/How are we persuaded? What is conformity, obedience?

*Essential Reading: Persuasion: Ch. 8, pp. 272-294; Social Influence: Ch. 16, pp. 308-351*

*Quiz: Emotions*

*Optional Reading:*

*Session 10 – Mon, 9 Nov 2015: Relationships and Attraction (RR6)*
Q&A with Skype Guest Gregory D. Webster, Associate Professor, University of Florida

*Essential Reading: Ch. 10, pp. 354-403.*

*Quiz: Social Influence and Persuasion*
Optional Reading: 

*Session 11 – Mon, 16 Nov 2015: Group Dynamics (RR7)*
When and how do groups succeed? How do group make decisions? What is leadership? Are leader stereotypes masculine?

*Essential Reading:* Ch. 12, pp. 452-493.

*Quiz:* Relationship & Attraction

*Optional Reading:*

*Session 12 – Mon, 23 Nov 2015: Aggression, Altruism, and Cooperation (RR8)*
When do we help, when do we cooperate? What is the nature of aggression? Situational determinants

*Essential Reading:* Ch. 13, pp. 496-525.

*Quiz:* Group Dynamics

*Optional Reading:*

*Session 13 – Mon, 30 Nov 2015: Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Intergroup Relations (RR9)*
with Iniobong Essien, PhD Student, Universität Hamburg, Invited Talk: title TBA

*Essential Reading:* Ch. 11, pp. 428-449. One other text TBA (guest suggestion).

*Quiz:* Aggression & Cooperation

*Optional Reading:*

*Optional Activity:*
go to http://www.understandingprejudice.org and check out the videos, reading, etc. on major kinds of prejudice
Session 14 – Mon, 7 Dec 2015: Social Psychology and Education (RR10)
What are the consequences of stereotypes and prejudice in the classroom? How can negative effects be attenuated?

Essential Reading: Ch. 11, pp. 406-449.

Quiz: Stereotypes, Prejudice, Intergroup Relations

Optional Reading:

Optional Activity:
go to https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/research and play around with the Implicit Association Test (IAT)

Session 15 – Mon, 14 Dec 2015: Final Exam
Wrap up, Evaluation, Reintroducing ourselves

Classroom Etiquette
Do not forget to turn on your cellphone after class. Also, laptops are not generally required. If we will work with laptops, I will make an announcement.
Lively, well-informed classroom discussions are an essential means to gain a deeper, more complex and applied understanding of the learning material. Diverging positions in discussions are vital for scientific progress -- respectfully responding to each other, as well. Kant’s categorical imperative [golden rule] should be the guideline. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Categorical_imperative)

Your Instructor
Lysann Zander studied Psychology at Humboldt Universität in Berlin, the University of California, Santa Barbara and Cal State Northridge. After obtaining her diploma, she taught Cognitive Psychology at the City University of New York, Brooklyn College. She finished her Ph.D. in June 2010 as well as her Habilitation in January 2015 at Freie Universität Berlin, where she also teaches classes on motivation and learning. In her research, she seeks to uncover the mechanisms underlying the sometimes astounding congruence of students’ self-perceptions and the social networks they establish within their learning environments.