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WF

Social Psychology

Spring 2012

LCB 102

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Textbook: Myers, D. G., EXPLORING SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, McGraw Hill, 6th ed. (2012)

Overview

This course surveys the major topic areas within social psychology. Social psychologists study how the thoughts, feelings, and actions of individuals influence and are influenced by the behavior of others. The goal of the course is to introduce you to theories and research that explain social interaction among people.

Topics are organized into 3 units with an exam following each of them. The first unit covers parts 1 (introduction) and 2 (social thinking) of the text. Topics will include research methods, social cognition, and self-concept. The second unit (part 3 of the text) concentrates on social influence and includes persuasion, conformity, and behavior in small groups. The third unit (part 4 of the text) examines social relations such as prejudice, aggression, helping, and interpersonal attraction. Specific topics, reading assignments, and exam dates are on the last page of the syllabus.

The text covers more topics than I will have time to develop in class. Consequently, there will be some areas of work discussed in the text that I will not address in class. On the other hand, I will develop some of the topics in greater detail than what is presented in the text as well as introduce some theory and research not touched on in the text. The aim of the class lectures is to be an extension, not a clone, of the text.

PowerPoint slides covering some of the lecture material will be posted at the sakai site for this course. Slide files will be found in the Resources tab. Sample exam questions as well as announcements will also be posted on sakai.

Evaluation: Your grade will be based on the total number of points accumulated from 3 exams (two class exams and a final exam) and a three-page paper.

Exams: Each exam will contain 70 multiple-choice questions. The paper will be worth 10 points, so total points for the course will be 220. Exam questions will be drawn chiefly from material that is available from both lecture and text.

Paper: You may select one of the following 2 options for the paper assignment.
1. Select an incident from your own experience and analyze it in terms of theories and research discussed in this course (For example, you might examine how research on social influence helps to explain your reactions when you joined a social group. Or you

might consider the fit between research on interpersonal attraction and how you became friends with another.) or

2. Select a newspaper or magazine story and analyze it in terms of theories and research discussed in this course. (For example, you might select an article that describes political ads and talk about how those ads relate to persuasion research.)

The purpose of the writing assignment is to encourage you to think about applications of the course material to experiences beyond the class. The paper should contain the following points: description of the incident you intend to analyze, statement and application of relevant theories and research, and references to relevant pages in the text and class lectures. (If you select option 2 – analysis of a new story -- attach the article to your paper.)

Paper is due on Friday April 27. A late paper will not be accepted (if there is any doubt about your being present that day, submit the paper before April 20. The paper will receive full credit (10 points) if it is clearly written and your analysis is accurate. If not, paper will receive partial credit. (Note, score for paper is not contingent on your analysis agreeing with social psychological research. For example, you might apply material from the course to your experience and find that there is a poor fit. Once again, the purpose of the assignment is to encourage you to think about the material, not to parrot what the author or I say. You will only lose points if you apply theory or research incorrectly.)

Make-up exams: If you miss an exam because of illness or family emergency, contact the teaching assistant to schedule a make-up and provide the TA with a signed excuse (e.g., doctor's note, accident report). I will be available outside of class to discuss the content of the course, your performance on exams, and any other academic matters. The TA will handle missed exams.

Class dates, Lecture topics, and Chapter assignments:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Text Module</u>
1/18-20	Overview & Research Methods	1, 2
1/25	Self-concept	3
1/27	Self-serving biases and Self-esteem	4, 5
2/1-3	Attribution	6
2/8-10	Social Cognition	7, 8
2/15	Clinical Applications	10, 11

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Text Module</u>
2/17	EXAM 1: classes 1/17-2/10; modules 1- 8, 10, 11	
2/22-24	Conformity and Obedience	12, 13, 14
2/29	Beliefs and Behaviors	9
3/2-7	Attitudes	15, 16, 21
3/9	Social Facilitation	17, 18
<i>Week of 3/12</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>	
3/21-23	Behavior in Groups	19
3/28	Group Decisions	20
3/30	EXAM 2: classes 2/14-3/20; modules 9, 12-21	
4/4-6	Prejudice	22, 23
4/11	Aggression	24
4/13	Media and Aggression	25
4/18-20	Interpersonal Attraction	26, 27
4/25	Conflict and Resolution	28, 29
4/27	Paper Due	
4/27	Helping	30, 31
5/8 Tuesday (4-7 pm)	FINAL EXAM: classes 4/3-4/27; modules 22-31	