

Social Psychology

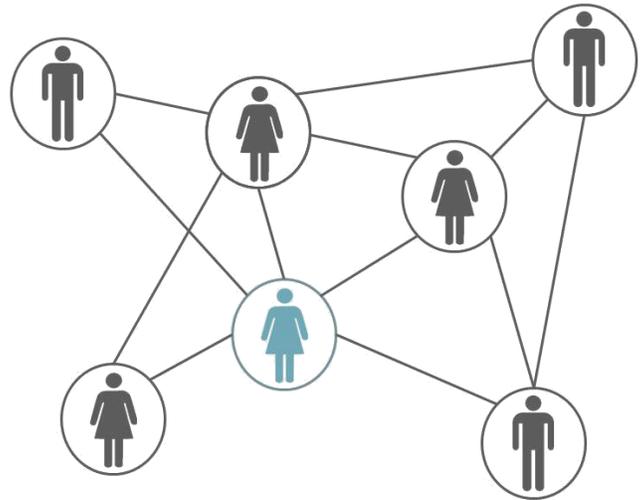
830:321:H2

Basic Course Information

Instructor: Janell C. Fetterolf
 Location: Livingston Classroom Building, Room 103
 Time: Monday through Thursday, 10:05-11:55.

My Contact Information

Email: jfetter@rci.rutgers.edu
 Office: Tillett Hall 629
 Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9-10
 Or by appointment



Course Overview

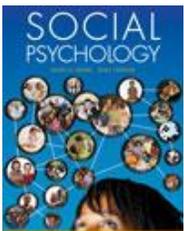
Human beings are amazingly social creatures. Take a moment to think about the number of people you have seen or interacted with today alone. Even if you did not make eye contact with or speak to every person you passed on campus, their mere presence likely affected your behavior. In your frequent and varied interactions with others, you interpret their behavior, make assumptions about their intentions and beliefs, and shape your own actions to portray yourself as you wish to be seen. Social psychology examines these topics – people’s feelings, thoughts, and beliefs within the context of social situations – in a scientific way. In this course, we will discuss the theory and research behind topics such as group influence, attitudes and attitude change, social perception, attraction, and social conflict.

Because we interact with people almost constantly, we have developed our own personal theories for human behavior. For the most part, we believe we know why other people do the things they do. In this course, you may realize that some of the theories you have developed are not supported by scientific research. In fact, one of the reasons social psychology is so interesting and important is because research findings can be counter-intuitive. Be prepared to think critically about your own experiences and how they relate to psychological findings and theories!

Course goals:

- Gain a general knowledge of the major theories and research findings in social psychology.
- Understand basic scientific methods used in social psychological research.
- Apply social psychological theories and principles to everyday experiences.
- Critically evaluate psychological topics and research.

Readings: The required textbook for the course is:



Myers, D.G. (2013). *Social psychology* (11th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill

The text is available at the Rutgers Bookstore. You may also use any number of online sites to buy or rent this edition of the textbook.

Additional readings posted on the schedule will be available on the Sakai site.

Course Evaluation

Attendance and in-class exercises: Attendance is essential in this course. Summer courses are fast-paced and intensive. Missing a class can set you behind and it may be difficult to catch up. Additionally, there will be material on the exams that is covered in class, but not covered in your readings. There will also be several in-class exercises throughout the session that will be included in your grade. There are no make-up assignments for missed in-class work. However, I will drop your lowest score, so if you absolutely must miss a class, you will not be penalized. Please make sure that you get the lecture notes from a classmate if you cannot come to class.

Response papers: Throughout the course, you will be required to write *five* short response papers. The papers should be *no more than 2 pages* long. You may write a response paper for any five readings you choose. Pick one theory or topic from the reading. The response papers can take two different forms.

- *Application of theory:* Does this theory help you make sense of a specific interaction or situation? You may choose an experience from your own life, or you may analyze a magazine/newspaper article, movie/TV show, cartoon, song, etc. Please briefly describe the scenario you are analyzing and then discuss how the theory applies to this scenario.
- *Critical evaluation of the theory:* Does this theory contradict other research you have read about? Does it fail to take important factors into consideration? Are there limitations to the way this theory can be tested? This response will be based partly on your own opinions but make sure to evaluate the theory in the context of psychological research methods.

In either form, make sure to briefly define or explain the theory that you choose to write about. I want to know that you have an understanding of the reading before you start to analyze or critique it. Response papers should be submitted through the Sakai site and must be submitted before the beginning of class in order to be graded. You may submit more than five papers, but only your five highest scores will be included in your course grade.

Exams: There will be two in-class exams consisting of multiple choice and short answer responses. The final exam will not be cumulative and will only cover material from the second half of the class. Test material will be taken from required readings, class lectures, and discussions. Make-up exams are not permitted without advance permission. Permission will be granted only for unavoidable circumstances (e.g., serious illness, family emergency).

Grading: Grades will be based on in-class exercises, response papers, and two exams. Grades are non-negotiable and there will not be extra credit opportunities. The point breakdown is as follows:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>	<i>Points Required</i>
In-class exercises	100 total	A	405-450
Five response papers	100 total	B+	387-404
Midterm exam	125	B	360-386
Final Exam	125	C+	342-359
		C	315-341
<i>Total points:</i>	<i>450</i>	D	270-314

Course Policies

Reading assignments: Assignments should be completed by the date they are posted on the schedule. You should come prepared to discuss the readings. I encourage you to take notes as you read and write down any questions that come up or thoughts you would like to share with me and the rest of the class. You do not need to bring the book to class with you, but I will assume that everyone will have done the reading. Brief quizzes on the reading material at the start of class are possible!

Note about class discussion: Social psychological topics can be easily applied to people's own experiences and thus, discussion is common (and highly encouraged). You will have many opportunities to ask questions and/or share your thoughts. However, you are never required to share any personal experiences. Most importantly, please be respectful of other students' opinions and the information they share in class.

Cheating/plagiarism: Hopefully you are all here to learn, not just get a good grade. Cheating on exams and quizzes or attempting to pass off other people's work as your own not only undermines the goals of the course and your fellow students, but it is a serious offense. If you are not familiar with the University's academic integrity policy, you can find more information here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. If I suspect someone of cheating, I will have to report that student to the disciplinary panel. If you have any questions about what qualifies as cheating or plagiarism, please ask me or refer to the academic integrity website.

Students with disabilities: Students who need accommodation for a physical or learning disability must submit a letter from Disability Services during the first week of class. You may email me, come to my office hours, or wait until after class to give me the letter. To get a letter to request accommodations, students should contact the Office of Disability Services at 848-445-6800, or visit the office in Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145. You can read more about Rutgers' policy here: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>.

Office hours: If you have any questions about the reading or lecture material, please feel free to ask them during class! If you would prefer to talk to me outside of class, for whatever reason, or you have concerns about assignments you are welcome to come to my office hours. I hold office hours for specifically this purpose and you do not need to feel concerned about bothering me. If you cannot meet during my office hours or following class, you can email me to arrange another time to meet.

Schedule of Topics and Reading Assignments

Date	Topics	Readings
Mon 7/7	Intro to the course and social psychology	<i>Optional:</i> Chapter 1
Tue 7/8	The self in a social world	Chapter 2
Wed 7/9	The self in a social world (continued)	Back et al., 2010
Thu 7/10	Social beliefs and judgments	Chapter 3

Mon 7/14	Behavior and attitudes	Chapter 4
Tue 7/15	Behavior and attitudes (continued)	Rudman, 2004
Wed 7/16	Genes, culture, and gender	Chapter 5
Thu 7/17	Genes, culture, and gender (continued)	Conley et al., 2011

Mon 7/21	Conformity and obedience	Chapter 6
Tue 7/22	Conformity and obedience (continued)	
Wed 7/23	Review for midterm exam	
Thu 7/24	MIDTERM EXAM	

Mon 7/28	Persuasion	Chapter 7
Tue 7/29	Group influence	Chapter 8
Wed 7/30	Prejudice	Chapter 9
Thu 7/31	Prejudice (continued)	

Mon 8/4	Aggression	Chapter 10
Tue 8/5	Attraction and intimacy	Chapter 11
Wed 8/6	Attraction and intimacy (continued)	Lewandowski, 2013
Thu 8/7	Helping	Chapter 12

Mon 8/11	Conflict and peacemaking	Chapter 13
Tue 8/12	Review for final exam	
Wed 8/13	FINAL EXAM	

The schedule is subject to change based on issues that may arise during the course of the session. You will be given as much advanced notice as possible for any changes.