830:321   Social Psychology   Fall 2013

Professor D. Wilder   Teaching Assistant: K. Mescher
603 or 231 Tillett Hall   629 Tillett Hall
email: dawilder@rci.rutgers.edu   email: kmescher@eden.rutgers.edu
office hours: Wed. 9-11   office hours: by appointment

Textbook: Myers, D. G., SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, McGraw Hill,
 11th ed. (2013)

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 aspects of social interaction.

Topics are organized into 3 units with an exam following each of them. The first unit
covers chapters 1-4 of the text. Topics will include research methods, social cognition,
and self-concept. The second unit (chapters 5-8) concentrates on social influence and
includes persuasion, conformity, and behavior in small groups. The third unit (chapters
9-13) 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.

Because the text covers more topics than I will have time to address in class, there will be
some subjects discussed in the text that I will not cover 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.

Power point 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 plus a noncumulative final exam), a few class exercises, and a
paper.

       Exams: Each exam will consist of 70 multiple-choice questions. Exam questions
will be drawn chiefly from material that is available from both lecture and text (rough
breakdown of questions for each exam: 60% from material covered both in class and
text; 20% from material unique to class; 20% from material unique to text. Total: **210
points**

Class assignments: There will be a few 3 point assignments – some in class and some posted as homework exercises – over the course of the semester. Total: **15 points.**

Paper: You may select one of the following 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   (e.g., how research on social influence helps to explain your behavior when you joined a social group. Or you might consider the fit between research on interpersonal attraction and how you became friends with another…..)
2. Select an article (newspaper, magazine, book, internet) and analyze it in terms of theories and research discussed in this course. (e.g., an article that describes political ads and discuss about how those ads relate to persuasion research...) If you choose option 2, you must submit a copy of the article along with your paper.

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. Paper length: 3-5 pages of text + references. Paper value: **20 points.**

Due date for paper: Wed. December 11. A late paper will <u>not</u> be accepted (if there is any doubt about your being present that day, submit the paper before Dec. 11. The paper will receive full credit if it is clearly written and your analysis is accurate. Evaluation of the 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 lose points if you apply theory or research incorrectly or if the paper is unclear and poorly written.

Total points for course: 210 (exams) + 15 (class exercises) + 20 (paper) = 245

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:

Date	Topics	Text Chapter
9/4	Overview	
9/9	Research Methods	1
9/11-16	Self and Self-esteem	2
9/23-25-30	Social Beliefs	3, 14: 522-540 15: 556-566
10/2-7	Behavior and Attitudes	4; 14: 541-545
10/9	**Exam 1**	
10/14	Genes, Culture, Gender	5
10/14-16-21	Conformity and Obedience	6
10/23-28	Persuasion	7
10/30-11/4	Behavior in Groups	8, 15: 573-583
11/6	**Exam 2**	
11/11-13	Prejudice	9
11/18-20	Aggression	10
11/25-12/2	Attraction	11, 14: 545-551 15: 567-572
12/4	Helping	12
12/9	Conflict	13
12/11	Wrap up	**Paper Due** 16

12/18 Wed. 9-11 a.m. MW 4ᵗʰ period class   FINAL EXAM

12/20 Fri.   12-2 p.m. MW 5ᵗʰ period class   FINAL EXAM