Social Psychology

## PSYC 3221 \* Section 003 \* TR 12:30-1:45

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| Classroom: Rawl 105Professor: Dr. Amy LyndonOffice: Rawl 305 B | Office Hours: M 9:00-12:00, T 2:00-4:00, F 9:00-10:00, and by appointmentEmail: lyndona@ecu.edu Phone #: 328-2589 |

**Course Description:** Social Psychology is the study of the behavior of the individual in a social setting, including the study of how other people (real, imagined, or implied) influence our thoughts, feelings, and behavior. This course will include discussion of research in the areas of the self, social perception, social cognition, prejudice, persuasion, conformity, attraction, aggression, and helping behavior. I have two main goals with this class 1) To help you understand how the scientific method – from theory to design to interpretation – uncovers the workings of individuals within certain environments, and 2) To show you how to you live and breathe social psychology every day by applying the theories and research findings to personal, political, and social issues.

**By the end of the semester, you should be able to…**

* Demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, and empirical findings in social psychology.
* Understand and apply basic research methods in social psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation
* Use critical thinking, skeptical inquiry, and when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.
* Understand and apply social psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.
* Recognize, understand, and respect the diversity of human experiences.

**Text:** Aronson, E., Wilson, T. D., & Akert, R. M. (2007). *Social Psychology, 7th ed*.

**Blackboard:** I will use Blackboard (Bb) extensively throughout the class. All class documents will be posted under “Course Documents” on Blackboard, including the syllabus, study guides, some handouts, PowerPoint outlines of the class, interesting websites, etc. Feel free to print the PowerPoint slides out prior to coming to class each week. Once the PowerPoint slides come up on the screen, go to File → Print. In the print box, under “Print what”, select “Handouts.” In the Handouts box next to the “Print what”, select “6” for slides per page. Then click “Ok”. If this doesn’t work, right click on the PowerPoint icon and click “Save Target As” and save it to your computer. Then open the document and print as described above. Do not print out each slide per page.

**Attendance:** Attendance is necessary for an interesting class and for a good grade. I will sometimes cover material that is neither in your textbook nor your PPT slides, so it benefits to come to class. Therefore, I will take attendance randomly. You are allowed 3 unexcused absences, after which 3 points will be deducted from your attendance grade for each additional absence. I will take attendance using “daily responses”, which are questions or comments about the lecture or the class in general.

**Exams:** There will be 4 exams. Questions will be a mixture of multiple choice and short answer. *Exams require not only that you learn definitions and theories, but also that you apply what you have learned*. All exams will focus on **both** material covered in class and in the textbook. The final exam will **NOT** be cumulative. Any person who must delay taking an exam must consult with me prior to test day (unless a true emergency arises, in which case you should contact me as soon as possible). Make-up tests will be given **only** with official, university-approved, written excuses.

**Application Paper:**

One application paper is required. The paper must be typed and double-spaced and should be around 3-4 pages long. Details of the application paper are discussed below. You will turn in your papers as hard copies in class on Thursday, Dec 1st.

**Grading:** To calculate your grade, divide how many points you have earned by how many points you *could* have earned by that point in time. Your grade is just a percentage of the points you could have earned.

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| 25 pts | Application Paper  |  |
| 25 pts | Attendance points | A 90% - 100% |
| 100 pts | Exam # 1 | B 80% - 89% |
| 100 pts | Exam # 2 | C 70% - 79% |
| 100 pts | Exam # 3 | D 60% - 69% |
| 100 pts | Exam # 4 | F < 60% |
| 450 pts |  |  |

### **Extra Credit (up to 15 points):**

1. I will give “pop” questions randomly throughout the class worth 1 point. If you answer correctly, you earn 1 point of extra credit.
2. You may choose to do one more application paper worth 10 points.
3. I will also spontaneously offer extra credit options in class as they arise.

**Classroom behavior**:

* Please **make sure** your cell-phones are off or on low vibrate when you arrive to class.
* Arrive to class **on time**. Late arrivals are distracting to the class and result in students missing important information.
* When sending email other than assignments, identify yourself fully by name and class in all e-mail and include a subject header in the e-mail.

**A reminder:** Your grades in this class are earned by you, not given by the instructor. You have a number of opportunities to learn the material and demonstrate what you have learned. I will do whatever I can to help you learn and do well on tests and assignments, plus extra credit. Please do not embarrass yourself or the instructor by asking or expecting the instructor to “give you points” toward your final grade, or by suggesting that your grade was somehow the responsibility (or fault) of the instructor. Secondly, please don’t ask me “if there’s anything I can do to improve my grade” within the last couple weeks of class. Follow instructions, pay attention to due dates, do the extra credit, and talk to me if you’re having difficulty – *before* it’s too late to do anything.

**Academic integrity** is a fundamental value of higher education and East Carolina University; therefore, I will not tolerate acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification or attempts to cheat, plagiarize, or falsify. Should I determine that an academic integrity violation has taken place, I reserve the right either to assign a grade penalty or to refer the case to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities for an Academic Integrity Board hearing. The minimum grade penalty that I will assign is an F for the assignment/course. Should it come to my attention that you have had a prior academic integrity violation, or if there are other aggravating circumstances, I will refer the case directly to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Should the Academic Integrity Board determine that you committed an academic integrity violation, you may be assigned a grade penalty and/or any other sanction allowed in the student Code of Conduct, up to and including suspension from the University. Note on plagiarism: Plagiarism can take a number of forms, including the re-use of your own written work without appropriate modifications and/or without the permission of your instructor. Plagiarism most commonly occurs when material is taken from a source without proper citation. Whenever material is directly quoted it must appear in quotation marks and be properly cited according to APA. A citation without quotation marks is not adequate because it implies that the material quoted is your wording.

**General Information:** In the event of a weather emergency, information about ECU can be accessed through the following sources:

ECU emergency notices <http://www.ecu.edu/alert>

ECU emergency information hotline: (252) 328-0062

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 (252) 737-1016 (Voice/TTY).

**New Retention Requirements from ECU**

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| GPA Hours at ECU (identified in Transcript in  Banner Self Service) plus transferred credit hours | “Old” Retention Requirement All courses taken at ECU | \*New Retention Requirements Effective\*With Fall 2011 grades All courses taken at ECU |
| 1-29 semester hours | 1.6 GPA | 1.8 |
| 30-59 semester hours | 1.8 GPA | 1.9 |
| 60-74 semester hours | 1.9 GPA | 2.0 |
| 75 or more semester hours | 2.0 GPA | 2.0 |

#### Course Outline

**Dates Topic Reading**

Aug 23 Introduction & Theory Chapter 1

Aug 25, 30 Research Methods Chapter 2

Sept 1, 8 Social Cognition Chapter 3

 Note: Monday classes will be held on Tuesday, September 6th.

Sept 13, 15 Social Perception Chapter 4

Sept 20 **Exam on Chapters 1, 2, 3, & 4**

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Sept 22, 27 The Self Chapter 5

Sept 29 Cognitive Dissonance Chapter 6

Oct 4, 6 Attitudes & Influence Chapter 7

 Note: Fall Break is from Oct 8th through Oct 11th

Oct 13 **Exam on Chapters 5, 6, & 7**

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Oct 18, 20 Conformity Chapter 8

Oct 25, 27 Group Processes Chapter 9

Nov 1, 3 Prejudice Chapter 13

Nov 8 **Exam on Chapters 8, 9, & 13**

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Nov 10, 15 The Jonestown Massacre

Nov 15, 17 Prosocial Behavior Chapter 11

Nov 22, 29 Interpersonal Attraction Chapter 10

Dec 1, 6 AggressionChapter 12

Dec 7 Reading Day

**11:00-1:30 Thursday, December 8th**  **Final Exam on Chapters 10, 11, & 12**

* This is the intended schedule, although we might sometimes get ahead or behind. Exam dates are firm.
* Application paper due in class on Thursday, Dec 1st.
* Unless otherwise specified, all extra credit is due by the last day of class on Tuesday, December 6th.

**Application Paper**

Choose one out of the following options. Write a paper answering the questions. In your **typed** report, **describe all of the following as subheadings in your paper**: (1) your procedure (how you went about collecting the information); (2) your findings, (3) how your findings relate to what we discussed in readings and lecture, and (4) your feelings/opinions about what you discovered. The purpose of these papers is for you to take the information you learn in the classroom and demonstrate the existence (or not) of the information you hear in class in the “real” world. There should be a general rule of a minimum of 3 pages for each topic, typed and double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. The paper topics tend to match certain points in the semester. These topics are listed with each paper. Five points out of the total will be assigned for grammar/readability. If you choose to do a paper that we have not yet covered in class, you must read the chapter ahead of time in order to relate your findings to course material. Papers are due on Thursday, Dec 1st.

1. *Attributions in the Sports Page*. Examine the sports pages for players’ attributions for their wins and losses, to see whether in fact winners are more likely to make internal attributions and losers to make external attributions. See how whether these examples matches research that found that stars and players in solo sports were more likely to make self-serving attributions than nonstars and players in team sports. Finally, consider which motive (protection of self-esteem, positive self-presentation, and personal knowledge of past performances) they think underlie self-serving attributions. (Social Perception)
2. *Persuasion*. Watch a variety of TV advertisements (infomercials are also good) or subject yourself to a hard sell salesperson. Summarize and correctly identify the various social influence techniques they used (i.e., foot-in-the-door, low ball, etc.). Report how did you tried to not be persuaded. (Attitudes or Conformity)
3. *Love*. Take a romantic relationship (you or someone you know) and analyze that love relationship with two theories of love. Describe the relationship, describe both theories, then how both of these theories apply to this relationship, and whether one is better analysis than the other. Appropriate theories are: evolutionary theory, social exchange theory, investment model, triarchic theory, attachment theory. (Attraction and Intimacy)
4. *A Day of Nonconformity*. Your challenge will be to live each minute of a 24-hour day in a way that is as uninfluenced as possible by conformity pressures to appear cool, fit in with a group, or go along with others to be liked or accepted. When carrying out this assignment, leave no behavior unexamined -- from washing your face to eating lunch to talking with friends to watching TV. That is, don't just avoid obvious acts of phoniness or insincerity. Note: To minimize any bias in social reactions, it is best if you do not tell others about the class assignment until after the Day of Nonconformity is over. Also, under no circumstances should you behave in a way that harms others or is unethical or illegal. Write about your experience, incorporating course content (e.g., normative or informational social influence; descriptive or injunctive norms). (Conformity)
5. *Aggression.* Watch one hour of music videos on a station such s MTV, BET, CMT, or VH-1. Using a coding sheet, analyze the videos. Code for the following types of aggression: Active, passive; direct, indirect; verbal, physical; instrumental, hostile; relational, stranger. Code who (male/female) are the aggressors and the targets. Summarize the videos, the percentages and discuss the types of aggression. Do you think that music videos are targeted toward a specific audience? If so, then who? What guidelines would you suggest for parents of adolescents who frequently watch music videos? (Aggression)
6. *Put yourself in a minority situation*. Think of a group to which you belong (e.g., male, female, athlete, computer wiz, heterosexual, gay man/lesbian). Put yourself in a minority situation (e.g., if you’re a man, go into Victoria’s Secret; if you’re heterosexual, go to a meeting of a gay/straight alliance group, etc.). Write about your experience, including applying at least two of the topics talked about in our section on targets of stereotypes. (Any time)
7. *Social Identity (answer all questions)*. The goal is to use social identity theory in figuring out who you are and how you reveal your self to others (and to yourself).
	* 1. Think about a group or social category you belong to, and with which you identify. Describe what the group means to you, and list some examples that demonstrate your high level of identification.
		2. Think about a group or social category you belong to, but with which you don't identify. Describe what the group means (or doesn't mean) to you, and list some examples that demonstrate your lack of identification.
		3. Think about a group or social category you belong to, but with which you actively disidentify. Describe what the group means to you, and list some examples that demonstrate your disidentification.
	1. *Socialization of Gender and Ethnic Stereotypes*: Beliefs that we have about men, women, and different ethnic groups may be based on subtle things we encounter as kids, such as the stories we are read when we are very small. To assess the potential impact of this, locate one children’s story and analyze the use of either gender or ethnic stereotypes in it.
8. Provide the complete citation for the story, in the format of *Title of Book*, by Name of Author. Name of publisher (date of publication).
9. Examine how men and women, or how people of different ethnic groups are portrayed. Provide photocopies of passage(s) or picture(s) that portray characters in gender or ethnic stereotypical ways.
10. Verbally summarize the stereotypical depictions. Are they overt and explicit (e.g., someone telling a female character that she should start making dinner) or are they subtle (e.g., pictures showing boys playing with trucks and girls with dolls)? Overall, what message might be being sent to kids?
11. Are there any counterstereotypical portrayals in the story, such as a woman who is a construction worker? If so, provide a copy of relevant passages or pictures.
12. *Helping behavior*. Find an example of helping behavior. Look on-line or in the newspapers. Describe this incident of an individual engaging in helping behavior. Describe whether this action is an example of altruism or prosocial behavior (as best you can decide). Then describe two theories of helping behavior and then how both of these theories apply to this example, and whether one is better analysis than the other. You may use two of the following theories: Evolutionary psychology, empathy-altruism theory, social exchange theory (aka rewards & costs of helping/not helping).