Instructor

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Course Overview

This course is intended to provide an introductory graduate-level survey of the content, theories, research paradigms, and findings of the field of social psychology. After completing this course, students should have a good understanding of the primary research traditions in social psychology, the types of questions social psychologists address, and the current state of knowledge in the field. This course also serves as a “gateway” for enrollment in other graduate-level social psychology core courses and seminars.

The class will be conducted in a lecture/discussion format. Typically, class will open with a lecture aimed at providing an overview of some topic area or principle. The remainder of the session will be devoted to the discussion of related readings.

Course Textbook


This is an excellent (and relatively advanced) text with a focus on basic thematic principles. It provides an outstanding overview of the field.

Course Requirements

Readings are assigned for each week, and are to be read by the Monday class with which they are associated. Each week's readings consists of: (a) chapters from the Smith & Mackie text, occasionally accompanied by a supplemental reading, and (b) a set of journal articles that are to form the focus of the class discussion and are aimed at providing illustrations of contemporary research. All the additional readings will be made available on the Carmen website, http://carmen.osu.edu.
Grades will be based on:

1. Midterm exam covering Weeks 2-5 of the syllabus and weighted 35% of the course grade. The midterm will be administered during class on November 1.
2. Final exam covering Weeks 7-10 of the syllabus and weighted 35%. The final will be administered during finals week. According to the Registrar's final exam schedule, the exam is scheduled for Tuesday, December 7, 1:30 - 3:18.
3. Class participation weighted 30%. This includes contributions to the discussions in general, as well as the discussion(s) that each student will be leading. Each of the discussion articles will be assigned to a student, who will assume the responsibility of: (a) preparing a single-page handout summarizing the reading for distribution to the class, (b) presenting a brief overview of the article, (c) offering observations about the research, and (d) generating issues or questions for class discussion.

Academic Misconduct

All students at the Ohio State University are bound by the Code of Student Conduct (see http://oaa.ohio-state.edu/coam/code.html). Suspected violations of the code in this class will be dealt with according to the procedures detailed in that code. Specifically, any alleged cases of misconduct will be referred to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

Students with disabilities

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request. In addition, if you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact the instructor immediately. Students with special needs should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 292-3307 for certification if they have not already done so. Upon such certification, the ODS and the instructor will make every effort to accommodate special needs. However, to ensure that evaluation of student performance in the course is conducted in a manner that is fair to all students, special accommodations will not be granted in the absence of ODS certification.
Tentative Schedule (subject to change)

September 27: Course Introduction

October 4: Orientation and Overview; History and Basic Principles

Main Readings:

Smith & Mackie: Chapters 1 & 2
[NOTE: skim this chapter quickly; it is to be read fully during the last week of the course.]

Discussion Focus and Readings: The power of language, learned associations, and appraisals as examples of basic principles regarding accessibility and the construction of reality


October 11: Social Influence: Others as Sources of Arousal, Reward, and Information

Main Readings:

Smith & Mackie: Chapters 9 & 10, pp. 440 - 445, 517-524

Discussion Focus and Readings: Illustrations of the sometimes subtle power of norms and social influence

October 18: Attitudes: Formation and Persuasion

Main Readings:

Smith & Mackie: Chapter 7

Discussion Focus and Readings: Illustrations of the influence of attitudes on perception, categorization, and memory


October 25: Attitudes and Behavior

Main Readings:

Smith & Mackie: Chapter 8, pp. 384-390

Discussion Focus and Readings: Illustrations of the potential cumulative and long-term effects of attitudes and social influence


November 1: Midterm
**November 8: Self and Social Identity**

*Main Readings:*

Smith & Mackie: Chapters 4 & 6

*Discussion Focus and Readings:* Illustrations of some interesting phenomena related to self-evaluation and self-regulation


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**November 15: Social Perception**

*Main Readings:*

Smith & Mackie: Chapters 3 & 5

*Discussion Focus and Readings:* Illustrations of the power and influence of stereotypes


November 22: Social Relationships

Main Readings:

Smith & Mackie: Chapters 11 & 13

Discussion Focus and Readings: Illustrations of recent research on the consequences of social exclusion and on the development and maintenance of close relationships


November 29: Wrap-up

Main Readings:

Smith & Mackie: Epilogue