

COURSE SYLLABUS

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

IFSA-Butler London Flagship

US semester credit hours: 3

Contact hours: 45

Course Code: PS381-09 or SO381-09

Delivery method: Face to Face

Language of Instruction: English

Departmental Cross-listings: Psychology, Sociology

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Drawing directly from the fields of sociology and psychology, Social Psychology is the examination of the perceptions, thoughts, feelings and behaviors of individuals within their social environments. This course provides a grounding in social psychology topics such as social cognition, attitudes, social influence, individual motivations, collective behavior, and cultural influences. Content and assignments are designed to illustrate how the individual and social interaction shape and are shaped by the cultures and social structures in which they exist.

Students will be introduced to methodologies that are used to investigate social psychology phenomena, and the course will aid students' understanding of the application of social psychology research to "real world" problems. Several carefully selected in-class exercises are included in order to facilitate application of theory to practice.

As a special topic of investigation, particular attention will be paid to the examination of socioeconomic class in Britain and its implications for social psychology issues in Britain. As part of the course, students will be guided by the instructor in brief visits to certain neighborhoods within London to provide rich context for discussions. In this way, the city of London will serve as a vibrant laboratory of learning.

This course is interactive and active participation is required.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course includes the following goals for students:

- Gain facility with the core principles of social psychology
- Become familiar with methodologies that are used to investigate social psychology phenomena
- Become aware of how the findings of social psychology research contribute to our understanding of "real world" problems
- Increase knowledge of issues surrounding socioeconomic class in Britain
- Understand how social psychology investigation strategies can be applied to problems of socioeconomic class
- Strengthen cultural and intercultural awareness

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- Strengthen research, persuasive argument, and academic writing skills
- Become familiar with resources available for social psychology research
- Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in the IFSA-Butler London Flagship

COURSE SCHEDULE

The following schedule indicates the weekly discussion topics, related readings, and assignments for this course. With the exception of Week 1 (when resources will be reviewed as a group during class), students are expected to read or watch resources in advance and be prepared to actively discuss them in class. In each meeting, the instructor will overview the topic and then facilitate a group discussion, drawing out relevant themes, following up on specific lines of inquiry, and prompting students' thoughtful engagement with the topic. Students are encouraged to bring their prior learning experiences into class discussions and to make connections between this course and others whenever possible. Theories of experiential learning and integrative learning therefore undergird the dynamic learning environment of this course.

Unit A Week 1 - Introductions

- Overview of Course and Social Psychology
- Syllabus Review
- Instructor and Student Introductions
- Personal Student Goals for the Course
- Instructor and Student Expectations
- Establishing a Community of Learning
- Integrative Learning Exercise: Connecting this course to the IFSA-Butler London Flagship experience, individual academic majors, and undergraduate careers

Reading:

Branscombe & Baron, Chapter 1: Social Psychology: The Science of the Social Side of Life

Unit B Weeks 2-4 – Our Social World

- Social Cognition
- Social Perception
- The Self: Who Am I?
- Attitudes

Reading:

Branscombe & Baron, Chapters 2-5

Related activities:

Field Visit #1 to selected London neighborhood (logistical details and expectations for the field visit to be provided by the instructor).

In-class Exercise (ungraded): Self-Portraits. Create a portrait of yourself applying concepts of self and social belief

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Assignment Due: Response Paper #1

Unit C Week 5 – Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination

Reading:

Branscombe & Baron, Chapter 6

Assignment Due: Institutional and Systemic Discrimination Project

Unit D Week 6 – Interpersonal Relationships

- Interpersonal Attraction
- Close Relationships

Reading:

Branscombe & Baron, Chapter 7

Unit E Weeks 7-9 – Social Influence and Behavior

- Changing Others' Behavior
- Prosocial Behavior
- Aggression

Reading:

Branscombe & Baron, Chapters 8-10

Related Activities:

Field Visit #2 to selected London neighborhood (logistical details and expectations for the field visit to be provided by the instructor).

Assignment Due: Response Paper #2

Unit F Weeks 10-11 – Belonging and Happiness

- Groups and Individuals: Belonging
- Overcoming Adversity
- Achieving Happiness

Readings:

Branscombe & Baron, Chapters 11-12

Related Activities:

Field Visit #3 to a selected London neighborhood (logistical details and expectations for the field visit to be provided by the instructor).

In-class Exercise (Ungraded): View Michael Norton's TEDx talk "How to Buy Happiness," linking prosocial spending to increased productivity. In small groups, students will conceptualize a company that encourages employees to engage in prosocial spending. Consider how the proposal will encourage robust participation across employees of varying socioeconomic

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backgrounds. As each group reports, the class will evaluate each proposal, focusing on why certain programs might have the greatest success.

Assignment Due: Response #3

Unit G Weeks 12-13 – Review of Social Psychology Research Methodologies

Selected readings as indicated by the instructor from Delamater & Myers

Unit H Weeks 14-15 - Review and Conclusions

Week 14 – In-class workshop in preparation for the Final Paper and Presentations

Week 15 – Final Papers and Presentations

- Content Review
- Concluding Questions and Comments
- Course evaluations

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Participation in scheduled class visits to selected London neighborhoods is required. Failure to attend or engage in follow-up class discussions of these visits will affect your participation grade, limit your understanding of the topic, and adversely affect your ability to produce a final project based that reflects an understanding of total class content.

ASSIGNMENTS

Response Papers (3)

Response papers can be constructed in a way that makes the most sense for you as the learner. Consider the class resources provided for the topic. Select one or more for the focus of your response. In a single page, describe your responses to what you encountered. Was your thinking challenged or were your prior ideas confirmed? Perhaps you found a particular reading compelling and it prompted you to consider new ideas or possible solutions; perhaps you made personal connections between a class discussion and your own learning; or maybe you located an additional resource that gave you more information on the topic. Feel free to describe your learning using any of these approaches or others, but do not use the response paper assignment to merely summarize a reading, discussion or experience. The response paper should demonstrate that you have given additional, reflective thought to an issue. Your voice should be heard in this paper.

Institutional and Systematic Discrimination Project*

Consider the following list of discussion starter examples of institutional and systematic discrimination, then identify your own example for interrogation. In a 3-page paper (Times New Roman 12 point font, double-spaced), describe the example, name the groups that may be discriminated against, describe the purpose of the policy, and, if you feel the purpose of the policy is a valid one, describe how else the purpose of the policy may be achieved without discrimination.

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Example policies:

- Children of alumni receive preference for admission into some private colleges.
- Persons accused of a crime who cannot post bail are imprisoned and thus appear in court dressed in prison uniform, often in handcuffs.
- Employees of a particular university are allowed free tuition, as are their spouses.
- A corporation decides to fill a vacancy "in-house" rather than advertise.
- A teacher requires an oral presentation as part of the final grade.

**adapted from Cultural Pursuit, Skidmore College and The Society for the Psychological Studies of Social Issues*

Final Paper

The Final Paper should demonstrate your understanding of social psychology as viewed through the lens of socioeconomic class in Britain. Answer the following questions: What have you learned about socioeconomic class in Britain? How has your evolving understanding of social psychology helped you understand the issues surrounding socioeconomic class in Britain? How was your prior thinking challenged or affirmed? Where might future research in this area take you? And, what sorts of research methodologies might help you pursue such lines of inquiry, and why?

The Final Paper is required to be 7-8 pages in length, Times New Roman 12 point font, double-spaced. Include five peer-reviewed journals in a reference list in support of your discussion.

Additionally, prepare a five-minute oral presentation that summarizes your Final Paper, for delivery to the class during the last week of the course. Visual aids are not required but are allowed.

80% of your grade for the Final Paper will be comprised of the written portion, and 20% will be comprised of the oral summary.

EVALUATION METHODS

The course instructor will provide specific requirements and grading rubrics for individual assignments for the course. Your final grade in the course will be comprised of the following course requirements:

Participation (includes attendance, engagement in discussion, civility, and respect) – 20%

Response Papers (3 total, 10% each) – 30%

Institutional and Systemic Discrimination Project – 20%

Final Paper – 30%

RESOURCES

Required Text:

Branscombe, N. R., & Baron, R. A. (2017). *Social Psychology* (14th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Selected readings will be provided from:

Delamater, J. D., & Myers, D. J. (2010). *Social Psychology* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning.

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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA-Butler takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA-Butler resident director as well as your home institution.