

Syllabus Introduction to Social Psychology – PSYS 350

Please expect changes to this syllabus. This will be replaced with a new version of this syllabus, distributed in class on the first day.

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(Please include “PSYS 350” in the subject line of all emails to me to help me respond to you more quickly.)

Course Objectives

This course is an introduction to social psychology. This course provides familiarity with the major areas of study within Social Psychology, and the central questions or issues in each of these areas.

It is also a Connections course under the Colonnade Plan. It is designed to meet and exceed the requirements for learning objectives under the Colonnade Plan. In this course, we will:

1. Analyze the development of self in relation to others and society.
2. Examine diverse values that form civically engaged and informed members of society.
3. Evaluate solutions to real-world social and cultural problems.

More concretely, we will gain abilities to understand how the situations we are in cause us to think and act. Instead of seeing behavior as caused solely by a person’s personality, we will learn how the situation works in combination with personality to make people do the things that they do.

We also will practice using our new knowledge of social psychology to critically interpret and offer new perspectives on the world around us.

These new abilities will allow us new insight into the nature of our lives, and allow us a more accurate understanding of within and cross-cultural differences in behavior. Understanding the psychological principles at work behind behavior makes it obvious that we as humans share far more similarities than differences. It also helps to clarify how we can work with others, all over the world, to achieve the basic goals and needs that all people have.

One important goal of this course is to provide the opportunity to become better critical thinkers capable of uncommon insight into human behavior. I urge you to seize this opportunity, so you can better become the person you want to be.

This course addresses the following general education goals and objectives:

- Understand the major research methods used by social psychologists
- Understand and describe basic processes and common errors in perceiving self and others
- Understand and describe cultural differences in perception and social behavior
- Describe the psychological aspects of basic social problems such as prejudice, discrimination, and aggression as well as potential solutions to these problems

This syllabus **will be modified**. Please download a current syllabus from Blackboard once the semester begins. Changes may also be announced in class.

- Describe how differences pertaining to race, gender, social class, and other social groupings influence social behavior and perception

Textbook: You may access this through our course website once the semester begins, or you may buy a separate copy.

Gilovich, T., Keltner, D., Chen, S., & Nisbett, R. E. (2018). *Social Psychology*, 5th ed., New York. W. W. Norton & Company.

ISBN: 978 0 393 93896 8

Additional Readings will be Posted on Blackboard:

Grades:

Information will be provided on syllabus available on Blackboard once class begins

Completion of Coursework

Any assignment that is missed will receive a zero.

Make-up assignments will not be given. An exception may be granted to a student who provides a validated excuse to me prior to the due date. If you realize that something may keep you from attending on the day an assignment is due, contact me immediately.

Incompletes will not be given. If you are unable to complete the course assignments, it is best for you to drop the course.

Make your travel arrangements to allow you to take the final exam. You will receive a zero if you miss it. No extra-credit assignments will be given.

Please be on time for class, and especially on quiz days. If you arrive in class after the first person has finished with their quiz, I will be unable to allow you to take the quiz. I want you to succeed, so please don't be late!

Article responses will be submitted online, using the Assignments feature in Blackboard. When you submit an article response assignment, please first open a text document and put the assignment prompts (the instructions) in it. Then, type in your response under the appropriate portions of the assignment prompts. Save this document and keep it for your records. Copy and paste the text of your response into the assignment box in Blackboard in order to submit your work. This copied and pasted text then will be graded. You should not attach any files to the assignment—just paste your work into the assignment box. I am unable to give you credit unless you paste your work into the assignment box. The article response assignment instructions may be slightly different from article to article. They are given under each article response assignment posted on Blackboard.

Final Paper:

Due the last regular class period before our final exam.

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Paper: In 1,400 words or less, please describe an incident relevant to social psychology that you experienced or witnessed. Indicate the number of words at the top of the paper.

After describing the incident you either witnessed or experienced, explain how four (4) of the course concepts you were exposed to (either in lecture or the book) have helped you better understand the social psychology of this incident. Make sure to clearly explain each concept before describing how it has helped your understanding of social psychology. Underline each concept. Cite your explanations of concepts using the format (Text, p. XX), or (Lecture, Date). Please do not attach a Title Page, Bibliography or Reference Page. This is unnecessary. Instead of quoting, paraphrase. For tips on paraphrasing, you can do a search on Google.com to find a site such as [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_paraphr.html]

Your grade will be heavily based on the clarity and completeness of your concept explanations, as well as how persuasively you show that the concepts have helped you better understand the incident. It also will be based on following these directions (i.e. word count, number of underlined concepts, explaining an incident).

RESIST!...the urge to send email, texts or tweets, check Facebook, read the news, or otherwise engage online via your computer or phone during class! Attentional capacity is a limited resource. It is a fact that dividing your attention this way will decrease your learning performance.

Do you want help with this course outside of class??

First, please come to office hours. Beyond this, if you want help with this class, or any other Gen Ed course, there are several places to go. The Learning Center, located in the Academic Advising and Retention Center, DUC A-330, has tutors in most major undergraduate subjects and course levels throughout the week. They also can direct you to one of many tutoring and assistance centers across campus. To make an appointment, or request a tutor for a specific class, call 745-6254 or stop by DUC A330. Log on to TLC's website at <http://www.wku.edu/tlc> to find out more.

Academic Misconduct:

All work must be your own. Cheating or plagiarism will be reported through official university channels, and the consequences will be severe.

Specific academic misconduct violations include academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. All exams in this course are to be taken (a) without the use of notes, books, or other additional materials, and (b) without the assistance of any other person or group. Use of electronic devices such as calculators, PDAs, cell phones, or audio devices during exams is not allowed.

You will receive a failing grade in the course if you engage in academic misconduct.

Do not discuss your work in this class with anyone before turning it in, and do not share your work with anyone who has not yet completed the assignment. You should not copy or steal others' work.

In general, to get something out of this course and to avoid any problems like those hinted at above, use your head. This means: pay attention in class, do the assigned readings, and study by thinking about

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course content as it relates to everyday life. Avoiding plagiarism is easy if you know how. Just paraphrase and cite your sources.

The quizzes, the exam, and the paper are designed for what you can do based on what we are covering in this class and the skills you have already learned. They assume you will do your own work.

Note: Although we will attempt to closely follow this syllabus, both the schedule and content of topics and assignments are subject to change based on the characteristics of our class. Any changes will be announced in class.

Disability Services

If you have a disability and would like to request accommodation, contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center A-200. The phone number is 745-5004; TTY is 745-3030. If you have a disability, you legally are entitled to assistance if you want it. Make sure to contact the office for student disability services before talking to me—this is university policy.

Please know that I care about your success in this course, and I am here to help in any reasonable way that I can.