



Psychology 501.6

Advanced Topics in Social and Theoretical Psychology:  
Individual, Interpersonal, and Intergroup Underpinnings of  
Social Behaviour

**Instructor:** Dr. Susan D. Boon  
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**Office:** A231B  
**Office Hours:** TBA

**Lecture Location:** A247B  
**Lecture Days/Time:** W 12:00 – 14:45

**Course Description and Goals**

An advanced survey of some of the fundamental issues and recent developments in Social and/or Theoretical Psychology. Topics will vary. NOTE: THIS IS A GRADUATE STUDENT-LEVEL COURSE.

An advanced survey of major topics in contemporary experimental social psychology, with a particular focus on individual, interpersonal, and intergroup processes. For each topic, critical analysis of relevant theory and research will form the basis of written and oral work in the course.

By the end of this course, students should:

- Be familiar and conversant with the social psychological perspective on human behaviour
- Develop critical knowledge and understanding of major areas of research in contemporary experimental social psychology
- Develop critical knowledge and understanding of critical issues in contemporary social psychology
- Achieve familiarity with methodological issues in experimental social psychology
- Develop oral and written skills in the communication of social psychological concepts
- Gain experience with the design of social psychological research projects

**Prerequisites**

Psyc 312—Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods

Psyc 345 – Social Psychology

**Required Texts**

Advanced Social Psychology: The State of the Science (2010). R. F. Baumeister & E. J. Finkel (Eds.). Oxford Press. (available at the Bookstore)

Ross, L., & Nisbett, R.E. (1991). *The person and the situation: Perspectives of Social Psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill (out of print: available as a PDF document through course Blackboard site)

## Readings

References for additional assigned readings (as selected by seminar leaders) will be made available on the course Blackboard site at least 1 week prior to the seminar.

Note that you can expect the reading load to be quite heavy in this course. As this is a senior (i.e., graduate student-level) seminar course, I will assume that you are a serious scholar interested in getting as much as possible out of the course. Accordingly, I will expect you to have completed all the reading and to have thought about what you read before each seminar. Like most things, what you get out of the readings (and this course, more generally) will depend on what you put in.

## Evaluation

All written assignments will be due on the dates indicated in this course outline and are to be handed in at the beginning of class. Except by prior arrangement, e-mailed (or otherwise electronically submitted) and late assignments will not be accepted.

Course Component	Weighting	Date
seminar participation	15%	throughout term
seminar presentations	25%	throughout term, beginning September 26; weight of individual presentations to be determined by number of presentations to be made (i.e., based on course enrollment)
thought papers ( $N = 10$ )	30%	due throughout term, beginning September 26; equally weighted
research grant proposal	30%	Due in A275 on Dec. 14, 2012 by 3:30 pm

**Seminar Participation.** The primary emphasis here will be on the quality of contributions, not quantity, but you *must* contribute. Attendance every week will be assumed. Quality contributions will be easy to make if you've given yourself time to read *and* think about the material before class. [See Blackboard for more detail.](#)

**Seminar Presentation** Each student will lead one or more seminar sessions (exact number to depend on final enrollment; order of presentation to be determined in the first class). Undergraduate students will share the time equally with one or more other undergraduate students. Undergraduate student seminar leaders will be responsible for selecting 1 (one) journal articles related to the assigned readings for that week to use—in conjunction with the assigned reading—as the basis of discussion during the seminar. The entire class will read the selected (i.e., assigned) readings in preparation for the seminar. To facilitate that, seminar leaders must post the citation(s) for selected readings on Blackboard no less than 1 (one) week prior to their seminar.

Missed seminar presentations will be handled on a case-by-case basis, normally by rescheduling later in the term (where possible).

[See Blackboard for more detail.](#)

**Thought Papers** You will be expected to write short (maximum 3 pages double-spaced) weekly thought papers that discuss your response to some aspect(s) of the past week's readings, journal article(s), and/or class discussion. The first thought paper is due September 26. The last thought paper will be due December 5 (in the last class), making a total of 10 thought papers due throughout the term.

Normally, thought papers will be due IN HARDCOPY at the beginning of the class one week after the topic has been covered in class. Electronic submissions will not be accepted. A 20% penalty will be assessed for each work day that the paper is late. It is your responsibility to ensure I receive the assignment on time.

[See Blackboard for more detail.](#)

### **Grant Proposal**

Submit a SSHRC-like proposal for a program of research in an area of social psychology that is of interest to you. You are free to choose any topic so long as it is relevant to the course content and *provided it is not directly related to your present thesis research*. **Students must arrange to meet with the instructor to discuss their proposal plans no later than November 23, 2010.**

[See Blackboard for more detail.](#)

### **Grading Scale**

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

### **Electronic submission of assignments/exam papers**

E-mailed assignments will NOT be accepted. Written assignments must be handed in at the beginning of class. Late assignments may be handed in at the Psychology Office, A 275 (after hours, the green box outside this office). Late assignments will be assessed a penalty as described above (10% per day, including 10% over weekends). Early assignments may be handed in to the same locations as late assignments (but will of course not be assessed a penalty).

### **Tentative Lecture Schedule**

Date	Topic/Activity/Due Date	Chapters/Readings
Sep 12	Lectures begin. <b>Course Overview and Introduction</b>	ASP ch. 1 and 2
Sep 19	<b>The Person and the Situation</b>	Ross & Nisbett (whole book)
F Sep 21	Last day to drop a course with no W grade and tuition refund.	
M Sep 24	Last day for add or swap courses.	
Sep 26	<b>The self</b> Thought paper #1 due	ASP ch. 5
Oct 1 - 5	<b>Personality</b> Thought paper #2 due	ASP ch. 21
M Oct 8	Thanksgiving Day. No lecture. University closed.	
Oct 10	<b>Cultural Psychology</b> Thought paper #3 due	ASP ch. 18
Oct 17	<b>Prosocial Behaviour</b> Thought paper #4 due	ASP ch. 8
Oct 24	<b>Aggression</b> Thought paper #5 due	ASP ch. 9
Oct 31	<b>Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination</b> Thought paper #6 due	ASP ch. 10
Nov 7	<b>Social Influence</b> Thought paper #7 due	ASP ch. 11
F Nov 9	Reading days. No lecture.	
M Nov 12	Remembrance Day (Observed). University Closed	
Nov 14	<b>Attraction and Rejection</b> Thought paper #7 due	ASP ch. 12
Nov 21	<b>Intimate Relationships</b> Thought paper #8 due	ASP ch. 13
Nov 28	<b>Group Processes</b> Thought paper #9 due	ASP ch. 14
Dec 5	<b>Intergroup Relations</b>	ASP ch. 15

	Thought paper #10 due	
Dec 7	Fall Term Lectures End.	
Dec 14	<b>GRANT PROPOSALS DUE NO LATER THAN 3:30 IN A275</b>	
Dec 10-19	Fall Term Exam Period	

### **Reappraisal of Grades**

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

### **Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct**

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

### **Academic Accommodation**

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

### **Absence From A Test/Exam**

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this

48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

### **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act**

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 275), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

### **Course Credits for Research Participation (Max 2% of final grade)**

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. **A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation.** The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>

The last day to participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **Dec 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012**.

### **Evacuation Assembly Point**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

### **Student Organizations**

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

**Student Union VP Academic:** Phone: 403-220-3911 [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)

**Student Union Faculty Rep.:** Phone: 403-220-3913 [socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca)

### **Important Dates**

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **Sep 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **Sep 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012**.