



Psychology 630.01

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

Instructor: Dr. Susan 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.

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

NOTE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS: This course may be repeated for credit.

Graduate students who do NOT have credit in an undergraduate introductory social psychology course should prepare for class by reading an introductory-level social psychology text prior to the first class.

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)

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; for graduate students only, includes "Social Psychology and You" presentation on September 19, 2012 |
| 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.](#)

Social Psychology and You presentation. Each graduate student will make a brief 10–15 minute presentation during the September 19 seminar that describes how some aspect or aspects of the ideas presented in Ross and Nisbett's *The Person and the Situation: Perspectives of Social Psychology* has/have implications for his/her own current (or most recent past) research. Plan on briefly describing your research and then discussing implications of R & N, particularly new insights from their book. If you must miss this presentation, you will present in a subsequent 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). Graduate students will have the whole class for the seminar. Undergraduate students will share the time equally with one or more other undergraduate students. Graduate student seminar leaders will be responsible for selecting 3 (three) 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. 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. Starting the week after the “Social Psychology and You” seminar, 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 (or past) 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. Course Overview and Introduction | ASP ch. 1 and 2 |
| Sep 19 | The Person and the Situation Social Psychology and You presentations | 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 | The self Thought paper #1 due | ASP ch. 5 |
| Oct 1 - 5 | Personality Thought paper #2 due | ASP ch. 21 |
| M Oct 8 | Thanksgiving Day. No lecture. University closed. | |
| Oct 10 | Cultural Psychology Thought paper #3 due | ASP ch. 18 |
| Oct 17 | Prosocial Behaviour Thought paper #4 due | ASP ch. 8 |
| Oct 24 | Aggression Thought paper #5 due | ASP ch. 9 |
| Oct 31 | Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination Thought paper #6 due | ASP ch. 10 |
| Nov 7 | Social Influence Thought paper #7 due | ASP ch. 11 |
| F Nov 9 | Reading days. No lecture. | |
| M Nov 12 | Remembrance Day (Observed). University Closed | |
| Nov 14 | Attraction and Rejection Thought paper #7 due | ASP ch. 12 |
| Nov 21 | Intimate Relationships Thought paper #8 due | ASP ch. 13 |

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|-----------|---|------------|
| Nov 28 | Group Processes Thought paper #9 due | ASP ch. 14 |
| Dec 5 | Intergroup Relations Thought paper #10 due | ASP ch. 15 |
| Dec 7 | Fall Term Lectures End. | |
| Dec 14 | GRANT PROPOSALS DUE NO LATER THAN 3:30 IN A275 | |
| 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

Students who miss a term test due to a valid and documented official University reason (illness, domestic affliction, or religious conviction) have 48 hours to contact AND schedule a makeup test with the instructor. The onus is on the student to have a makeup test approved and scheduled within 48 hours, or the makeup test option is forfeited. The same process applies to missed makeup tests. At the instructor's discretion, the makeup test may differ significantly in form and/or content from the missed test. However, the makeup test cannot differ in weight (% of final grade) from the missed test. Except in extenuating circumstances (a documented official University medical excuse), a makeup test must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test. Absence from a final exam, and deferral of a final exam, are handled by Enrolment Services (see http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/deferred_final). Students absent from a final exam must notify the instructor within 48 hours and must then apply for an official deferred final exam no later than the deadline indicated in the Examinations Schedule.

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.

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 Ombudsman's Office

The Office of the Student Ombuds provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. The office can be reached at 403-220-6420 or ombuds@ucalgary.ca (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>).

Safewalk

The safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus. This service is free and available 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333.

Important Dates

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