

Social Psychology

PSYC 3730 Section E02 | June 2020 | 4 credits

Professor: Dr. Nisha Gupta

Contact: ngupta@westga.edu and via Courseden (I encourage you to email me via Courseden. I will generally reply within 24 hours on the weekday, and 48 hours on the weekends.)

Office Hours: By appointment only, via phone, Facetime, google chat, or Skype.

Course Description:

Why do people betray their moral conscience to fit in with the group? Why are people inclined to stereotype and discriminate against members of different groups? How can we resolve the conflicts of society? What does it mean to practice love towards ourselves and others? In this course you will learn about research and theories in social psychology that help answer these questions. This course provides a systematic introduction to the field of social psychology, which studies how the thoughts, feelings, and actions of a person are influenced by other people and social situations. This course will particularly explore the influence that social situations have on individuals and groups in order to better understand the wounds of injustice in society. Throughout the class we will cover topics such as conformity, obedience, persuasion, group behavior, prejudice and discrimination, aggression, altruism, cooperation, and love. Special emphasis will be placed on applying social psychological principles to everyday life for the purposes of social justice.

This is a 100% online course. All material will be taught via video lectures, powerpoint slides, textbook reading, and supplementary readings and videos as necessary. All material will be available on Courseden.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Be familiar with basic principles of social psychology, including major theories and developments in the history of social psychology
2. Evaluate empirical literature regarding the science of social behavior
3. Apply psychological concepts, theories and research findings to social dynamics in everyday life and current events in our wider society

Required Readings:

For modules 1 - 5 you are assigned to read chapters from the following textbook (available as a PDF on Courseden).

Aronson, Elliot. (2012). The Social Animal (10th Ed). New York: Worth Publishers.

For modules 6 and 7 you are assigned to read PDF articles which will be uploaded on Courseden.

The course goals will be met and evaluated on the basis of the class assignments below.

Evaluation and Grading:

Discussion Posts (30%):

Every weekend by Sunday 11:59PM, you are required to submit a discussion post on Courseden in response to each module. This is a two-part assignment which involves both writing your own post for each module, and responding to another student's post the following week for each module:

Instructions for WRITING YOUR OWN posts (15%)

- (1) Pick a specific concept that you learned about from this module which sparks your interest and attention, and define that concept.
- (1) Write one original question that you are curious about regarding that social psychology concept—some curiosity you have about society, social relationships, social dynamics, etc which has been sparked by that particular concept.
- (3) Connect your question to a personal example from everyday life.

****YOUR QUESTION SHOULD BE ORIGINAL AND NOT PLAIGARIZED BY LOOKING AT OTHER STUDENTS' POSTS.** This question should emerge from your own curiosity about what you are learning about in class.

*****Discussion posts for modules 1&2 are due by Sunday 6/7. Discussion posts for modules 3&4 are due by 6/14. Discussion posts for modules 5&6 are due by 6/21. Discussion posts for module 7 are due by 6/28.***

Instructions for RESPONDING TO ANOTHER STUDENT'S posts (15%)

- (1) Select a student's discussion board post from the previous module who you have not yet responded to. Write a response to their discussion post.
- (2) When typing a response, please demonstrate empathy for their original question and also offer some insights to try to answer the question that they have posed, based on your own lived experiences, wisdom, and/or understanding of the course material.

*****RESPONSES to your peers' discussion posts for modules 1&2 are due by Sunday 6/14. Responses to your peers' discussion posts for modules 3&4 are due by 6/21. Responses to your peers' discussion posts for modules 5&6 are due by 6/28.***

Midterm Exam (30%):

There will be one midterm exam to evaluate your retention of the social psychology concepts from modules 1-4. The exam will consist of approximately 30 multiple choice questions. The questions will draw from material covered in both the video lectures and textbook reading. The test is open book. Questions are randomized so as to prevent cheating from other students.

The exam will cover Modules 1, 2, 3, and 4. It will be administered on Friday June 12th, and will be available on Courseden to take from 9AM to 11:59PM.

Final Paper/Powerpoint: “The Social Psychology of...” (40%):

For the final project, you will select a particular social phenomenon to reflect upon using the social psychology concepts learned in class. Your options for the topic are the following:

- a. “The Social Psychology of Living in a Time of Coronavirus”: Reflect upon the personal and social experience of COVID-19 using social psychology concepts.
- b. Any other social phenomenon that you are curious about and want to apply social psychology principles to (i.e. previous students have done the Social Psychology of Discrimination, Heartbreak, Social Anxiety, Stereotyping, Conflict with a Loved One, etc.)

Submit either a 5-6 page (double spaced) paper, OR a 8-10 slide powerpoint presentation, which analyzes this phenomenon using at least 7 social psychology concepts learned from the course. Please consult both the textbook, pdf readings, and video lectures to help with this endeavor. In your paper/powerpoint presentation, you should incorporate personal stories and descriptions of the phenomenon, as it has been experienced by you, people you know, or people in the media. Then, you should reflect on those stories/experiences using the social psychology concepts learned in class. You should end your paper by offering insights from social psychology regarding possibilities for healing/change/transformation of the issues pertaining to your phenomenon. In other words, how can social psychology help HEAL the social issues that emerge with CORONAVIRUS, HEARTBREAK, DISCRIMINATION, etc? Ultimately, the point of this final paper is to demonstrate that you can apply the social psychology concepts learned in class to a phenomenon that you are living-through and personally concerned with, because “knowledge is power.”

The final paper/powerpoint should be uploaded in the “Assignments” section of Courseden by Friday, June 26th at 11:59PM.

Grading Information and Policy:

There are a total of 100 points possible in the course. These 100 points will be used to calculate a percentage grade according to the standard percentage point divisions (see table below):

Grading structure and point scale		
90-100 points	90% - 100%	A
80 points - 89 points	80% - 89%	B
70 points - 79 points	70% - 79%	C
60 points - 69 points	60% - 69%	D
< 60 points	< 60%	F

Semester Schedule:

Topic	Course Material	Assignment due
<p>WEEK ONE (6/1-6/7)</p> <p>Module 1: Introduction to Social Psychology</p> <p>Module 2: Conformity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • READ: Aronson Chapter 1 • WATCH: Video lecture: "Introduction to Social Psychology" • Watch supplementary youtube videos • READ: Aronson Chapter 2 • WATCH: Video lecture: "Conformity" • Watch supplementary youtube videos 	<p>Discussion posts for modules 1 & 2 are due by Sunday June 7th at 11:59PM.</p>
<p>WEEK TWO 6/8-6/14</p> <p>Module 3: Mass Communication, Propaganda, and Persuasion</p> <p>Module 4: Prejudice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • READ: Aronson Chapter 3 • WATCH: Video lecture: "Mass Communication, Propaganda, and Persuasion" • Watch supplementary youtube videos • READ: Aronson Chapter 4 • WATCH: Video lecture: "Prejudice" • Watch supplementary youtube videos 	<p>Discussion posts for modules 3 & 4 due by Sunday June 14th at 11:59PM</p> <p>Responses to peers' discussion posts for modules 1 & 2 due by Sunday June 14th at 11:59PM</p>
<p>MIDTERM EXAM ON COURSEDEN ON FRIDAY JUNE 12th from 9AM to 11:59PM</p>		

<p>WEEK THREE 6/15-6/21</p> <p>Module 5: Aggression</p> <p>Module 6: Altruism and Cooperation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • READ: Aronson Chapter 7 • WATCH: Video lecture: "Aggression" • Watch supplementary youtube videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • READ: The Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis • READ: Reconciliation from a Social-Psychological Perspective • WATCH: Video lecture: "Altruism and Cooperation" • Watch supplementary youtube videos 	<p>Discussion posts for modules 5 & 6 due by Sunday June 21st at 11:59PM</p> <p>Responses to peers' discussion posts for modules 3 & 4 due by Sunday June 21st at 11:59PM</p>
<p>WEEK FOUR 6/22-6/28</p> <p>Module 7: Love</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • READ: "Types of Love" • READ: Cherry "Love, Anger, and Racial Justice" • WATCH: Video lecture: "Love" • Watch supplementary youtube videos 	<p>Discussion posts for module 7 by Sunday June 28th at 11:59PM</p> <p>Responses to peers' discussion posts for modules 5 & 6 due by Sunday June 28th at 11:59PM</p>
<p>FINAL PAPER/POWERPOINT DUE FRIDAY JUNE 26th by 11:59PM</p>		

Syllabus

As this document corresponds with a dynamic entity (a class), this syllabus is subject to change

Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook](#).

Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

Accessibility Services

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services](#).

Americans with Disabilities Act Statement: If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and require assistance or support services, please seek assistance through the [Office for Accessibility Services](#). UWG also provides [Accessibility Statements for Technology](#) that you may be required to use for this course.

For more information on the Americans with Disabilities Act, UWG Email, Credit Hour, and UWG Honor Code policies as well as information on Academic Tutoring, Student Services, and Technical Requirements, Privacy Policy, and Accessibility Statements, please see the [Common Language for Syllabus](#) document.

Academic Support

The [Center for Academic Success](#) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu

The [University Writing Center](#) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu

[Smarthinking](#) offers online tutoring services and resources (including the Writing Center) for UWG students/instructors in all courses. A link to Smarthinking is available in CourseDen under Resources in the navigation bar.

Here is a great resource of [Student Services](#) for all students at UWG, whether or not they are taking online courses. This link provides students with most of the information they need. If a student is experiencing distress and needs some help, check out [UWG Cares](#).

Additional Support Information

Technical Support: Technical support for CourseDen, as well as the technological requirements, accessibility statements, privacy statements, tutorials, and other information can be found at [Technology Requirements](#).