

Social Psychology – Fall 2012

PSY 232 ■ Chambers 1062 ■ MWF 9:30 – 10:20am

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Textbook:

Myers, D. G. (2010). *Social psychology* (10th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Nier, J. A. (2013). *Taking sides: Clashing views in social psychology* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Additional readings can be found on Moodle.

Websites:

Course Website: <http://moodle.davidson.edu> (log in with ID and password, click on PSY 232). Additional readings, assignments, and the most-up-to-date syllabus can be found here. Please check the website frequently for any announcements regarding syllabus changes, class cancellations, etc.

Book Website: http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073370665/student_view0/

The textbook publishers have put together a really helpful supplementary site. This includes study materials, outlines, practice tests, a glossary of terms, etc.

Course Description:

Social Psychology is the scientific study of how people think about one another, influence one another, and relate to one another. Human experience is shaped by social considerations, from the way culture shapes our interpretations of the world around us to the ways our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors take into account the real or imagined presence of others. Through readings, lectures, discussions, activities, writing assignments, and exams, you will be asked to think critically about the research presented, and to discuss applications of that research to your life.

Course Goals:

- Gain a general overview of what psychologists have learned about the role of social context in people's daily lives
- Understand basic research methods used in social psychological research
- Apply social psychological theory and principles to the self

- Understand differing perspectives with regard to controversial issues within social psychology

Grading:

Grades will be based on exams, reaction papers, and participation. The breakdown will be as follows:

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade	Final Grade	Percentage
Exam 1	10%	A	93.0 – 100%
Exam 2	15%	A-	90.0 – 92.9%
Exam 3	15%	B+	87.0 – 89.9%
Final Exam	15%	B	83.0 – 86.9%
Paper #1	10%	B-	80.0 – 82.9%
Paper #2	15%	C+	77.0 – 79.9%
Paper #3	10%	C	73.0 – 76.9%
Participation	5%	C-	70.0 – 72.9%
Research Credits	5%	D+	67.0 – 69.9%
		D	60.0 – 66.9%
		F	0 – 59.9%

Exams: There will be three in-class exams, as well as a self-scheduled, cumulative final exam given during exam week. Tests will consist of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay questions. Test material will be taken from required readings, class lectures, and discussions. Exams will be held during regular class hours, as specified on the schedule. **Make-up exams are not permitted without advance permission. Permission will be granted only for unavoidable circumstances (travel for athletic event, serious illness, family emergency).**

Paper #1: In this first paper, you will violate a social norm of your choosing in a public setting, then write about your experience. You must describe your norm violation, report others’ reactions to your behavior, and discuss relevant psychological principles. Papers should be no longer than 3 double spaced pages, 12 point font. Specific details will be given later in the term.

Paper #2: In the second paper, each member of the class will collect data on the effectiveness of several persuasive techniques and we will analyze the data in class. In the paper, you will report on your data collection experience, your hypothesis, the class results, and the relevance to class readings on persuasion and helping. Papers should be no longer than 3 double spaced pages, 12 point font. Specific details will be given later in the term.

Paper #3: In the final paper, you will discuss how social psychological principles are evidenced on social media sites. Papers should be no longer than 3 double spaced pages, 12 point font. Specific details will be given later in the term.

Participation: Participation consists of BOTH attendance and active attention and discussion in class. Attendance is necessary but not sufficient for full participation credit. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class by passing around the roster. All students will be given three “free” missed classes. Additional absences will result in a decreased participation grade, so use your free absences wisely (i.e., save them for sick days). Students requiring additional absences due to emergency circumstances should contact me as soon as possible.

In addition to attendance, participation means being respectful of others in the classroom. Thus, students should arrive to class on time, prepared, and ready to participate in class. Students arriving late to class must sign in with an “L” on the roster at the end of class.

Laptops are permitted, but studies suggest that they lower student performance and grades (e.g., from surfing the web in class, answering email, and other multitasking), so I wouldn't advise bringing one unless you really need it. Cell phones are not permitted (that includes texting!). If it seems that students are not reading the assigned material, I reserve the right to implement “pop” reading quizzes.

Throughout the semester you will read some compelling research, as well as engage in in- and out-of-class activities. The more fully you participate in class discussions and activities, the more you will enjoy the class, and likely the better your performance will be.

Research Credits: One of the objectives of this course is to give students an opportunity to be involved with current research in psychology. **You must complete three research credits and may choose any combination of the following options:**

(1) Participate in a Davidson student research project.

The psychology department has an active research program. If you choose this option you will be a participant in a research study conducted by Davidson students. Experiments take approximately 40 minutes to complete. All students are members of a Moodle site that includes information about how to sign up. Write a brief (one page or less) summary of the research including any comments or critiques about your experience, and turn that in to me *within one week* of your participation.

(2) Attend an approved psychology talk.

There are several opportunities to hear psychologists talk about research that is being conducted. You may choose to attend one (or more) of these talks to fulfill

a research credit requirement. The exact dates and times of these talks will be announced in class and posted on Moodle. Write a brief (one page or less) summary of the research including your thoughts and reactions to the talk, and turn it in to me *within one week* of attending the talk.

All research credits must be turned in by the last day of class (Dec. 5th), but may be turned in at any point during the term. I strongly encourage you not to leave this assignment until the last minute!

GRADING NOTE: If you believe that there was a mistake in the calculation of your final grade at the end of the class, you must speak to me about it within two weeks of your final grade being posted. *After two weeks, your final grade cannot be adjusted for any reason.*

Academic Accommodations: Accommodations are the legal right of students with all kinds of disabilities. If you are a student who might need accommodations, and you have a disability that is documented with Davidson College, please let me know *as soon as possible*, so that we can explore appropriate accommodations. All such discussions will be fully confidential unless you stipulate otherwise.

Honor Code: Academic dishonesty of any type will not be tolerated. All work turned in for this class must be pledged and signed; **unpledged work will not be graded.** Students may discuss ideas or study for exams with other students, but all exams and papers are to be completed independently. You are Honor bound to not use any “spots” or assignments from students who have preceded you in the course, or to reuse any work written for a previous course. No copies of prior tests should exist and none should be made. If you find or are offered any, you must report this as an honor code violation. If in doubt, don’t do it.

The honor code pledge can be found at: <http://www3.davidson.edu/cms/x8918.xml>

To help clarify the situation, I have provided specific details about what is and what is not academic dishonesty:

You May:

- Consult the textbook and other students when completing reaction papers
- Use the internet to look up study guides or to do research for your reaction papers.
- Study for exams with other students
- Ask me for extra help with a concept

You May Not:

- Use the textbook, your notes, or “cheat sheet” on an exam
- Turn in another student’s work as your own
- Represent someone else’s idea as your own
- Contact anyone during an exam – cell phones OFF
- Use a friend’s notes to write a summary for your research credit

YOU MUST:

- Cite your sources in all written work and provide complete references

Office Hours:

Students are encouraged to ask questions during class or meet with me during office hours. Students should feel free to drop by any time during my scheduled office hours, with no appointment necessary. If students have other classes during office hours, I am happy to arrange appointments to meet with students individually for extra help. Office hours are not a substitute for coming to class, but can be a helpful supplement for students struggling with course material. Do not wait until the night before an exam; if you have questions, come to me ahead of time.

Audio & Video Recording of Classes:

Davidson College policy prohibits audio/video recording of classes by students without permission of the instructor. You may not record class sessions or portions thereof unless the Dean of Students has authorized recording as an academic accommodation for a qualified student with a disability and has notified me of that authorization. All such recordings are for the sole use of the individual student and may not be reproduced, sold, posted online, or otherwise distributed.

Course Schedule:

The following is a *tentative* schedule. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on the course website.

	Date	Topic	Reading (before class)
Week 1	Aug 27 th	Course Introduction	
	Aug 29 th	What is Social Psychology	Myers Chap. 1
	Aug 31 st	Research Methods	Ellyson & Haberstadt (1995)
Week 2	Sept 3 rd	The Self	Myers Ch. 2
	Sept 5 th		Nier #6
	Sept 7 th		(Burger & Burns, 1988)
Week 3	Sept 10 th	Social Beliefs and Judgments	Myers C. 3
	Sept 12 th		Nier #4
	Sept 14 th		Dunning et al. (2003)
Week 4	Sept 17 th	EXAM 1	
	Sept 19 th	Behavior and Attitudes	Myers Ch. 4
	Sept 21 st	<i>Video: Stanford Prison Study</i>	
Week 5	Sept 24 th		Nier #13

	Sept 26 th	Genes, Culture, & Gender	Myers Ch. 5
	Sept 28 th		
Week 6	Oct 1 st		Arnett (2008)
	Oct 3 rd	Conformity and Obedience	Myers Ch. 6
	Oct 5 th	<i>Video: Milgram Shock Experiment</i> Reaction Paper #1 DUE	
Week 7	Oct 8 th		Burger (2009), Nier #11
	Oct 10 th	Aggression	Myers Ch. 10
	Oct 12 th		Nier #20
Week 8	Oct 15 th	Fall Break – NO CLASS	
	Oct 17 th		Plous & Zimbardo (2004)
	Oct 19 th	EXAM 2	
Week 9	Oct 22 nd	Persuasion	Myers Ch. 7
	Oct 24 th		Nier #15
	Oct 26 th		
Family weekend			
Week 10	Oct 29 th		
	Oct 31 st	Helping	Myers Ch. 12
	Nov 2 nd	Reaction Paper #2 DUE	Nier #19
Week 11	Nov 5 th	Stereotyping and Prejudice <i>Video: A Class Divided</i>	Myers Ch. 9
	Nov 7 th		
	Nov 9 th		Gaertner et al. (2003) Glick & Fiske (2003)
Week 12	Nov 12 th	Attraction and Intimacy	Myers Ch. 11
	Nov 14 th		APA Resolution (2004)
	Nov 16 th		
Week 13	Nov 19 th	Group Influence	Myers Ch. 8
	Nov 21 st	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS	
	Nov 23 rd	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS	
Week 14	Nov 26 th		
	Nov 28 th	EXAM 3	

	Nov 30 th	Conflict & Peacemaking	Myers Ch. 13
Week 15	Dec 3 rd		
	Dec 5 th	Environmental Applications	Myers Ch. 16 Cialdini (2003)
	Dec 7 th	Legal Applications Reaction Paper #3 due	Myers Ch. 15
Week 16	Dec 10 th	Legal Applications	
	Dec 12th	Exam Review	
	Dec 14th – 20th	FINAL EXAM	