

## **INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY**

(Tu, Th. 10 -11:15 a.m., Tarbutton Hall, room 106)

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### **Course Objectives**

This course provides an introduction to social psychology, an interdisciplinary area of study that attempts to answer the following major question: How does the real, implied, or imagined presence of others affect our beliefs, feelings, and behaviors? The focus of the course is on how groups -- ranging from small friendship circles to ethnic groups to entire societies -- affect the life of an individual and how the individual, in turn, affects the group. Thus the course focuses on the reciprocal relationship between individual-level and group-level phenomena.

We begin discussing general questions of social psychology. We focus on a classic Sociological approach, symbolic interactionism, to examine how individuals' identities emerge and affect social interaction, and how the context bears upon social dynamics. In addition, we review the ways researchers go about testing the accuracy of those answers.

The second part of the course focuses on the thoughts and feelings of individuals in social interaction. Here we study issues such as: How do individuals perceive other people and situations? How do people's attitudes emerge? Do attitudes affect behavior or do behaviors affect attitudes? How do individuals experience and express emotions in various situations? This section of the course concludes with an application of perceptual, attitudinal, and emotional processes: how do beliefs and emotions underlie the development of prejudice and discrimination? What processes can undermine prejudice and discrimination?

The third part of the course examines group processes such as attraction, influence, conflict, and justice and structural properties of groups defined by power and status. Pertinent questions include: How do relationships develop and change? How does attraction affect conformity? How can bargaining resolve conflict? Why do higher status group members exert more influence and how can this pattern change? When do people sense unfairness?

The course provides substantive answers to the questions posed above. In addition, students should be able to discuss analytically social behavior in a wide variety of groups. In-class exercises aid in applying concepts to everyday life. Thus, by the end of the course, class members should more clearly understand their own and others' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

## Course Requirements

### *Participation*

*Timely* class attendance and regular participation in discussions is expected. Taking part in discussion may involve asking a question, giving a response, making a comment on reading or lecture materials, offering an example, etc. Involvement in in-class exercises also counts as participation. Attendance and participation will be duly noted at the end of the semester.

### *Readings*

All assigned **readings** should be completed *before* class to ensure active participation in class discussions and activities.

Main Text: Aronson, Elliot. 2008. *The Social Animal*. New York: Worth Publishers.

Readings: Other readings are available through electronic reserves. (You need Adobe Acrobat to read the files). Some other readings may be added.

Power point slides, sorted by topic (available on course Blackboard site)

The course outline lists readings in the text (e.g., Aronson, pp. Xxx-Yyy) or by the full citation for articles on reserve.

### *Exams*

There will be three **exams** during the semester (75% of your grade). Each exam covers materials presented in readings, films, lectures, discussions, etc., for one part of the course (i.e., the exams are not really cumulative). Exams include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. See policies below with regard to make-up exams.

*Tentative* exam dates are:      Exam 1: Thursday, 14 February  
   Exam 2: Thursday, 27 March  
   Exam 3: Friday, 2 May, 8:30 – 11 a.m.

### *Paper*

A 6 page **paper** (worth about 25% of your grade) allows you to examine a social psychological phenomenon that you have experienced or observed. More specifically, you will complete a mini empirical study of an issue of interest to you. In doing so, you will create a theoretical argument based on materials from the class and two additional published empirical studies, derive an hypothesis, figure out a means to test the hypothesis, collect data, and analyze whether your data confirm or disconfirm your hypothesis. A handout will provide more details.

There will be several parts to the assignment. First you must submit a brief description of your project or your ideas about what you might do your project on by **Thursday, February 21**.

I will review these short descriptions and then meet with each of you to discuss your topic before November 1. As questions arise in your research, you should discuss them with me or the TA. Second, depending on the nature of your research, you will construct a “consent document” for your study participants. This procedure is necessary so that you understand the rights of people who agree to be in your study as well as what you need to do to protect them from harm. The third part of the assignment is optional: you may submit to a draft of your paper for review at least ten days prior to the due date of the paper. The paper is tentatively due **Thursday, April 17**. (Although you write a paper, this course does not fulfill the writing requirement.)

### **Policies**

**Make-up exams:** ...will generally **NOT** be given, except under extenuating circumstances (e.g., legitimated illness, documented family death, earthquake, nuclear disaster). If you are affected by such circumstances, notify me *prior* to the exam (the department will take messages, 727-7510). Without advanced notification, you forfeit your opportunity for a make-up exam. Also, if you have a legitimate and unavoidable scheduling conflict for a particular exam date, you must present in writing this conflict at least one week prior to the date. We will discuss the possibility of alternative arrangements. Please note that make-up exams may be of a different format.

**Late assignments:** ...are papers that are turned in to me any time after the class period in which they are due. Papers will be docked 5 points per day.

**Honor Code:** The Emory University honor code applies fully to this course. When you sign an exam or submit your assignments, you are pledging to the honor code. For reference, please consult [http://www.college.emory.edu/current/standards/honor\\_code.html](http://www.college.emory.edu/current/standards/honor_code.html).

**Disabilities:** Students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (7-6016) to obtain proper documentation if accommodations are needed. Please do this early in the semester in order to make sure that everything is in order.

**Blackboard:** We will use the Blackboard site for this course regularly. Please check the site several times a week in order to ensure that you are aware of class announcements and so forth. We may also use the site to arrange discussions with your colleagues in the course.

**Email:** Please allow at least 24 hours for replies to emails. If you have an urgent concern about the course, contact me by phone. All assignments should be submitted in paper form, not as an email attachment (unless otherwise approved ahead of time). **WORD documents sent via email must be “saved as” an earlier (not 2007) version of Office so that I can open them!**

**Mobile phones:** All “ringing” gadgets (phones, pagers, watch alarms) should be turned off during class. Failure to do so may result in confiscation of said gadget.

## Course Outline

(This is the intended ordering and longevity of topics. Modifications may occur as the course progresses. Also, consult the Bb site for a “schedule” that lists date, topic, required reading.)

Thurs, Jan 17 **Introduction**

### QUESTIONS, APPROACH, METHODS

Tues, Jan 22 **Social Psychological Phenomena: *What do social psychologists study?***

Aronson, pp. 1-11 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 1-9)

Thurs, Jan 24 **Symbolic Interaction: *How do people socially construct their worlds?***

Charon, Joel M. 2007. *Symbolic Interactionism* (Chapter 3: “Symbolic Interactionism As a Perspective,” pp. 28-42) . Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

O’Brien, Jodi. 2006. *The Production of Reality* (“Shared Meaning As the Basis of Humanness,” pp. 64-82). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Tues, Jan 29 **Symbolic Interaction: *How do individuals create identities?***

Charon, Joel M. 2007. *Symbolic Interactionism* (Chapter 6: “The Nature of the Self,” pp. 71-92). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Lee, James David. 1998. “Which Kids Can ‘Become’ Scientists?” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 61:99-119.

Thurs, Jan 31 **Symbolic Interaction: *How do identities play out in interaction?***

Khanna, Nikki. 2004. “The Role of Reflected Appraisals in Racial Identity: The Case of Multiracial Asians.” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 67:115-131.

Tues, Feb 5 **Methods: *How do researchers study social interaction?***

Aronson, pp. 405-429 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 329-347)

Thurs, Feb 7 **Methods: *What methods are appropriate, when?***

Aronson, pp. 48-56 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 38-45)

Michener, H. Andrew, John D. DeLamater, and Daniel J. Myers. 2004. *Social Psychology*. (“Research Methods in Social Psychology,” pp. 26-49). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.

Tues, Feb 12 **Methods: *Designing Studies***

Thurs, Feb 14 **EXAM I**

## PERCEPTUAL & AFFECTIVE PROCESSES

Tues, Feb 19 **Social Cognition & Impression Formation: *How do people process information?***

Aronson, pp. 117-135 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 93-117)

Thurs, Feb 21 **Attribution Theory: *How do people determine the causes of behavior?***

Rosenhan, David L. 1973. "On Being Sane in Insane Places." *Science* 179:250-258.

***Paper Prospectus DUE!!!***

Tues, Feb 26 **Attribution Biases: *How accurate are people's perceptions of others?***

Aronson, pp. 135-147, 166-179 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 124-126, 131-141)

Thurs, Feb 28 **Attitudes: *How do evaluative beliefs develop? Change?***

Aronson, pp. 59-115 (9<sup>th</sup> 58-91)

Tues, Mar 4 **Attitudes: *When do attitudes shape behavior? When do behaviors shape attitudes?***

Aronson, pp. 160-166, 181-241 (9<sup>th</sup> 126-131, 143-199)

Thurs, Mar 6 **Affect: *How do people experience emotions?***

Ridgeway, Cecilia. 1994. "Affect." Pp 205-230 in *Group Processes: Sociological Analyses*, edited by M. Foschi and E. Lawler. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

March 11-13 ***Spring Break!!!***

Tues, Mar 18 **Affect: *Why & how are emotions kept in check?***

Smith, Allen C. III and Sherryl Kleinman. 1989. "Managing Emotions in Medical School: Students' Contacts with the Living and the Dead." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 52:56-69.

Thurs, Mar 20 **Stereotypes, Prejudice, Discrimination: *How do cognitions underlie behavior toward others?***

Aronson, pp. 301-337 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 241-274)

Feagin, Joe R. 1991. "The Continuing Significance of Race: Anti-black Discrimination in Public Places. *American Sociological Review* 56:101-116.

Tues, Mar 25 **Stereotypes, Prejudice, Discrimination: *How can prejudice/discrimination be eliminated?***

Aronson, pp. 338-355 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 274-287)

Thurs, Mar 27 **EXAM 2**

### **GROUP PROCESSES**

Tues, Apr 1 **Attraction: *How do relationships develop?***

Aronson, pp. 357-403 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 289-327)

Adler, Patricia A. and Peter Adler. 1995. "Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in Preadolescent Cliques." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 58:145-162.

Thurs, Apr 3 **Attraction Dynamics: *How is interaction affected by attraction in groups?***

Aronson, pp. 13-47 (9<sup>th</sup> pp. 11-38)

**(OPTIONAL: Last day to turn in paper drafts)**

Tues, Apr 8 **Structure of Relationships – Status: *How do status differences affect interaction?***

Michener, H.A. and J. DeLamater. 1999. *Social Psychology*. ("Group Structure and Interaction," pp. 336-348). San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace.

Thurs, Apr 10 **Structure of Relationships – Status: *How can we alter status-based interaction patterns?***

Carli, Linda L. 1990. Gender, Language, and Influence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59:941-951.

Tues, Apr 15 **Structure of Relationships – Power: *What constitutes power and power use?***

Kanter, Rosabeth. 1977. *Men and Women of the Corporation*. ("Power," pp. 164-173). New York: Basic Books.

Thurs, Apr 17 **Structure of Relationships – Power: *How does power engender conflict in bargaining?***

***Papers DUE!!!***

Tues, Apr 22 **Evaluating Relationships: *When is a relationship fair?***

Hegtvedt, Karen A. 1994. "Justice." Pp. 177-204 in *Group Processes: Sociological Analyses*, edited by M. Foschi and E. Lawler. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Thurs, Apr 24 **Evaluating Relationships: *How do people respond to injustice?***

Hochschild, Arlie. 1989. *The Second Shift*. (Pp. 37-55). New York: Penguin.

Fri, May 2 **EXAM 3** (8:30- 11:00 a.m.)