SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY – PSYC 231-DL
FALL 2018 SYLLABUS

Instructor: Elisa Torres
Office: David King Hall 3064
Office Hours: By appointment

Day/Time: Distance Learning (online)
Email: etorre@masonlive.gmu.edu


OVERVIEW: This course provides students with a survey of the topics covering the social bases of behavior. Social psychology is the scientific study of how people think about one another, influence one another, and relate to one another. We will examine some of the historical and philosophical foundations of social psychology, as well as theories and models of various social phenomena. Through text reading, lectures, writing assignments, and exams, you will learn about empirical studies of these phenomena, understand how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors, and think about applications of that research to your life. This course is part of the social and behavioral sciences general education core. Accordingly, this course will have the following learning outcomes:

- Recognize and recall key concepts, terminology, principles or theories within the field
- Describe and explain methodological approaches used in social psychological research
- Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles, or theories to your life

COURSE STRUCTURE: This is an online course, as such, this class will be broken up into four quarter periods. During each period, there will be a series of follow-along video lectures, two required discussion board posts, and an exam. For two of the periods, there will also be a short paper assignment.

TECHNOLOGY: For this course you will use Blackboard (https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu) to facilitate discussions and materials exchange this semester. Students are encouraged to post whatever questions, answers, tips, issues, problems, suggestions, whatever, as often as they like throughout the semester.

OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS VIA GMU E-MAIL: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.
HONOR CODE: As the instructor for the course, I reserve “the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an Honor Code violation.” Violations of the honor code include (but are not limited to) lying, cheating, plagiarism, as well as turning in or accepting credit for work that is not yours. For more information, go to www.gmu.edu/catalog/9798/honorcod.html.

CANCELATIONS: Any class cancelations (other than Mason closures for snow days, etc.) will be sent to students via email.

Other Important Dates
- Last day to add - all individualized section forms due: September 4
- Final Drop Deadline with no tuition penalty: September 9
- Self Withdrawal Period 100% Liability: September 10-30
- Selective Withdrawal Period: October 1-26
- Last day of classes: December 8
- Reading Day: December 10-11
- Exam Period: December 12-19

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please email me and contact the Disability Resource Office (703-993-2474). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

GRADING:
- INTRODUCTORY VIDEO (5%): Within the first week of class you are to submit a short introductory video that will be viewed by just the professor regarding course goals and what topics you are most looking forward to covering. This information will guide course material throughout the semester. Submitting this video counts towards 5% of your final grade.
- EXAMS (45%): There will be four closed book exams in this course. Each exam will be made up of multiple-choice questions. These exams will be given using the Respondus Lockdown browser. The lowest of the four exams will be dropped when computing the final average. Each of the three exams will be worth 15% of your final grade.
- REACTION PAPERS (30%): One of the learning outcomes for this course is to apply the concepts of social psychology to your life. Accordingly, one component of your course grade will be based on the completion of reaction papers where you will use your knowledge of social psychological principals such as dissonance, attitudes, social influence, and scientific methodology to answer the prompts below. Reaction Papers #1 and #2 should not be longer than 4 double spaced pages (1” margins), Times New Roman 12-point font. Please review your paper for grammatical and spelling errors. Note that points will be deducted for major errors in formatting and/or grammar/spelling. See below for abbreviated synopsis of these papers.

  Reaction Paper #1 (15%): In this first paper, you will violate a social norm of your choosing. In the paper you must 1) describe your norm violation, 2) report others’ reactions, and 3) discuss relevant psychological principles (minimum 2 principles).
**Reaction Paper #2 (15%)**: In this second paper, the focus will be on social media sites. Please provide a well thought out discussion on how psychological principles are evidenced on social media sites (minimum 2 principles).

**DISCUSSION BOARD POSTS (20%)**: To facilitate discussion in this course and encourage thoughtful reactions to the course content, you will be required to submit two discussion board questions AND answer two other student’s questions. Make sure your questions are appropriate and relate to a topic in the quarter. Your answer will need to be **three full sentences at minimum**. Extra credit will be provided of .25 points on the final average for answers that are well sourced responses (e.g., provide a citation to a peer reviewed journal). The discussion board posts are worth 20% of your grade.

**LATE WORK**: All work is expected to be turned in on time. For every day that an assignment is late, 10 points will be deducted from the possible grade. **After a week, late assignments will not be accepted.**

**GRADING DISPUTES**: Grades will be posted on blackboard, and you will be notified when grades are up. Once grades are posted, you will have a week to contact me if you feel that your grade is incorrect. After that point, there will be no changes to the grades on blackboard.

**GRADING BREAKDOWN**:
- Introductory Video: 5%
- Exams: 45% (15% for each exam – lowest will be dropped)
- Reaction Paper #1: 15%
- Reaction Paper #2: 15%
- Discussion Board Posts: 20%

**LETTER GRADE**: Based on the percentages that you receive on your exams and project deliverables, your final letter grade will be calculated using the following:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 – 93</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>92 - 90</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>B</td>
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**EXTRA CREDIT**: You may earn 3 percent of extra credit (added to your final grade) by participating in 3 hours of research experiments. You can sign up for the research studies through the SONA system. Please choose only those studies that pertain broadly to topics related to social psychology. You may ask me if a particular topic fits. Other extra credit opportunities may be provided throughout the semester.
I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus and will give students ample notice to any changes. We may take more or less time to cover certain material than is allocated on the schedule.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

**Quarter 1 (8/27-9/29)**
Video lecture topics (Ch 1-4): Introduction, methodology, social cognition, and social perception
Introductory video due by September 1st, 11:59 PM
Blackboard questions (2) due by September 22nd, 11:59 PM
Blackboard answers (2) due by September 29th, 11:59 PM
Exam I due by September 29th, 11:59 PM

**Quarter 2 (10/1-10/27)**
Video lecture topics (Ch 6-8): Attitudes and attitude change, conformity, self-justification
Reaction paper #1 due by October 13th, 11:59 PM
Blackboard questions (2) due by October 20th, 11:59 PM
Blackboard answers (2) due by October 27th, 11:59 PM
Exam II due by October 27th, 11:59 PM

**Quarter 3 (10/29-11/24)**
Video lecture topics (Ch 9-11): Group processes, interpersonal attraction, prosocial behavior
Reaction paper #2 due by November 10th, 11:59 PM
Blackboard questions due by November 17th, 11:59 PM
Blackboard answers due by November 24th, 11:59 PM
Exam III due by November 24th, 11:59 PM

**Quarter 4 (11/26-12/15)**
Video lecture topics (Ch 12 & 13): Aggression, prejudice
Blackboard questions due by December 8th, 11:59 PM
Blackboard answers due by December 15th, 11:59 PM
Exam IV (cumulative) due by December 15th, 11:59 PM