

PSYC 231
Social Psychology
Spring 2021

Time: Mondays 2:00 PM – 4:40 PM

Location : TBA

Instructor: Vias C. Nicolaides, Ph. D.

Instructor E-mail: vnicolai@gmu.edu

Instructor Office hours: G 669

R 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

and by appointment

Course Overview:

This course provides students with a survey of the topics covering the social bases of behavior. We will examine some of the historical and philosophical foundations of social psychology, as well as theories and models of various social phenomena. We will also discuss empirical studies of these phenomena. This course is part of the social and behavioral sciences general education core. Accordingly, this course will have the following learning outcomes:

- Demonstrate understanding of key concepts, terminology, principles or theories within the field;
- Demonstrate understanding of methodological approaches appropriate to the field;
- Identify, evaluate and properly cite resources appropriate to the field, such as audio/visual/online/print materials, or artifacts;
- Explain how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors as appropriate to the field; and
- Use appropriate methods to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles, or theories to significant issues.

Recommended Text: Aronson, E., Wilson, T.D., & Akert, R.M., & Sommers, S. R. (2019). Social psychology (10th ed). Boston: Pearson. Print edition ISBN-13: 978-0-13-464128-7

Throughout the semester the instructor will also assign readings which will be posted on blackboard.

Grading: The final grade will consist of the following weighted components:

In-class Exams (best of 3 out of 4)	300 points
Social Psychology Project Paper	100 points
Social Psychology Project Presentation	64 points
Social Psychology Research Article Review	100 points
Total	564 points

Your final grade for the course will depend on the total points you earn by the end of the term. Your total points (out of 500) will be converted to 1000 points and the below guidelines will be followed for assigning grades:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Points
970 and above	A+	4.0
940 – 969 points	A	4.0
900 – 939 points	A-	3.7
870 – 899 points	B+	3.3
840 – 869 points	B	3.0

800 – 839 points	B-	2.7
770 – 799 points	C+	2.3
730 – 769 points	C	2.0
700 – 729 points	C-	1.7
600 – 699 points	D	1.0
Below 600 points	F	0.0

In-Class Exams: There will be 4 exams administered throughout the semester. Exam material will include concepts covered in class (lecture, discussion, and activities) and the assigned textbook readings. You will be responsible for basic definitions, research findings, theory, and applications of social psychology to everyday life. The final in-class exam grade will be based on only 3 of the 4 exams (i.e., I will drop the lowest exam score). Because I will drop the lowest exam grade, it means that there are absolutely NO make-up exams.

Social Psychology Project: Each of you will select one out of three offered project options, execute it, write up a short report, and present it in class. Your project must be approved in advance by the Professor, and no variation on your proposed project is allowed. A two-page written review of the project will be presented to the class and will be handed in one week BEFORE the last day of class.

Social Psychology Research Article Review: Students will select an academic journal article that pertains to an area of social psychology and review it in writing. Your choice of a journal article should be first approved by your professor. More details about this assignment will be uploaded on Blackboard.

Technology expectations: All students are expected to maintain and regularly access their Mason e-mail accounts. If you are having your Mason mail forwarded to another account, please ensure that your Mason account doesn't exceed the assigned limit, causing mail to bounce back to the sender.

Attendance and decorum: Class attendance is not recorded, but it is important for students who want to do well to be in class, prepared, and attentive. In addition to other important information, extra credit opportunities may be announced in class and may often consist of in-class participation. Preparation for class includes completing readings and coming to class ready to discuss interesting topics. Lectures and debates will be more interesting and more meaningful for students who have done the reading in advance. In order to be attentive, you should not engage in any multi-tasking activities during class – that means no texting, e-mail, web surfing, doing homework for other classes, etc. Please turn off all cell phones and other potential sources of disruption at the start of class. During class, laptops may only be used for taking notes. If you must arrive late or leave early, please do so as quietly as possible and be considerate of your classmates by sitting near an exit.

Disability accommodations: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me early in the semester. If you have not already done so, contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Please keep in mind that it might not be possible to grant last-minute requests for accommodations, so it is important to make all arrangements well before the date when the accommodation is needed.

Academic Resource Center: The Academic Resource Center, GMUK is in the business of looking at your papers and problems to improve your academic achievement in the area of Writing, Mathematics, Accounting, Statistics, and Economics. You are invited to utilize the faculty and student tutor services at a variety of stages

in your academic activities, checking to see that your project specifically meets the directions specified by your instructor. While tutors are helping you in your writing or projects, they do help you become conscious of particular error patterns that emerge in your work.

For more information, please contact Professor Eunmee Lee, director of the Academic Resource Center (elee45@gmu.edu, office #638).

Honor code: All students are expected to be familiar with, and abide by, the University Honor Code. As required by the Honor Code, all suspected violations will be reported. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

Important dates: **Last Day to Add Classes: March 2, 2021/Final Drop Deadline: March 15, 2021**

Enrollment: Every student is responsible for verifying correct enrollment. Graded work will not be returned to students who are not officially enrolled.

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."

Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and its content. Any changes will be announced orally and in writing.

COVID 19 Considerations: In the interest of everyone's safety, students and faculty must follow these guidelines during the Spring 2021 semester.

1. Use the basement entrance to enter and exit Mason's building. Your temperature will be screened each time you enter the building. Allow additional time before class to complete the entrance screening procedure. Carry your student ID card with you at all times and be ready to show it when you enter and exit the building. Do not prop doors or let others enter the building through doors on the ground floor.
2. Wear a face mask at all times. Remain 6 feet apart from others. Clean your seat and desk space with disinfectant wipes before you begin class. Use hand sanitizer regularly, and avoid shaking hands or other forms of physical contact. Do not share pens, pencils or other personal items. Limit your use of the elevators, and use stairs to travel between floors of the building. Students are expected to purchase their own masks for personal use. Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom.
3. Classrooms are marked to indicate appropriate seating to allow for social distancing. Only sit in allowable seats, and maintain current set-up of classroom furniture. If you are asked to re-arrange classroom furniture by your professor for in-class exercises, return furniture to its original position when you are finished.
4. Observe these rules at all times during the class period and while in Mason's building or other public areas of the campus. This includes during class breaks, in small group work (in or out of class), meetings with your professors during office hours, tutoring sessions at the Academic Resource Center, socializing in common areas, or any other activities on campus.
5. Make sure windows and doors remain open during the class period to promote circulation of outside air. Classrooms without windows have mechanical systems that vent air, but doors should be kept open at all times.

6. The safest option for studying is to study alone in your dorm room or at home. If you must study in the building, alone or in groups, observe these rules at all times.
7. All faculty and students must abide by these rules in the classroom. If you see others who are not observing the rules outside the classroom, you may report this to your instructor, student affairs or academic affairs.
8. Do not enter the Mason building or come to class if you have symptoms such as fever, chills, sore throat, persistent cough, shortness of breath or other respiratory difficulties. If you must miss class for this reason, send an email immediately to the professor prior to the beginning of class. You will not be penalized for missing class for this reason, but you may be asked to provide documentation that you sought medical diagnosis or treatment. You are responsible for making up any missed assignments or tests as a result of your absence.
9. Students who come to class with visible signs of illness will be asked to leave the classroom immediately and seek assistance from the IGC Health Clinic. Faculty will report your name and symptoms to the Office of Student Affairs (mksa@gmu.edu) to confirm that you have sought medical assistance.
10. Failure to comply with any of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action through the Student Code of Conduct.

Date	Tentative Topics
Week 1 22/2	Syllabus review and Chapter 1 - Introduction to Social Psychology
Week 2 1/3	Chapter 2- Methodology
Week 3 8/3	Chapter 3-Social Cognition
Week 4 15/3	EXAM 1
Week 5 22/3	Chapter 4-Social Perception
Week 6 9/3	Chapter 5 & 6 - The Self and the need to justify our actions
Week 7 5/4	Chapter 7 – Attitudes & Attitude Change
Week 8 12/4	Chapter 8-Conformity
Week 9 19/4	EXAM 2
Week 10 26/4	Chapter 9-Group Processes
Week 11 3/5	Spring Recess (No Classes)
Week 12 10/5	Chapter 11-Prosocial Behavior
Week 13 17/5	EXAM 3
Week 14 24/5	Chapter 12-Aggression/Chapter 13-Prejudice
Week 15 31/5	Student Presentations
TBA	FINAL EXAM DAY