**PSYC 231: Social Psychology, DL1 (3 credits)**

**Spring 2022**

**Instructor:** Dr. Amanda Gordon

**Email:** agordon8@gmu.edu

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome! This course offers an introduction to social psychology, the scientific examination of how humans interact and influence one another. Social psychologists systematically study how social contact affects perceptions, attitudes, and behavior. Encompassing topics like persuasion, conformity, prejudice, aggression, and attraction, this course encourages analytical observation of social interaction and understanding of its psychological research.

Please note: This course is **completely** online, which means a great deal of responsibility rests on each student’s shoulders. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

**BLACKBOARD LOGIN INSTRUCTIONS**

Access to [MyMason](https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/ultra/institution-page) and GMU email are required to participate successfully in this course. Click on the link for Psyc 231-DL1. The class website in Blackboard will contain access to videos, assignments, the discussion board, exams, and other course resources. All course activities will take place in Blackboard (including access to REVEL), so it is important to login and begin to explore the various components in the first days of the semester. Please make sure to update your computer and prepare yourself to begin using the online format BEFORE the first day of class. Check the [IT Support Center website](https://its.gmu.edu/find-a-service/). Navigate to the [Student Support page](https://its.gmu.edu/article-categories/teaching-learning/blackboard/tl-s/) for help and information about Blackboard. In the menu bar to the left you will find all the tools you need to become familiar with for this course. Take time to learn each! Make sure you run a system check a few days before class. If you aren’t already, become familiar with the attributes of Blackboard and online learning.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

Pearson REVEL

Social Psychology, 10e

By Aronson, Wilson, & Sommers

While access to REVEL is required, the printed version of this text is optional. For help on how to get registered, please watch the video and review the PowerPoint slides that I have included on Blackboard under “REVEL and eText.” Additionally, there will be several Zoom sessions available for those who need help getting registered. These can also be found on Blackboard under “REVEL and eText.”

There are several tools (flashcards, e-text, audio text, etc.) available to you through the Pearson account to use throughout this course. These should all be available to you through the course once you complete the necessary steps with Pearson. In addition to these tools, I will also post PowerPoint slides (with videos) under “Chapter Slides and Additional Readings” on Blackboard each week. I will include these in case it is helpful for you to see important bullet points for each chapter.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

You will develop the following skills:

1. Generate hypotheses about human behavior in social situations.
2. Design ways to test their hypotheses about human behavior.
3. Describe the ways in which the human brain uses automatic pilot thinking to make everyday life easier.
4. Synthesize information from social psychological research about how the use of automatic pilot thinking leads to conformity, prejudice, and other group processes.
5. Describe the ways in which we can use high effort thinking to improve our understanding of human behavior in social contexts.
6. Use the concepts learned in class to analyze and critically examine our own behavior in everyday life.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

* High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard’s supported browsers, [go here](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers).

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices, [go here](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems).

* Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
* Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
* The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
	+ [Adobe Acrobat Reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
	+ [Windows Media Player](https://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/)
	+ [Apple Quick Time Player](https://support.apple.com/kb/DL837?locale=en_US)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Participation (30 points).** You are expected to participate in weekly writing activities within REVEL, as well as section and chapter quizzes.“Shared Writing” assignments within REVEL chapters will require you to respond to a writing prompt and respond to your classmates’ responses. You will also see journal opportunities within REVEL chapters. Think of these as a form of guided note-taking (not to be confused with the 5 journal entries that you will submit in Blackboard - see below for more details). Your participation points in REVEL will be weighted .30 of overall course grade.

**Weekly Reflections (10 total) (30 points).** Weekly reflections on Blackboard will be completed via the Discussion Board, which means they will be available for your classmates to read. They will be more in-depth than the “Shared Writing” assignments via REVEL. Each student is expected to post a reflection in 10 different discussion forums and reply to another student’s reflection within that forum. Each post with reply is worth 3 points, for a total of 30 points that will be factored directly into the overall grade. These reflections will be completed and submitted on Blackboard by 11:59pm the Sunday they are due. Please note that original posts are due on Saturdays by 11:59pm to allow your classmates enough time to respond.

**Journaling Assignments (5 total entries) (10 points).** This experience in Blackboard is designed to help you to gain a better understanding of how social psychology applies to your own life and will not be available for your classmates to read. These journal entries do not need to be of an intimate nature, but should reflect your improved understanding of the various aspects of social psychology. Prompts will be posted to Blackboard. These journal entries will be completed and submitted on Blackboard by 11:59pm the Sunday they are due.

**Midterm Exam (15 points).** This timed exam on Blackboard will be composed of 50 multiple-choice questions and will cover Chapters 1-7 in textbook, plus any additional readings. It will be graded 0-100 points and weighted .15 of overall course grade.

**Final Exam (15 points).** This timed exam on Blackboard will be composed of 50 multiple-choice questions and will cover Chapters 8-13 in textbook, plus any additional readings. It will be graded 0-100 points and weighted .15 of overall course grade.

**Extra Credit**

For extra credit, you may find something in the news that is relevant to the materials in one of the chapters, and write a one page description about how this news item relates to a concept discussed in the textbook. It is worth up to **five points**. Your one page description, if you choose to do it, needs to be emailed to me by Sunday, May 15th at 11:59pm.

Please reach out to me in advance if you are having trouble meeting the course requirements or if unforeseen circumstances arise that impact your ability to participate in class.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: assignments in REVEL open every Sunday for the upcoming week, while assignments in Blackboard open every Monday for the upcoming week.**

[**\*5 Tips for Using Revel to Succeed in This Course\***](https://youtu.be/5hD3Eo1IQPk)

1. Quizzes can help you learn more as you read.
2. Track your performance in REVEL throughout the semester.
3. Highlighting important sections in the chapter will allow you to easily refer to them later on in the semester. Be on the lookout for any **BLUE** highlights, as these are highlights or notes coming from me, your instructor!
4. You may want to try listening to the audio while you read.
5. If you forget your login information, go to the [​Forgot Username or Password](https://piapi.openclass.com/v1/piapi/login/forgotusernamepasswordjsp?client_id=NimtqV7BcT00BM9xOXCQUFJYwF3RzEIk&login_success_url=https://console.pearson.com/signin) link to retrieve your username or reset your password. Then, enter your email address and click continue. Check your email account for an email with the subject, "Pearson Username/Password Request." The message will contain all of the usernames that are found for that email address. Choose one account to use with REVEL.

**GRADING SCALE**

Grades will be calculated using the points described in the course requirements section above. They will be assigned as follows: 97-100% = A+; 93-96% = A; 90-92% = A-; 87-89% = B+; 83-86% = B; 80-82% = B-; 77-79% = C+; 73-76% = C; 70-72%=C-; 65-69% = D; below 65% = F.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

1. **Late Assignments**: Late assignments in Blackboard (weekly reflections, journal entries) will be marked down by 15% each day and will not be accepted after **three days.** These terms are negotiable only in the case of documented emergencies and, if possible, with **advance notice.** Work with me… the more I know, the more I can help you. Late assignments in REVEL (section quizzes, shared writing, chapter quizzes) will be marked down by 50%. LATE EXAMS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.
2. **The Honor Code:** Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the [GMU Honor System and Code](http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm). Students are encouraged to study together as much as possible throughout the course, however, no assistance, sharing of information, or discussion of exam items or answers between students may take place. For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to GMU procedures. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student’s. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.
3. Students must follow the university policy for **Responsible Use of Computing.**
4. **Enrollment:** Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes (available from the Registrar's Website: registrar.gmu.edu). After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons. Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.
5. **Student Services:** The University provides a range of services to help you succeed academically and you should make use of these if you think they could benefit you. I also invite you to speak to me (the earlier the better).
6. **Official Communications via GMU Email:** 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 email account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. As a tip, please include your G-number and the course section in the subject of the email in all email correspondences with all instructors.
7. **Instructor-Student Communication:** The instructor is available by email throughout the entire session. You may email with questions, comments, and/or concerns. Throughout the semester, all emails will be answered within two business (i.e., M-F) days – although responses will usually come within one business day, please allow two business days or 48 hours. If I will be away from email for more than one day, I will post an announcement on Blackboard.
8. Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact **Counseling & Psychological Services** (3129 Student Union Building I, http://caps.gmu.edu/) at 993-2380 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything.
9. **Disability Help:** Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit https://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474
10. The George Mason University **Writing Center** staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. University Writing Center: Robinson Hall Room A114, 703-993-1200. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.
11. **Diversity:** George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth. George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard, and respected.
12. **Title IX Statement:** Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.
13. **Religious Holidays:** A list of religious holidays is available on the University Life Calendar page. See the Religious Holiday Calendar. Any student whose religious observance conflicts with a scheduled course activity must contact the Instructor at least 2 weeks in advance of the conflict date in order to make alternative arrangements.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Topic**  | **Reading /Participation in REVEL** | **What’s Due in BB?**  |
| 1 | 1/24-1/30 | Introducing Social Psychology | Chapter 1:1.1: Defining Social Psychology* **Section Quiz**

1.2: The Power of the Situation* **Section Quiz**

1.3: Where Construals Come From: Basic Human Motives* **Section Quiz**

1.4: Why Study Social Psychology?Summary and Key Terms: Introducing Social Psychology* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 1** due (initial posts due 1/29 end of day)**Journal entry 1** due |
| 2 | 1/31-2/6 | Methodology: How Social Scientists Do Research | Chapter 2:2.1: Social Psychology: An Empirical Science* **Section Quiz**

2.2: Research Designs* **Section Quiz**

2.3: New Frontiers in Social Psychological Research* **Section Quiz**

2.4: Ethical Issues in Social Psychology* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Methodology: How Social Psychologists Do Research* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 2** due (initial posts due 2/5 end of day) |
| 3 | 2/7-2/13 | Social Cognition: How We Think About The Social World | Chapter 3:3.1: On Automatic Pilot: Low-Effort Thinking* **Section Quiz**

3.2: Types of Automatic Thinking* **Section Quiz**

3.3: Cultural Differences in Social Cognition* **Section Quiz**

3.4: Controlled Social Cognition: High-Effort Thinking* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Social Cognition: How We Think About the Social World* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Journal entry 2** due |
| 4 | 2/14-2/20 | Social Perception: How We Come To Understand Other People | Chapter 4:4.1: Nonverbal Communication* **Section Quiz**

4.2: First Impressions: Quick But Long-Lasting* **Section Quiz**

4.3: Causal Attribution: Answering the "Why" Question* **Section Quiz**

4.4: Culture and Social Perception* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Social Perception: How We Come to Understand Other People* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 3** due (initial posts due 2/19 end of day) |
| 5 | 2/21-2/27 | The Self: Understanding Ourselves In A Social Context | Chapter 5:5.1: The Origins and Nature of the Self-Concept* **Section Quiz**

5.2: Self-Knowledge* **Section Quiz**

5.3: Self-Control: The Executive Function of the Self* **Section Quiz**

5.4: Impression Management: All the World’s a Stage* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: The Self: Understanding Ourselves in a Social Context* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 4** due (initial posts due 2/26 end of day) |
| 6 | 2/28-3/6 | Cognitive Dissonance And The Need To Protect Our Self-Esteem | Chapter 6:6.1: The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance: Protecting Our Self-Esteem* **Section Quiz**

6.2: Advances and Extensions of Cognitive Dissonance Theory* **Section Quiz**

6.3: Some Concluding Thoughts on Dissonance and Self-Esteem* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Cognitive Dissonance and the Need to Protect Our Self-Esteem* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 5** due (initial post due 3/5 end of day) |
| 7 | 3/7-3/13 | Attitudes And Attitude Change: Influencing Thoughts And Feelings | Chapter 7:7.1: The Nature and Origin of Attitudes* **Section Quiz**

7.2: When Do Attitudes Predict Behavior?* **Section Quiz**

7.3: How Do Attitudes Change?* **Section Quiz**

7.4: The Power of Advertising* **Section Quiz**

7.5: Resisting Persuasive Messages* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Attitudes and Attitude Change: Influencing Thoughts and Feelings* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **MIDTERM EXAM** |
| 8 | 3/14-3/20 | --- | --- | **Spring Break!!** |
| 9 | 3/21-3/27 | Conformity And Obedience: Influencing Behavior | Chapter 8:8.1: Conformity: When and Why* **Section Quiz**

8.2: Informational Social Influence: The Need to Know What’s “Right”* **Section Quiz**

8.3: Normative Social Influence: The Need to Be Accepted* **Section Quiz**

8.4: Conformity Tactics* **Section Quiz**

8.5: Obedience to Authority* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Conformity and Obedience: Influencing Behavior* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 6** due (initial posts due 3/26 end of day)**Journal entry 3** due |
| 10 | 3/28-4/3 | Group Processes: Influence In Social Groups | Chapter 9:9.1: What Is a Group?* **Section Quiz**

9.2: Individual Behavior in a Group Setting* **Section Quiz**

9.3: Group Decisions: Are Two (or More) Heads Better Than One?* **Section Quiz**

9.4: Conflict and Cooperation* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Group Processes: Influence in Social Groups* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Journal entry 4** due |
| 11 | 4/4-4/10 | Attraction And Relationships: From Initial Impressions To Long-Term Intimacy | Chapter 10:10.1: What Predicts Attraction?* **Section Quiz**

10.2: Making Connections in the Digital World* **Section Quiz**

10.3: Love and Close Relationships* **Section Quiz**

10.4: Assessing Relationships: Satisfaction and Breaking Up* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Attraction and Relationships: From Initial Impressions to Long-Term Intimacy* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 7** due (initial posts due 4/9 end of day) |
| 12 | 4/11-4/17 | Prosocial Behavior: Why Do People Help? | Chapter 11:11.1: Basic Motives Underlying Prosocial Behavior: Why Do People Help?* **Section Quiz**

11.2: Personal Qualities and Prosocial Behavior: Why Do Some People Help More Than Others?* **Section Quiz**

11.3: Situational Determinants of Prosocial Behavior: When Will People Help?* **Section Quiz**

11.4: How Can Helping Be Increased?* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Prosocial Behavior: Why Do People Help?* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 8** due (initial posts due 4/16 end of day) |
| 13 | 4/18-4/24 | Aggression: Why Do We Hurt Other People? Can We Prevent It? | Chapter 12:12.1: Is Aggression Innate, Learned, or Optional?* **Section Quiz**

12.2: Social Situations and Aggression* **Section Quiz**

12.3: Violence and the Media* **Section Quiz**

12.4: How to Decrease Aggression* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Aggression: Why Do We Hurt Other People? Can We Prevent It?* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 9** due (initial posts due 4/23 end of day) |
| 14 | 4/25-5/1 | Prejudice: Causes, Consequences, And Cures | Chapter 13:13.1: Defining Prejudice* **Section Quiz**

13.2: Detecting Hidden Prejudices* **Section Quiz**

13.3: The Effects of Prejudice on the Victim* **Section Quiz**

13.4: Causes of Prejudice* **Section Quiz**

13.5: Reducing Prejudice* **Section Quiz**

Summary and Key Terms: Prejudice: Causes, Consequences, and Cures* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Weekly reflection 10** due (initial posts due 4/30 end of day) |
| 15 | 5/2-5/8 | Using Social Psychology to Achieve A Sustainable FutureSocial Psychology And HealthSocial Psychology And The Law | Chapters SPA1, SPA2, and SPA3:SPA1.1: Applied Research in Social PsychologySPA1.2: Using Social Psychology to Achieve a Sustainable FutureSPA1.3: Happiness and a Sustainable LifestyleSummary and Key Terms: Using Social Psychology to Achieve a Sustainable and Happy Future* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**

SPA2.1: Stress and Human HealthSPA2.2: Coping with StressSPA2.3: Prevention: Promoting Healthier BehaviorSummary and Key Terms: Social Psychology and Health* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**

SPA3.1: Eyewitness TestimonySPA3.2: Juries: Group Processes in ActionSummary and Key Terms: Social Psychology and the Law* **Shared Writing**
* **Chapter Quiz**
 | **Journal entry 5** due |
| 16 | 5/9-5/15 | --- | --- | **FINAL EXAM** |

*The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and its content. Any changes will be announced in writing. If you are confused about a deadline, please let me know.*

Important Dates:

First day of Spring Classes: Monday September 24

Last day to add: Monday January 31

Last day to drop: Monday February 7

Unrestricted withdrawal period: Tuesday February 15 – Tuesday March 1

Spring Break: Monday March 14 – Sunday March 20

Reading Days: Monday May 9 and Tuesday May 10