CPSE 650: Advanced Social Psychology (Spring 2014)

Instructor: Timothy B. Smith
E-mail: tbs@byu.edu
Office: 340-N MCKB
Office phone: (801)422-1311

Days: Monday/Wednesday
Time: 11:00AM-1:50PM
Location: 238 MCKB
Office hours: T/Th 2-3PM, by appointment

Course Description
In this class, we critically examine theory, methodology, and research findings of social psychology through analysis of scholarly literature.

Course Overview
This course builds on students’ prior exposure to social psychology to help students analyze and evaluate scholarship at an advanced level. Students are expected to (1) understand and evaluate theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of social behavior, (2) evaluate and synthesize the findings of relevant empirical research, (3) develop and implement social psychology observations or experiments, and (4) use data and theory to interpret social behavior and thought.

Required Text

Course Readings
In addition to readings from the required textbook, 2-4 readings from classic and contemporary scholarly literature will be assigned each week. Readings must be completed before each class. Class members will be invited to distill points from the readings and share those with the class. Quizzes may be given in class. Please bring the assigned readings to class so that they can be referenced during discussions. Professional level knowledge and skill development, aims of this class, necessitate extensive reading and synthesis of readings.

Student Responsibilities
- Preparation for class and class activities
- Active class participation, including teaching classmates in order to learn more effectively
- Design and implement a social experiment or observational study relevant to class content
- Synthesize content during class meetings, retain that knowledge, and demonstrate that knowledge
- Produce a term paper on a topic covered in the class

Learning Outcomes
1. Demonstrated understanding of social psychology theory and research
2. Ability to accurately summarize research findings in social psychology
3. Skills necessary to evaluate social psychology variables through experimentation and/or observation
4. Ability to interpret social behavior and thought using social psychological theory and research data

Class Discussion
Questions enhance learning. Discussions help to distill key principles and work though complex issues. Willingness to take intellectual risks is a prerequisite for learning. Commit to engaging with others and learning from others, two essential components of social psychology.

Grading
Assignments, class participation, and the final grade will be scored according to the following scale:

A 94 - 100%  A- 90 - 93%  B+ 88 - 89%  B 83 - 87%  B- 80 - 82%  C+ 78-79%
C 73 - 77%  C- 70 - 72%  D+ 68 - 69%  D 63 - 67%  D- 60 - 62%  F <60%
Class Assignments:

- **Distillation Papers (3 points each; 11 x 3 = 33% of the grade):** Each week, generate a written synthesis of the required readings (1 page), such as bulleted points, controversies, and questions. This learning activity is explicitly intended to enhance class discussions and student retention of knowledge.

- **Additional Readings (1 point each; min. of 2, max. of 10 [up to 8% extra credit]):** Required readings cover broad issues. Hundreds of research manuscripts and theoretical critiques are available in the literature. Select optional readings from the list on the syllabus or from a reputable journal (i.e., searching on scholar.google.com or PsycINFO). In at least two class sessions, provide a brief oral summary of the main points from the article read.

- **Active Class Participation (15% of the grade):** Sharing information, asking questions, critiquing positions, etc. Class participation includes a brief oral summary of key points learned during the class that are shared during the final class meeting.

- **Term Paper (10% of the grade):** Students will write a paper on a topic covered in this class to demonstrate depth of understanding and integration of recent research findings (identified through searches of scholar.google.com or PsycINFO).

- **Social Observation or Experimentation, Group Activity (20% of grade):** In groups of three, design and carry out an observational study, survey, or social experiment that aligns with one of the topics covered in the required readings for the class period. Students will have at least 20 minutes during class to conduct the activity. Example activities will be described in class. The projects will be graded in terms of relevance to the social psychology variable, including research design and creativity (10%) and group contribution (10%), with the two group peers assigning that portion of the grade.

- **Final Exam (20% of the grade):** Students will provide responses to short essay questions covering class presentations, readings, and videos.

**Professional Courtesy**
Relationships entail courtesy. As everyone knows, electronic devices enrich our lives, but they can distract from our learning and convey a message of disrespect when used in social settings, including university classrooms. Please keep laptops closed and cell phones turned off during class. Class notes can be taken with pen and paper.

**Disclaimer**
Any changes made to this syllabus will be announced in class and distributed to all students.
Course Readings and Schedule


Additional Readings


Additional Readings


Additional Readings


Additional Readings


Additional Readings


Additional Readings


**Additional Readings**


**Additional Readings**


Additional Readings


or


Three other required class readings TBD.
PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education and pertains to admissions, academic and athletic programs, and university-sponsored activities. Title IX also prohibits sexual harassment of students by university employees, other students, and visitors to campus. If you encounter sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895 or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours), or http://www.ethicspoint.com; or contact the Honor Code Office at 801-422-2847.

Students With Disabilities:
Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD Office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.