

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Psychology 360
Fall 2021

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00 – 3:00 am, Thursdays 1:00– 2:00 pm, or by appointment

Course Description

Social psychology was defined by Gordon Allport as a discipline that attempts "to understand and explain how the thoughts, feeling, and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others." This course is designed to introduce some of the major theoretical and empirical areas of interest to social psychologists. We will survey a variety of theories and concepts within social psychology and examine evidence pertaining to social psychological theory. Among the topics we will consider are: the self, attitudes and attitude change, social perception and social influence, aggression, prejudice, and prosocial behavior. Course material will be conveyed through lectures, films, and reading, as well as group exercises and discussions.

Educational Goals

It is the goal of Grand Valley to provide students with the opportunity for a liberal education. Students who are pursuing a liberal education learn to think independently as they develop the skills of asking and pursuing questions, reflection and critical thinking. They also learn how to engage in dialogue with others, and to express themselves clearly both orally and in writing. Through your coursework in Social Psychology (PSY 360), you can especially develop your ability to think critically and to question what you see and hear within the academic environment and in everyday life. You will also have some opportunities to engage in dialogue in the classroom, to express yourself, to reflect on what you've read and learned in class, and to apply what you are learning to life outside the classroom. Thus, in addition to learning about social psychological theory and research findings, taking this course provides multiple ways to enhance your learning experience from a liberal education perspective.

Learning is not easy work. Just as physical exercise can be difficult and demanding, so can mental exercise. Studying at the university level needs to be challenging so that students have the chance to fully develop their intellectual capabilities. This does not mean that intellectual work at this level cannot also be enjoyable; the thrill of pushing beyond one's physical limits has a parallel in the intellectual realm. Learning to think more critically, to analyze, to craft an argument, and to articulate one's ideas, can be rewarding as well as challenging.

It is my expectation that students taking this class are interested in learning. You may have additional motivations for taking it; however, your experience in this class will be much more rewarding if learning is one of your primary goals. I am committed to making this an interesting, challenging, and informative course that should stimulate thought, questions, and discussion.

The learning objectives for this course are as follows. Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

Describe social psychological theories and concepts.

Evaluate and think critically about the theories and major findings in social psychology.

Explain the scientific method as it applies to social psychological phenomenon.

Explain how social psychological theories and concepts apply to people's experiences in everyday social life.

Reading

Required: Kassin, S. M., Fein, S., & Markus, H. (2021). Social Psychology, Eleventh Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

If you are interested in looking for a used copy of the tenth edition of the textbook, you are likely to be okay with that edition as well. There may be an occasional exam question that will come straight from the eleventh edition that you could miss as a result, but this should be a rare occurrence. Most questions will cover material that is in both the tenth and eleventh editions. You may also be lucky enough to find a used copy of the eleventh edition but, since it is a newer edition, those will be harder to find. Brand new, the tenth and eleventh editions should be about the same price, so it's advisable to opt for the eleventh edition if you're buying new.

The least expensive version of the eleventh edition of the textbook through the university bookstore comes with MindTap materials that are designed to help with studying. However, it is not required that you use these materials; they are OPTIONAL. They are available for your independent use and will not be graded or used to evaluate your performance in the class. In fact, I strongly recommend that you develop and use your own strategies for studying effectively. There are tips for studying effectively for this class on BB (see How to Study for Exams posted under Success in This Course).

You will benefit if you have completed the required reading before the first class of the week. Some familiarity with the reading material will be assumed during lectures and discussions. A schedule of topics and associated readings is included in this syllabus. Each week, on BB, you will find information about what is most important in a given chapter as well any sections of the chapter that are not required.

Course Requirements, Evaluation, and Grades

Students are expected to do all of the assigned reading and to attend all class sessions. Detailed notes should be taken during lectures and, **if absence is unavoidable, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from another student**. If you do need to miss class, I strongly suggest you attempt to obtain notes from two or three individuals. Films, group exercises and discussion are intended to facilitate learning in this course, and summary notes should also be taken on these activities. Exams and quizzes will cover all sources of information in the course. Students are generally expected to invest approximately 3 hours outside the classroom for every hour spent inside the classroom, and necessary additional time studying for exams.

Quizzes

Quizzes are designed to help you to gauge how well you know the material. Quiz questions will all be multiple-choice. They will be made available at 9:00 pm on Thursdays and you will have 24 hours (until 9:00 pm Friday) to complete each one. Quizzes will cover the week's textbook reading and lecture material. You will have 15 minutes to complete each quiz. To have the full allotted time, you must begin each quiz by 8:45 pm on Fridays. Each quiz will be worth 10 points and your 6 best quizzes will count toward your final grade. This means that you could certainly skip several of the quizzes, but it is in your best interest to use them as a tool to see how well you know the material. If you don't do as well as you'd like on a quiz, that's a heads-up that you need to study that topic more for the next exam. Quizzes will be completed online and can be found on BB under Assignments as soon as they are made available (9:00 pm Thursdays). They will be open book, but your time is limited so you don't want to rely too much on being able to look things up.

Exams during the semester

All exams for this course will be a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer/short essay questions. There will be three exams during the semester, prior to final exam week. The exams will be held in class

during regular, scheduled class times. The dates for each exam appear below and also on the attached schedule of topics. Each of these exams will be worth 40 points. There will be **no make up exams**. However, the lowest of these three exam scores will be dropped so **if you must miss an exam, the score for the missed exam is the one that will be dropped**. Thus, your final grade will be based in part on the two highest of your three exam scores (for a total of 80 possible points).

Exam 1: Tuesday, September 28

Exam 2: Thursday, October 28

Exam 3: Tuesday, November 30

Final exam (cumulative and mandatory)

There is a final exam for this course that will take place at the scheduled time during the final exam period. This exam will also be a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer/short essay questions. It will be worth 70 points toward your final grade.

Assignment

There will also be **one** brief assignment required during the semester. More information on this assignment will be provided in the coming weeks. Although you will **complete only one assignment**, there will be **three options** from which you can choose. For whatever assignment topic you choose, you will have the option of writing a two-page paper or recording a three-minute Flipgrid post. Each must be submitted on or before the relevant due date. This assignment will be worth 40 points toward your final grade. If you request to turn in a late assignment, and I agree to accept it, four points per day will be deducted from your score. Whichever assignment you choose to do, the assignment itself will be very short in length; however, assignments are expected to be **very high quality**. Each option will provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to apply the concepts you are learning in the class, to think critically about what you are learning, and to effectively and succinctly communicate your ideas in a well-crafted paper or recording.

Academic integrity

Working together with other students is very much encouraged in this class. It is often beneficial to study with others (after having reviewed the material independently), but you must complete quizzes and exams on your own without getting help from someone else. It can also be useful to talk with others about your assignment; however, the assignment you submit must represent **your own independent work**. Any sources on which you base your ideas, including lecture material and the textbook, should be **cited in your assignment**. It is not necessary to supply references for lectures or the textbook; however, if you choose to use any other sources, you must include a reference in addition to citing the source in your assignment. If you use a direct quote, you must cite the source. All cases of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism or cheating) will be dealt with accordingly and may result in failure of the course.

Final grades

It is possible to receive a total of 250 points on the exams, quizzes, and assignment for this course. The grading scale will be as follows:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Final Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Final Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Final Grade</u>
93 - 100	A	80 - 82	B-	68 - 69	D+
90 - 92	A-	78 - 79	C+	60 - 67	D
88 - 89	B+	73 - 77	C	below 60	F
83 - 87	B	70 - 72	C-		

Classroom Etiquette

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies>.

Out of consideration for everyone who is part of this class, please do everything in your power to **arrive to class on time**. Late arrivals are often disruptive to other students as well as to me. Moreover, coming late to class may mean you miss out on important announcements or overviews and introductions to the day's topic, and this may make it difficult for you to follow lecture or to get the most out of it. Please do not begin packing up to go until it is clear that class is done for the day. This can be as disruptive as arriving late.

On occasion, students complain that other students talk during lecture, making it difficult for people around them to hear. In my experience, the vast majority of students are very considerate this way; however, it only takes a couple of students to annoy many others. Please refrain from talking during lecture, including when I am responding to student questions. Also, please demonstrate respect for one another during class; it is often productive to express differences of opinion, but important do so in a civil and respectful way.

I strongly encourage people to ask questions in class, but **please raise your hand** or otherwise indicate that you have a question rather than calling it out. Please make sure your phone is turned off **before** class begins. Computers are definitely allowed in the classroom, but only for note-taking. Any other activities (e.g., surfing the web, checking your e-mail) are distracting to other students, and if you do anything other than note-taking, you will no longer be able to bring your computer to class. Computers will be banned for everyone if there are three breaches of this "note-taking only" policy.

Responding to the Changing COVID Landscape

Grand Valley staff, students and faculty are required to be vaccinated by September 30. Now that the FDA has officially approved one of the vaccines, we hopefully will see an increase in vaccination rates immediately. As a result, all of us will be less likely to be infected and transmit the virus; and, the likelihood of additional variants will also be reduced.

The following paragraph is a general GVSU statement specifically about face masks:

Face coverings, such as masks, are required to be worn in the classroom. Students who have forgotten their face coverings may get a disposable mask at a campus office. The evidence is clear that [face coverings are a crucial part of keeping coronavirus at bay](#) and [support the university's commitment to providing all members of its community with an inclusive living and learning environment with equitable opportunities for success](#). [GVSU's policy on face coverings](#) is posted on the Lakers Together web site. Students who are not able to wear a face covering due to a medical condition should [contact Disability Support Services \(DSR\)](#) to discuss their individual situation.

Regarding this class specifically, this syllabus describes the ideal situation of a normal semester in which we can hold classes in person and social distancing is not a necessary part of our daily lives. However, as we all know from recent experience, the COVID landscape is unpredictable and in flux. It may be the case that we will need to alter our plans somewhat due to COVID, particularly if the Delta, or some other, variant becomes increasingly problematic. Should it be necessary to shift to an online format, we will be able to do that and continue to function with as little disruption as possible. For example, I would then be posting lecture material online and exams would take place online. Whatever comes our way, we will adjust accordingly.

One thing we have all learned from the COVID experience is that we are resilient and able to respond to change in ways that once would have seemed impossible. Rest assured that I will have our collective health and safety in mind throughout the semester and that we will be able to respond effectively together to whatever this semester brings. I am looking forward to getting to know each of you and to a healthy and productive semester together. And I hope you're able to see all kinds of connections between the material you'll be learning about in the class and the life you live outside of the classroom.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

WEEK OF:	TOPIC & CHAPTER
August 31:	Introduction to course; What is Social Psychology? (Chapter 1)
September 7:	Methods in Social Psychology (Chapter 2)
September 14:	The Self (Chapter 3)
September 21:	Social Perception and Social Cognition (Chapter 4)
September 28:	Exam on Tuesday, September 28; Attitudes (Chapter 6)
October 5:	Persuasion and Attitude Change (Chapter 6)
October 12:	Social Influence (Chapter 7)
October 19:	Social Influence, continued; Groups (Chapter 8)
October 26:	No class on Tuesday (Fall break); Exam on Thursday, October 28
November 2:	Gender (Chapter 5)
November 9:	Prejudice and Discrimination (Chapter 5)
November 16:	Prejudice and Discrimination, continued; Aggression (Chapter 11);
November 23:	Prosocial Behavior (Chapter 10) No class on Thursday (Thanksgiving)
November 30:	Exam on Tuesday, November 30; Close Relationships (Chapter 9)
December 7:	Preparation for final exam

FINAL EXAM: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 10:00 AM - 11:50 AM