

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology 360

Fall 2020

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Class Time: M/W/F 10:00 – 10:50

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 the reading, online lectures and films.

Educational Goals

It is the goal of Grand Valley to provide students with the opportunity for a liberal education. According to the Grand Valley Vision, Mission, and Values Statement, students who are pursuing a liberal education “learn to think for themselves as they develop the skills of inquiry, reflection, critical analysis, dialogue, and expression.” While not all of these skills are intentionally targeted in each class you take, each class will help you focus on one or more of these skills. Through your coursework in Social Psychology (PSY 360), you can, in particular, develop your ability to think critically and to question what you see and hear within the academic environment and in everyday life. Much of what you learn in this course may seem like common sense, though you’ll need to remember that it’s still important to conduct research to ensure that we’re not just making assumptions based on what we think of as common sense. Also, there are some very interesting counterintuitive findings that have come out of social psychological research that should remind you that sometimes things are not at all what we’d predict based simply on common sense. One of the cool things about social psychology is that it is so applicable to our lives outside the classroom or, in this case, outside of the online learning situation. You will have opportunities 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 advanced 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.

Learning online comes with its own set of advantages and challenges. As a student you have more flexibility, but you also need to be self-motivated and self-disciplined. Grand Valley’s website has online resources (see links below) to help you decide whether online learning is a good fit for you and to determine whether your current technology meets requirements for online courses. The first link also provides you with resources and advice for how to do your best in online courses.

<https://www.gvsu.edu/sasc/online-learning-tips-140.htm>

<https://www.gvsu.edu/online/technology-requirements-for-onlinehybrid-courses-8.htm>

It is my expectation that students taking this class are interested in learning. You may have additional motivations for taking it; most people do. 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 your thinking.

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

1. Describe social psychological theories and concepts.
2. Evaluate and think critically about the theories and major findings in social psychology.
3. Explain the scientific method as it applies to social psychological phenomenon.
4. Explain how social psychological theories and concepts apply to people's experiences in everyday social life.

Reading in This Course

REQUIRED: Kassin, S. M., Fein, S., & Markus, H. (2020). Social Psychology, Eleventh Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

The Kassin et al. textbook is a primary source of information in this course. A schedule of topics and associated textbook readings is included at the end of the syllabus. The textbook (available through the university bookstore) also comes with access to MindTap materials that are designed to help you learn and study the material. It is not required that you use these materials, but they are available help support you through the semester. MindTap materials require an access code that should come with your textbook if you have ordered it new; these materials are OPTIONAL. They are available for your independent use and will not be graded or used to evaluate your performance in the class.

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, but recognize that a used copy will not include the optional MindTap materials. Also, 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. Brand new, the tenth and eleventh editions should be about the same price.

Structure of the Course

On BlackBoard you will find a **Learning Module** for each week of the semester. Typically, learning modules start with an **Overview** for the week, including a list of things to do for that week. To be on top of what's happening in a given week, always start with the Overview.

There is also a tab for **Course Materials** that includes information about the **required** reading/viewing.

Next there is a tab for **Supplemental Materials** that includes additional reading or activities designed to enhance your learning. Supplemental Materials are all **optional**, but it is recommended that you check them out.

There is also typically a **Tips and Resources** tab that offers tips for succeeding in this course and in your education more generally.

Finally, each week there is a **quiz** or an **exam** that must be taken during the class time on Fridays. Each quiz and exam will be made available at the beginning of class each Friday (except for Thanksgiving week, when it will be available on the Wednesday). All quizzes and exams can be found on BB under Assignments as soon as they are made available (10:00 on Fridays).

This course is designed so that you have maximum flexibility each week to cover the material whenever is best for you. You can read the textbook at any time and information regarding the textbook reading (e.g., what to focus on) is available in the Course Materials section for each week. To keep up with the reading and get it done in plenty of time for quizzes, it is recommended that you read over the weekend for the following week. Additional reading/viewing material (written or recorded lectures or other written/audio/video material) for each week is posted under Course Materials and will always be posted by class time on Mondays. You can set aside Monday's class time to read/view the additional material that adds to the textbook reading. It should usually be possible to get through that material within a class period. Wednesdays during class time I will be available on Collaborate Ultra on BB to answer any questions you might have about the course material. Ideally, all required reading/viewing should be completed by Wednesday of each week so that if you have any questions you can easily have them answered during Wednesday's class period. **Friday's class time will be reserved for quizzes and exams. You need to be available to take quizzes and exams during class time each Friday.**

Weekly reading assignments, as well as additional material and instructions, can all be found under Documents on Blackboard (BB) in each week's Learning Module. The basic schedule of topics and textbook readings is outlined at the end of the syllabus and also in a separate document under Syllabi on BB.

Getting in Touch with Me

As noted above, I will be available to meet with you during class time on Wednesdays. I will open a Collaborate Ultra session to take any questions and offer help should you be having any difficulties. In addition, you can e-mail me with questions and concerns and we can either handle them via e-mail or set up a time to meet virtually. From Monday through Friday I aim to respond to e-mail messages within 24 hours of your message. On weekends you may need to wait a bit longer for a response, but you will definitely hear back from me by Monday. If you don't hear back from me within the stated timeframe, please resend your message (and you may want to doublecheck the e-mail address in case something went awry).

Course Requirements, Evaluation, and Grades

Students are expected to do all of the assigned reading and to access all additional Course Materials online. Everything under the Course Materials tab is required. Detailed notes should be taken on online material (lectures, films, etc.). Exams will cover all required sources of information in the course. You should make sure to schedule enough time for reading and for reviewing material for quizzes. In addition, you will need to set aside extra time for studying for exams during the semester and for the final (see all exam dates below).

Quizzes

Quizzes are designed to help you to gauge how well you know the material. Quizzes will all be multiple-choice questions. They will be made available during class time and will typically occur on Fridays, except for Thanksgiving week when the quiz will be available on Wednesday. Quizzes will cover the week's textbook reading and additional material posted online under Course Material. You will have 15 minutes to complete each quiz, and you can begin quizzes at any time during the class period up to 15 minutes before the end of class. Each quiz will be worth 10 points and your 7 best quizzes will count toward your final grade. This means that you could certainly skip several of the quizzes, but it's 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.

Flipgrid (video) posts

Twice during the semester you need to respond to Flipgrid topics posted under Assignments on BB. There are three possible topics available but you choose only TWO of those. They are available to view from the beginning of the semester, but I'd advise waiting until about a third of the way through the semester before choosing your topics. You need to have enough social psychological information to work with before making a choice. The responses are brief video responses that will be posted to Flipgrid and visible to the class. They are designed to stimulate your thinking about and applying social psychological concepts and communicating your ideas to your peers. Each of the Flipgrid postings are worth 10 points. Your responses may be posted whenever you are ready (and they don't need to be done at the same time), but both need to be done before Thanksgiving.

Exams during the semester

Exams will include multiple-choice questions and some combination of several short-answer questions and/or one longer essay question. There will be three exams during the semester. The exams will be held on Fridays during scheduled class times. Dates for each exam appear below and also on the schedule of topics at the end of the syllabus. Each of these exams will be worth 40 points. There is no additional reading for exam weeks, so you can focus strictly on studying. **If you must miss an exam, you need to let me know in advance via e-mail that you are unable to make the exam and provide documentation of the reason for your absence (e.g., doctor's letter; proof of jury duty). You will also need to schedule a make-up exam with me. All make-up exams will be strictly essay exams.**

Exam 1: Friday, October 2

Exam 2: Friday, October 30

Exam 3: Friday, December 4

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 (Monday, December 14, 10:00 am). This exam will cover material from across the semester. It will be exactly the same format as the exams during the semester, but will include more questions and be worth 65 points toward your final grade.

Use of course materials

All of the quizzes and exams in this course are open book. If you would like to refer to course materials during quizzes and exams, you are welcome to do that. However, recognize that all exams and quizzes are timed events, so it is crucial that you study and that you know the material well in order to do well in the class. If you know the material well, you'll have time to quickly locate it to doublecheck something you're unsure of, but you will not have time to go searching for and reading about concepts you haven't studied.

Academic honesty

Working together with other students is encouraged in this class. It is often beneficial to study with others, though only after having reviewed the material independently. However, consistent with university policy, it is your ethical responsibility to submit work that is your own. Thus, quizzes and exams should be done by you without any assistance from others.

Final grades

It is possible to receive a total of 275 points on the quizzes and exams for this course:

Quizzes (best 7)	70
Flipgrid posts (2 at 10 points each)	20
Exams during the semester (3 at 40 points each)	120
Final exam	65

The grading scale is standard, 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-		

Netiquette and Course Policies

If you've never taken an online course before, you may find it useful to think about how "classroom etiquette" operates in the virtual environment. While we're unlikely to do much in the way of online discussion in this class, there are still things you might want to think about in terms of online communication with me and with your classmates. There are lots of websites that offer information and suggestions for good netiquette practices. Here are a few:

<https://asuonline.asu.edu/newsroom/online-learning-tips/netiquette-online-students/>

<https://www.educatorstechnology.com/2014/06/15-essential-netiquette-guidelines-to.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIVrHjKLaUw>

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies>. In particular, the following sections from the Student Code Section 4 on Academic Integrity of Grades and Scholarship state:

No student shall, without authorization, complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person.

No student shall, without authorization, allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, by another person.

No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as their own.

Performing Well in This Course

Social psychology is the field in which I was trained. One of the reasons I chose this field is because I strongly believe that recognizing that we are social creatures is a very good starting point in understanding the human condition and human behavior. As I said above, I am committed to making this course interesting, challenging, and informative. In addition, I want you to be able to meet the intellectual challenge that is part

of this course and that should be part of any university course. I want you to be able to perform as well as you possibly can. To that end, there are resources posted on BB in the Learning Modules to help support you in your learning. In particular, I include advice and suggestions for reading well, for studying, and for writing effectively. I will also be available to talk about any issues you might be having with your work in this course. The easiest way to talk with me will be during class time on Wednesdays. However, if you'd like to make an appointment to talk at some other time, that is another way to be in contact and get academic support.

While I normally teach this course face-to-face, I am looking forward to the online format. Living through a pandemic poses new challenges in many aspects of our lives; but it also opens the door to thinking anew about how we do things under changing conditions, to adaptation, and to practicing flexibility. Last winter semester we were all thrown off track as we had to unexpectedly transition to online teaching and learning. We got through it and we all learned a lot. Part of what we learned is that we are capable of meeting all kinds of challenges. At least this semester in this course we're starting off online, so we're less likely to have to worry about unexpected transitions. But just in case things do get a little crazy towards the end of the semester, you'll notice that the syllabus is set up so that the reading load drops right off during the last couple of weeks. You can use all of your time for studying rather than also trying to learn new material.

One other thing I can tell you is that, whatever happens in the wider world, what you're learning in this class can be applied to all kinds of real-life situations. You should be able to make connections between social, political, and world events with the course material. This should be an interesting time to first be studying social psychology. I look forward to our semester together and getting to know you as the next few months unfold.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

WEEK OF:	TOPIC & CHAPTER
August 31:	Introduction to course; What is Social Psychology? (Chapter 1)
September 7:	Research Methods in Social Psychology (Chapter 2; Monday is Labor Day)
September 14:	The Self (Chapter 3)
September 21:	Social Perception/Cognition (Chapter 4)
September 28:	No additional reading; exam on Friday, October 2
October 5:	Attitudes and Persuasion (Chapter 6)
October 12:	Social Influence (Chapter 7)
October 19:	Groups (Chapter 8)
October 26:	No additional reading; exam on Friday, October 30
November 2:	Prejudice and Discrimination (Chapter 5)
November 9:	Aggression (Chapter 11)
November 16:	Prosocial Behavior (Chapter 10)
November 23:	Close Relationships (Chapter 9); quiz on Wednesday; November 26 is Thanksgiving
November 30:	No additional reading; Exam on Friday, December 4
December 7:	Overview of course; no additional reading

FINAL EXAM: MONDAY, DECEMBER 14 at 10:00 am