

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Psychology 360
Winter 2021

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Class Time: T/TH 8:30 – 9:45 (See Course Structure below for how each week is organized)

Office hours: Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:00 and 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 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 it's important to remember that we still need 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 space. 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 it is 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>

You need, for example, a computer with camera capabilities so that you can fully participate in online zoom sessions and Collaborate meetings on Blackboard (BB). Also, one of the course assignments requires a functional camera and mic.

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.

Required Course Materials

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 least expensive version 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).

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.

In addition to the textbook, I will be posting course materials each week under Weekly Modules. These will typically be in the form of relatively brief lectures or lecture notes and are **required**. In addition, there will be various supplementary materials. These are optional, but strongly recommended.

Structure of the Course

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.

On Blackboard, under **Weekly Modules**, 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.

In each learning module you will also find a folder for **Course Material**. This folder includes information about the **required** material, often including information about what you need to pay close attention to in the textbook. Any additional lectures, notes, and/or videos included under Course Material are definitely required. If I think something is important enough to post here, it's material you need to know. Make sure to study this material for exams and quizzes as well as what's in the textbook.

Next there is a folder for **Supplementary 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** folder that offers tips for succeeding in this course and your education more generally. Some of this information is also posted under Success in This Class, but is included in the weekly modules at points during which it is most relevant.

Finally, each week there is either a **quiz** or an **exam** that must be completed by the end of class time on Thursdays.

This course is designated as synchronous so it is expected that all students are able to attend class on Tuesdays and complete exams and quizzes on Thursdays during class time. However, the course is designed so that you have maximum flexibility each week to cover the material whenever is best for you. Remember that you will have a quiz or an exam that must be completed every Thursday by the end of class time (9:45 am). To prepare for each quiz, you need to read the relevant textbook material and read or view the material posted online. All of the information you need for any quiz will be made available by the previous Thursday; therefore, you can read/view all course material beginning each Thursday for the following Thursday's quiz. To keep up with the reading/viewing and get it done in plenty of time to review for quizzes, it is strongly recommended that you read or view the material over the weekend. On Tuesdays during class time, I will be available on zoom sessions to talk with you about the material, help you process it, and answer any questions you might have about it. Thus, all required reading/viewing should definitely be completed by Tuesday of each week so that you can participate in class activities and, if you have any questions, you can easily have them answered during Tuesday's class.

Quizzes and exams must be completed by 9:45 on Thursdays and class time will be reserved just for this. (The only exception to this is Thursday, April 1, which is a break day; in that one instance the deadline will be Friday, April 2, by 9:45 am.) To provide you with some flexibility and accommodate unanticipated events, quizzes and exams will be made available on BB on Wednesdays at noon. They will be timed (15 minutes for quizzes and 50 minutes for exams), but you will have a window from noon Wednesday to the end of class time (9:45 am) on Thursday in which to take them. Note, however, that **they must be done by the stated deadline. There will be no make-up exams.** If you are prone to health issues (e.g., migraines, seasonal colds and flus, etc.) or are concerned that other situations may crop up, make sure to take the quizzes and exams on Wednesdays so you're not caught off guard on Thursday mornings.

Course Requirements, Evaluation, and Grades

Students are expected to do all of the assigned reading and to access all additional course materials online. Remember that everything under the Course Materials tab is required. Detailed notes should be taken on online material (lectures, videos, etc.). Exams will cover all required sources of information in the course. You should make sure to schedule enough time for reading and then for reviewing material for quizzes. In addition, you will need to set aside extra time to study 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. Quiz questions will all be multiple-choice. They will be made available at noon on Wednesdays and will be due for completion by 9:45 on Thursdays. 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. To have the full allotted time, you can begin quizzes at any time from Wednesdays at noon up to 15 minutes before the end of class time on Thursday. 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 for the next exam. All quizzes and exams will be found on BB under Assignments as soon as they are made available (noon on Wednesdays).

Exams during the semester

Exams will include multiple-choice questions and some combination of short-answer and essay questions. There will be three exams during the regular semester. As with quizzes, exams during the semester will be made available at noon on the Wednesday before the due date and will be due Thursday by 9:45 am. Exams will each be worth 40 points and you will have 50 minutes to complete each one. To make sure you have the full allotted time, you must begin the exam by 8:55 on the Thursday morning. Dates for each exam appear below and also on the schedule of topics at the end of the syllabus. There is no additional reading during exam weeks, so you can focus strictly on studying.

Due dates for exams (9:45 am):

Exam 1: Thursday, Feb. 18

Exam 2: Thursday, March 18

Exam 3: Thursday, April 15

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 on Thursday, April 29, 8:00 am. Please note that you need to be available at this time for the final exam. **You will have one hour and fifteen minutes to complete the exam and it must be taken at this time.** 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 70 points toward your final grade.

Use of course materials in quizzes and exams

All of the quizzes and exams in this course are open book. If you would like to look through course materials and your notes 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 if you want to do well in the class. If you know the material well, you'll have time to quickly locate information 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. Remember that using up several minutes on single multiple-choice questions is a recipe for exam disaster. Also, for short answer and essay questions, you need to be prepared to respond in your own words. **Under no circumstances should you be copying or cutting and pasting from course material** (see plagiarism policy below).

Flipgrid (video) posts

Two assignments need to be completed during the semester. More detailed information about them will be available on BB early in the semester. In both cases, your responses will be in the form of brief videos that will be posted to Flipgrid and visible to the class. The assignments are designed to stimulate your thinking about social psychological concepts, give you practice in applying concepts to your own experiences and things that are going on in the world, and provide you with opportunities to communicate your ideas to me and your peers. Each of the Flipgrid posts is worth 20 points.

The first, Connections to My Life, must be completed by everyone by midnight on Friday, February 26. Although this assignment will be available early in the semester, it is advisable to wait until at least three weeks into the semester before working on it because you need to have enough social psychological information to work with before completing the assignment.

For the second Flipgrid assignment, there will be two possible topics and you will choose ONE of them to complete. Additional information about the two choices will be provided later in the semester. Your second Flipgrid assignment should be submitted during the second half of the semester with an absolute deadline by midnight Friday, April 16. Given that things tend to get progressively busier towards the end of the semester, though, it is strongly advised that you work on this assignment well before the deadline.

Final grades

It is possible to receive a total of 300 points on the quizzes, exams and assignments for this course:

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

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-		

Getting in Touch with Me

As noted above, I will be available to meet with you during class time on Tuesdays. I will send a link each week for a zoom session to talk with you about the week's material, take any questions and offer help should you be having any difficulties. You can also meet with me during office hours on Tuesdays from 10:00 to 11:00 am, but please let me know that you'd like to do so in advance so I know how many people to expect and can set up a specific time for you. In addition, you can e-mail me with questions and concerns that might be handled via e-mail or we can 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).

Netiquette

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 won't often be having extensive discussions in this class, we will be interacting online so 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>

Academic Honesty and Course Policies

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies>. In particular, make sure you are aware of the Student Code Section 4 on Academic Integrity of Grades and Scholarship.

Working together with other students is encouraged in this class. It is often beneficial to study with others, particularly after having reviewed and studied 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. Moreover, you need to demonstrate your understanding of the course material by writing and talking about course concepts in your own words. There are few opportunities to plagiarize in this course, but one possibility is to copy or cut and paste from course materials (textbook or online material) on essay questions on the exams. Doing this will result in a **score of zero on that question**. And remember that simply changing a word or two in a sentence is still plagiarism. You need to be able to express ideas in your own words. Another possible opportunity for plagiarism is the Flipgrid posts. When preparing a Flipgrid post, your best policy is to simply say things in your own words. If you do decide to include a direct quote from course materials, that is fine, but make sure to keep it brief and acknowledge the source.

Incidents of plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment or essay question, and possible failure of the course, and will be reported to the Dean of Students.

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, or at least let me know you are having difficulty, will be during or right after class time. However, if you'd like to make an appointment to talk during office hours or, if necessary, at some other time, that is another way to be in contact and get academic support. Again, appointments can be made either by chatting at the end of class or via e-mail.

While I normally teach this course face-to-face, I have enjoyed teaching it in an online format as well. 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. We have all learned a lot through this pandemic. Part of what we've learned is that we are capable of meeting all kinds of challenges, and many students learned last semester how challenging it can be to take multiple online classes. Online learning requires stronger discipline and organizational skills beyond the level that face-to-face classes typically demand. This class is organized in a way that should allow you to always know what is happening each week, to see what is likely to happen as the course unfolds, and to get into a rhythm. We will get things off to a quick start so your learning should be able to progress at a reasonable pace throughout the semester.

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 course material and your personal lives, as well as social, political, cultural and world events. 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
January 19:	Introduction to course; What is Social Psychology? (Chapter 1)
January 26:	Research Methods in Social Psychology (Chapter 2)
February 2:	The Self (Chapter 3)
February 9:	Social Perception/Cognition (Chapter 4)
February 16:	No additional reading; exam must be completed by 9:45 am Thursday, February 18
February 23:	Attitudes and Persuasion (Chapter 6) Deadline for first Flipgrid: Midnight, Friday the 26th
March 2:	Social Influence (Chapter 7)
March 9:	Groups (Chapter 8)
March 16:	No additional reading; exam must be completed by 9:45 am Thursday, March 18
March 23:	Prejudice and Discrimination (Chapter 5)
March 30:	Aggression (Chapter 11)
April 6:	Prosocial Behavior (Chapter 10)
April 13:	No additional reading; exam must be completed by 9:45 am Thursday, April 15 Deadline for second Flipgrid: Midnight, Friday the 16th
April 20:	Close Relationships (Chapter 9)

FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY, APRIL 29 at 8:00 am