

# SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

PSYC 254      FALL 2022

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Tu/Th 1:20-2:50 pm THEATER 200

Course website: <https://moodle.macalester.edu/course/view.php?id=1278>

**Instructor:** Steve Guglielmo (he/him/his): [sgugliel@macalester.edu](mailto:sgugliel@macalester.edu)

Office: OLRI 327 (phone: 696-6112)      Office hours: Tue 3-4 and Wed 9-10 (and by appointment)

## **Required texts:**

- Aronson, E., Wilson, T. D., & Sommers, S. R. (2019). Social Psychology (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson.
  - o Note: Two copies of a slightly older edition (8<sup>th</sup> ed.) are on reserve in the library
- Various academic journal articles (all posted on Moodle; see course schedule below)

## COURSE OVERVIEW AND GOALS

Hello and welcome to Social Psychology! I'm excited to have you in class this semester.

Social psychology is the study of thoughts and behavior in a social context. It investigates the ways in which we are influenced by the actual or perceived presence of other people. How do we understand and explain other people's behavior? What makes us happy? How are we influenced by social norms? Is our behavior driven more by conscious or unconscious processing? Why do we use stereotypes and how can we reduce prejudice? How do we determine right and wrong? In our coverage of material and in your assignments, we'll focus on understanding primary research on social psychology and its connection to various real-world issues.

The course format will be a mix of lecture, discussion, and in-class exercises, as well as workshop days to work on the two major projects of the course. We'll have several Focus Days — approximately one per week — where we'll have an in-depth examination of specific topics (often ones that aren't covered in detail in the textbook). On these days we'll read primary journal articles and spend much of our class time on discussion and debate.

I've designed this course to meet several goals. Specifically, to help you build skills in...

- examining social behavior from a social scientific perspective. This includes identifying and generating research hypotheses, understanding the relationship between hypotheses and empirical data, and considering alternative explanations.
- applying your understanding of psychological phenomena to broader issues or problems, and proposing solutions that are grounded in psychological research.
- engaging deeply with course material, discussing and defending your ideas, and respectfully critiquing and debating others' ideas.
- communicating your ideas in different modes (online forums, verbal presentations), in different degrees of formality (reading reflections, scientific writing), and to different audiences.
- engaging in self-reflection and assessing your own learning, skills, and growth.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

### **Midterm Exam (10%) — Tue 10/18**

The midterm will cover material from the first half of the course from the lectures, textbook, other assigned readings, and in-class activities. It will include multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions.

### **Final Exam (15%) — Thu 12/8 (last day of class)**

The cumulative final exam will cover material from the entire course. Like the midterm, it will include multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions.

### **Reading Reflections (15%) — due by 8 pm the night before each Focus Day**

During each Focus Day (approximately once a week), we'll take a closer look at the literature by reading primary journal articles and discussing them in class. Prior to each Focus Day, you'll submit a brief reading reflection (300-400 words) about the articles we'll be discussing that day.

Your reading reflections should critique, extend, and/or apply the research. For example, given what we've learned from the article(s), what would be an important study to conduct next, why, and what do you predict it would reveal? Or, how do the findings have implications for various issues, events, controversies in the "real world" (e.g., on campus, nationally, globally, etc.)? Or, are there any serious concerns about the methodology or conclusions in the article(s)—are there reasons to doubt that the authors are right about what they claim? [Please avoid critiques of the study's sample composition—such as the number or type of participants in the study—unless this is an especially compelling concern. It's often easy to call out a study for having a small or non-representative sample, and these can indeed be important limitations. But I'd like you to focus your thinking on other aspects unless these limitations severely call into question the study's conclusions.]

Submit your reflections to Moodle by 8 pm the night before each Focus Day. Enter/paste your text directly into the Moodle forum; please don't upload a separate file. **I'd like you to address at least two of the readings in your response.** (Some days we have only two readings; others we have three).

These are **informal and low-stakes writing assignments**. You do not need an introduction, conclusion, or any specific formatting/organization to your writing — I just want to see your ideas and reflections.

You must submit a reflection for all Focus Days except the last one (11/29: Personality). Thus, you will submit a total of 9 reading reflections throughout the semester.

### **Behavior Observation Project (15%) — due Tue 11/8**

For this project, you will work with a group to collect data (through behavior observation) to help answer a psychological question. Your group will work together to: identify a general topic of interest, find relevant prior research, develop a specific hypothesis and a methodology, and collect data to test your hypothesis. You'll collect data not by surveying participants but by observing behavior in a public space — the street, a park, the dining hall, some other place on campus, etc. Then you will write up the project as a small paper with all the sections of a typical empirical psychology article (Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion).

All group members must submit their own project. You may co-write Method and Results sections with your group (thus, these two sections may be identical for all group members). The other sections may not be identical — you must write your own Introduction and Discussion sections.

The assignment is due by 8 pm on Tue 11/8. Save your file as a .docx with the filename 'Lastname\_BOP.docx' and upload it to Moodle.

**Persuasion Paper (15%) — due Fri 12/6**

In this assignment, you will write a research-based persuasive argument for a policy/behavior change, directed to a specific audience. You will identify a topic/problem of interest to you (e.g., pay discrimination; climate change denial; hate crimes; etc.) and analyze it from a social psychological perspective. What are the psychological factors and processes that help explain this problem or phenomenon (e.g., why, when, or for whom it exists), what exacerbates or attenuates the problem, and how does this lead to an argument for a particular policy/behavior intervention or change? If your proposed changes were to be implemented, what would the likely consequences be? You will address your paper to a specific audience to whom your argument is most applicable (e.g., MCSG; a Congressperson; a company's CEO; the head of a specific agency in the US government). Your paper should be 5-7 pages and should reference 10+ psychology journal articles.

You will give a short (~5 minute) verbal presentation of your argument. Presentations will take place in class on 12/1 and 12/6.

The persuasion paper is due by 8 pm on Friday 12/9. Save your assignment as a .docx file with the filename 'Lastname\_Persuasion.docx' and upload it to Moodle.

**Participation (10%)**

This portion of your grade includes attending class and participating in discussions, activities, and workshops.

**Self-Assessment (20%)**

At various times throughout the semester, you will complete self-assessments, in which you will assess your own goals, contributions, and learning, and you will indicate the grade you think you deserve on various assignments. Your completion of these self-assessments, along with your actual self-assigned grades, together will determine this component of your course grade.

## FLEXIBILITY TOKENS AND COVID POLICIES

I know that life sometimes interferes with deadlines, so I provide you with five "flexibility tokens" that allow you to miss some deadlines without penalty. Each token allows you a 48-hour extension on an assignment due date, and you can use a token for any reason at all. Please tell me **that** you're using a token, but you **don't need to tell me why** you're using it. You may use more than one token for a given assignment, but I urge you to try not to do this. For example, you may submit each of five assignments 48-hours late OR you may submit three assignments 48-hours late and one assignment 96 hours late. In each example, your five tokens would cover the late deadlines, and you would not lose any points for lateness. If your tokens are all gone and you need additional extensions, please reach out and I will do my best to help. **Note: you may not use flexibility tokens to get an extension on exams or your research presentation.**

We will undoubtedly continue to face challenges, stressors, and uncertainty due to Covid-19 this semester. Even more so than usual, I expect all of us to treat each other with grace and understanding. I will extend as much flexibility and accommodation as I can to each of you, and I ask that you do the same to me.

***If you feel sick or have any Covid symptoms, stay home. If you have a Health & Wellness appointment that conflicts with class, go to your appointment.*** I will not penalize you in any way for missing class for any Covid-related reason (feeling sick, having a health and wellness appointment, needing to quarantine, etc.).

If you are unable to come to class but are still feeling well enough to Zoom in, I'll ask you to do so.

If you become ill and this impacts your ability to submit your work on time, I will work with you to come up with a new deadline. Please be mindful of the fact that it might take me much longer to give you grades/feedback on any work that is submitted late.

***You must be in touch with me in advance of any Covid-related absence or any extension you need for a Covid-related reason.*** I am more than willing to be flexible, but I need to know about your circumstances prior to missing any classes/deadlines.

It's also possible that I'll get sick and won't be able to come to class at some point during the semester. If that ends up being the case, we'll hold our class meetings via Zoom.

## PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is the presentation of others' thoughts, ideas, or words as your own. Plagiarism can be blatant, such as directly copying other's words, or it can be subtle, such as failing to properly cite another's ideas. Either way, plagiarism violates Macalester College's expectation that all members of the community act with academic integrity. If you are unsure about citations, wording, or similarity of structure, please meet with me to discuss these issues; I can help you make sure that you are citing and paraphrasing appropriately. If I have any reason to suspect your integrity in this class, I will contact you. After that meeting, I will determine what further steps are appropriate, and I may refer you to the Director of Academic Programs, who will determine additional consequences. If you have questions, please contact me or refer to this site:

<http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/>

## ACCOMMODATIONS AND WELL-BEING

I am committed to creating an accessible and inclusive class environment where all students can fully participate and succeed. I will post all assignments to Moodle at least two weeks (and usually longer) before they are due, and I will post .pdfs of slides to Moodle before each class.

If you know you have a disability that affects your learning, please contact Shammah Bermudez in Disability Services ([disabilityservices@macalester.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@macalester.edu)). Please also email me so we can work together to ensure your accommodations and needs are being met. It is important for this to happen as early in the semester as possible, to ensure that your accommodations are implemented early on. Further information about disability services and accommodations is available at: <http://www.macalester.edu/disabilityservices>

I encourage you to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester and your career at Macalester. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you more fully engage in and benefit from your academic experience. Beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and how they can have an impact on your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you increase your well-being and remain resilient. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or to find support from reach out to one of the resources listed on Macalester's [Health and Wellness Resource guide](#).

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment (due)
Thu 9/1	Intro		
Tue 9/6	Methods	Chapter 2	
Thu 9/8	Social Cognition	Chapter 3	
Tue 9/13	<u>Focus Day: Emotion</u>	Ekman & Friesen (1971); Szyncer et al. (2021); Wadley et al. (2020)	
Thu 9/15	Attribution and Social Perception	Chapter 4	
Tue 9/20	<u>Focus Day: Conspiracy Theories and False News</u>	Douglas et al. (2017); Van Prooijen et al. (2015); Vosoughi et al. (2018)	
Thu 9/22	Self Perception	Chapter 5	
Tue 9/27	<u>Focus Day: Happiness</u>	Diener (2000); Kahneman et al. (2006); Wilson & Gilbert (2005)	
Thu 9/29	Dissonance	Chapter 6	
Tue 10/4	<u>Data collection workshop</u>		
Thu 10/6	Attitudes, Stereotypes, Prejudice	Chapter 7, Chapter 13	
Tue 10/11	<u>Focus Day: Sexism &amp; Racism</u>	Glick & Fiske (2001); Rasmussen et al. (2022)	
Thu 10/13	<u>Focus Day: Intolerance</u>	Brandt et al. (2014); Verkuyten et al. (2020)	
Tue 10/18	<u>Midterm Exam</u>		
<b>Fall Break</b>			
Tue 10/25	Norms and Conformity	Chapter 8	
Thu 10/27	<u>Focus Day: Norms and Social Influence</u>	Kanngiesser et al. (2022); Nolan et al. (2008)	
Tue 11/1	Crowds and Groups	Chapter 9	
Thu 11/3	<u>Focus Day: Willpower</u>	Bartels & Urminsky (2011); Mischel et al. (1989)	<b>BOP (Tue 11/8)</b>
Tue 11/8	Attraction	Chapter 10	
Thu 11/10	<u>Focus Day: Freedom and Choice</u>	Madan et al. (2020); Schwartz (2000)	
Tue 11/15	<u>Research Paper workshop</u>		
Thu 11/17	Prosocial Behavior	Chapter 11	
Tue 11/22	<u>Focus Day: Morality</u>	Hamlin et al. (2007); Malle et al. (2022); Merritt et al. (2012)	
<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>			
Tue 11/29	<u>Focus Day: Personality</u> ; course recap	Back et al. (2010); Jackson et al. (2015); Rentfrow & Gosling (2006)	
Thu 12/1	<u>Research Presentations</u>		
Tue 12/6	<u>Research Presentations</u>		
Thu 12/8	<u>Final Exam</u>		<b>Paper (Fri 12/9)</b>

**Black** = textbook topic

**Red** = Focus Day (journal articles)

**Blue** = workshop, exam, presentation

## FULL CITATIONS FOR ALL FOCUS DAY ARTICLES

### Tue 9/13: Emotion

- Ekman, P., & Friesen, W. V. (1971). Constants across cultures in the face and emotion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *17*, 124-129.
- Sznycer, D., Sell, A., & Lieberman, D. (2021). Forms and functions of the social emotions. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *30*, 292-299.
- Wadley, G., Smith, W., Koval, P., & Gross, J. J. (2020). Digital emotion regulation. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *29*, 412-418.

### Tue 9/20: Conspiracy Theories and False News

- Douglas, K. M., Sutton, R. M., & Cichocka, A. (2017). The psychology of conspiracy theories. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *26*, 538-542.
- van Prooijen, J. W., Krouwel, A. P., & Pollet, T. V. (2015). Political extremism predicts belief in conspiracy theories. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *6*, 570-578.
- Vosoughi, S., Roy, D., & Aral, S. (2018). The spread of true and false news online. *Science*, *359*, 1146-1151.

### Tue 9/27: Happiness

- Diener, E. (2000). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychologist*, *55*, 34-43.
- Kahneman, D., Krueger, A. B., Schkade, D., Schwarz, N., & Stone, A. A. (2006). Would you be happier if you were richer? A focusing illusion. *Science*, *312*, 1908-1910.
- Wilson, T. D., & Gilbert, D. T. (2005). Affective forecasting: Knowing what to want. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *14*, 131-134.

### Tue 10/11: Sexism and Racism

- Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (2001). An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality. *American Psychologist*, *56*, 109-118.
- Rasmussen, R., Levari, D. E., Akhtar, M., Crittle, C. S., Gately, M., Pagan, J., ... & Urry, H. L. (2022). White (but not Black) Americans continue to see racism as a zero-sum game; White conservatives (but not moderates or liberals) see themselves as losing. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

### Thu 10/13: Intolerance

- Brandt, M. J., Reyna, C., Chambers, J. R., Crawford, J. T., & Wetherell, G. (2014). The ideological-conflict hypothesis: Intolerance among both liberals and conservatives. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *23*, 27-34.
- Verkuyten, M., Adelman, L., & Yogeeswaran, K. (2020). The psychology of intolerance: Unpacking diverse understandings of intolerance. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *29*, 467-472.

**Thu 10/27: Norms and Social Influence**

Kanngiesser, P., Schäfer, M., Herrmann, E., Zeidler, H., Haun, D., & Tomasello, M. (2022). Children across societies enforce conventional norms but in culturally variable ways. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 119*, e2112521118.

Nolan, J. M., Schultz, P. W., Cialdini, R. B., Goldstein, N. J., & Griskevicius, V. (2008). Normative social influence is underdetected. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 34*, 913-923.

**Thu 11/3: Willpower**

Bartels, D. M., & Urminsky, O. (2011). On intertemporal selfishness: How the perceived instability of identity underlies impatient consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research, 38*, 182-198.

Mischel, W., Shoda, Y., & Rodriguez, M. L. (1989). Delay of gratification in children. *Science, 244*, 933-938.

**Thu 11/10: Freedom and Choice**

Madan, S., Nanakdewa, K., Savani, K., & Markus, H. R. (2020). The paradoxical consequences of choice: Often good for the individual, perhaps less so for society? *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 29*, 80-85.

Schwartz, B. (2000). Self-determination: The tyranny of freedom. *American Psychologist, 55*, 79-88.

**Tue 11/22: Morality**

Hamlin, J. K., Wynn, K., & Bloom, P. (2007). Social evaluation by preverbal infants. *Nature, 450*, 557-559.

Malle, B. F., Guglielmo, S., Voiklis, J., & Monroe, A. E. (2022). Cognitive blame is socially shaped. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 31*, 169-176.

Merritt, A. C., Effron, D. A., Fein, S., Savitsky, K. K., Tuller, D. M., & Monin, B. (2012). The strategic pursuit of moral credentials. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 48*, 774-777.

**Tue 11/29: Personality**

Back, M. D., Stopfer, J. M., Vazire, S., Gaddis, S., Schmukle, S. C., Egloff, B., & Gosling, S. D. (2010). Facebook profiles reflect actual personality, not self-idealization. *Psychological Science, 21*, 372-374.

Jackson, J. J., Connolly, J. J., Garrison, S. M., Leveille, M. M., & Connolly, S. L. (2015). Your friends know how long you will live: A 75-year study of peer-rated personality traits. *Psychological Science, 26*, 335-340.

Rentfrow, P. J., & Gosling, S. D. (2006). Message in a ballad: The role of music preferences in interpersonal perception. *Psychological Science, 17*, 236-242.