INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY  
(Tu, Th. 10 -11:15 a.m., Tarbutton Hall, room 105)

Instructors: Dr. Karen Hegtvedt  
Office: Tarbutton Hall, room 227  
Hours: Tu, Th 9-10 a.m. & by appointment  
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Course Objectives

This course provides an introduction to social psychology, an interdisciplinary area of study that attempts to answer the following major question: How does the real, implied, or imagined presence of others affect our beliefs, feelings, and behaviors? The focus of the course is on how groups -- ranging from small friendship circles to ethnic groups to entire societies -- affect the life of an individual and how the individual, in turn, affects the group. Thus the course focuses on the reciprocal relationship between individual-level and group-level phenomena.

We begin discussing general questions of social psychology. We focus on a classic Sociological approach, symbolic interactionism, to examine how individuals’ identities emerge and affect social interaction, and how the context bears upon social dynamics. In addition, we review the ways researchers go about testing the accuracy of those answers.

The second part of the course focuses on the thoughts and feelings of individuals in social interaction. Here we study issues such as: How do individuals perceive other people and situations? How do people’s attitudes emerge? Do attitudes affect behavior or do behaviors affect attitudes? How do individuals experience and express emotions in various situations? This section of the course concludes with an application of perceptual, attitudinal, and emotional processes: How do beliefs and emotions underlie the development of prejudice and discrimination? What processes can undermine prejudice and discrimination?

The third part of the course examines group processes such as attraction, influence, conflict, and justice and structural properties of groups defined by power and status. Pertinent questions include: How do relationships develop and change? How does attraction affect conformity? How can bargaining resolve conflict? Why do higher status group members exert more influence and how can this pattern change? When do people sense unfairness and what do they do about it?

The course provides substantive answers to the questions posed above. In addition, students should be able to discuss analytically social behavior in a wide variety of groups. In-class exercises aid in applying concepts to everyday life. Thus, by the end of the course, class members should more clearly understand their own and others’ thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
Course Readings

All assigned **readings** should be completed before class to ensure active participation in class discussions and activities.


Readings: Other readings are available through electronic reserves and the course Blackboard site. (You need Adobe Acrobat to read the files). Some other readings may be added. (listed with full citations on the course outline)

Power point slides: Available on course Blackboard site, sorted by topic

Course Requirements

**Overview**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates (tentative)</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1: Questions, Approach, Methods</td>
<td>Thursday, Sept. 23</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2: Perceptual &amp; Affective Processes</td>
<td>Tuesday, Nov. 2</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 3: Group Processes</td>
<td>Friday, Dec. 10 (4:30p.m.)</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal (&amp; Consent)</td>
<td>Thursday, Oct. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion of proposal</td>
<td>(by) Tuesday, Oct. 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft (optional)</td>
<td>Tuesday, Nov. 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed paper</td>
<td>Tuesday, Nov. 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Out-of-class power/status observations</td>
<td>Tuesday, Nov. 30</td>
<td>8</td>
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**Participation**

Timely class attendance and regular participation in discussions is expected. Taking part in discussion may involve asking a question, giving a response, making a comment on reading or lecture materials, offering an example, etc. Involvement in in-class and out-of-class exercises also counts as participation. Attendance will be taken at each class session.

**Exams**

There will be three **exams** during the semester (75% of your grade). Each exam covers materials presented in readings, films, lectures, discussions, etc., for one part of the course (i.e., the exams are not really cumulative). Exams include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. See policies below with regard to make-up exams.
Paper

A 6 page paper (worth 25% of your grade) allows you to examine a social psychological phenomenon that you have experienced or observed. More specifically, you will complete a mini empirical study of an issue of interest to you. In doing so, you will create a theoretical argument based on materials from the class and two additional published empirical studies, derive an hypothesis, figure out a means to test the hypothesis, collect data, and analyze whether your data confirm or disconfirm your hypothesis. A handout will provide more details.

There will be several parts to the assignment. First you must submit a brief description of your project or your ideas about what you might do your project on by Thursday, October 5. Second, I will review these short descriptions and then meet with each of you to discuss your topic before Tuesday, October 26. At that meeting, we will assess the necessity of a “consent document” for your study participants. If you will need a consent document, then I must review it prior to the beginning of your data collection. This procedure is necessary so that you understand the rights of people who agree to be in your study as well as what you need to do to protect them from harm. The third part of the assignment is optional: you may submit to a draft of your paper for review by Tuesday, November 9. The paper is tentatively due Tuesday, November 23; a hard-copy should be delivered to me or my mailbox in Tarbutton 223 by 11:30 a.m. (Although you write a paper, this course does not fulfill the writing requirement.)

Policies

Make-up exams: ...will generally NOT be given, except under extenuating circumstances (e.g., legitimated illness, documented family death, earthquake, nuclear disaster). If you are affected by such circumstances, notify me prior to the exam (the department will take messages, 727-7510). Without advanced notification, you forfeit your opportunity for a make-up exam. Also, if you have a legitimate and unavoidable scheduling conflict for a particular exam date, you must present in writing this conflict at least one week prior to the date. We will discuss the possibility of alternative arrangements. Please note that make-up exams may be of a different format.

Late assignments: ...are papers that are turned in to me any time after the class period in which they are due. Papers will be docked 5 points per day.

Honor Code: The Emory University honor code applies fully to this course. When you sign an exam or submit your assignments, you are pledging to the honor code. For reference, please consult http://www.college.emory.edu/current/standards/honor_code.html.

Disabilities: Students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (7-6016) to obtain proper documentation if accommodations are needed. Please do this early in the semester in order to make sure that everything is in order.

Blackboard: We will use the Blackboard site for this course regularly. Please check the site several times a week in order to ensure that you are aware of class announcements and so forth. We may also use the site to arrange discussions with your colleagues in the course.
Email: Please allow at least 24 hours for replies to emails. If you have an urgent concern about the course, contact me by phone. All assignments should be submitted in paper form, not as an email attachment (unless otherwise approved ahead of time). And, any questions about an exam should be sent no later than 5 p.m. the day prior to the exam to ensure a response.

Digital Citizenship:

- **Ringing gadgets**: Phones, pagers, watch alarms, etc. should be turned off during class! Failure to do so may result in confiscation of said gadget.
- **Computers**: Please send me an email to request permission to use your laptop in class. All laptop users will sit in a designated area in the class. Use of laptops during class for purposes unrelated to the course will result in loss of laptop privileges and potentially a request to leave the class session for that day.

Course Outline

(This is the intended ordering and longevity of topics. Modifications may occur as the course progresses.)

Thurs, 8/26  **Introduction**

QUESTIONS, APPROACH, METHODS

Tues, 8/31  **Social Psychological Phenomena: What do social psychologists study?**

Aronson, pp. 1-11

Thurs, 9/2  **Symbolic Interaction: How do people socially construct their worlds?**


Tues, 9/7  **Symbolic Interaction: How do individuals create identities?**


Thurs, 9/9  **Symbolic Interaction: How do identities play out in interaction?**

Tues, 9/14  **Methods:** *How do researchers study social interaction?*

Aronson, pp. 405-429

Thurs, 9/16  **Methods:** *What methods are appropriate, when?*

Aronson, pp. 48-56

Tues, 9/21  **Methods:** *Designing Studies*  (in-class exercise)

Thurs, 9/23  **EXAM 1**

PERCEPTUAL & AFFECTIVE PROCESSES

Tues, 9/28  **Social Cognition & Impression Formation:** *How do people process information?*

Aronson, pp. 117-135

Thurs, 9/30  **Attribution Theory:** *How do people determine the causes of behavior?*


Tues, 10/5  **Attribution Biases:** *How accurate are people’s perceptions of others?*

Aronson, pp. 135-147, 166-179

*Paper Proposal DUE*

Thurs, 10/7  **Attitudes:** *How do evaluative beliefs develop? Change?*

Aronson, pp. 59-115

Tues, 10/12  **Fall Break!!!**

Thurs, 10/14  **Attitudes:** *When do attitudes shape behavior? When do behaviors shape attitudes?*

Aronson, pp. 160-166, 181-241
Tues, 10/19  **Affect: How do people experience emotions?**


Thurs, 10/21  **Affect: Why & how are emotions kept in check?**


Tues, 10/26  **Stereotypes, Prejudice, Discrimination: How do cognitions underlie behavior toward others?**

Aronson, pp. 301-337


Thurs, 10/28  **Stereotypes, Prejudice, Discrimination: How can prejudice/discrimination be eliminated?**

Aronson, pp. 338-355

Tues, 11/2  **EXAM 2**

**GROUP PROCESSES**

Thurs, 11/4  **Attraction: How do relationships develop?**

Aronson, pp. 357-403


Tues, 11/9  **Attraction and Groups: What is a group and how does attraction affect dynamics in groups?**

Aronson, pp. 13-47

*(Optional: Paper drafts due)*
Thurs, 11/11  **Structure of Group Relationships – Status: How do status differences affect interaction?**


Tues, 11/16  **Structure of Group Relationships – Status: How can we alter status-based interaction patterns?**


Thurs, 11/18  **Structure of Group Relationships – Power: What constitutes power and power use?**


Tues, 11/23  **Illustrating Group Dynamics: Where have you seen power and/or status operate in your groups?**

(out-of-class exercise; report [no more than 1 page] due Tues, Nov. 30)

**Papers DUE**

Thurs, 11/25  **Thanksgiving!!!**

Tues, 11/30  **Evaluating Relationships: When is a relationship fair?**


Thurs, 12/2  **Evaluating Relationships: How do people respond to injustice?**


Fri, 12/10  **EXAM 3** (4:30-7:00 p.m.)