

**INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY**  
(Mon,Wed 2:30-3:45 p.m. Tarbutton 111)

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Office: Tarbutton Hall, room 227  
Hours: Mon/Wed 1-2 p.m. & by appointment  
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**Course Objectives**

This course introduces social psychology, an interdisciplinary area of study that addresses the following major question: *How does the real, implied, or imagined presence of others affect people's beliefs, feelings, and behaviors?* The course focuses on the role of groups—ranging from small friendship circles to ethnic groups to entire societies—on the life of an individual and, in turn, the impact of the individual on the group. This reciprocal relationship between individual-level and group-level phenomena provides the basis for illustrating how inequalities that emerge in interaction have consequences for larger groups.

The first part of the course pertains to the general realm of social psychology. We emphasize underlying theoretical thinking and the ways researchers bring data to bear upon empirical questions regarding how individuals negotiate their social worlds. Then, we turn to a classic sociological approach, symbolic interactionism, asking: How do individuals' identities emerge and affect social interaction? How does the context bear upon such social dynamics?

The second part of the course focuses on the thoughts and feelings of individuals in social interaction. Here we ask questions such as: How do individuals perceive other people and situations? What impact do “processing short cuts” have on assessments of a situation? How do people's attitudes emerge, and do they affect their behavior? How do individuals experience and express emotions in various situations? These individual-level processes impact the attraction processes that bring people together and ultimately feed into behaviors in groups.

The third part of the course examines group processes. We define what constitutes a group and how individuals conform within them, with specific attention to power and status structures that shape influence and perceived fairness. We query: What is the impact of power or status position on influence? What disrupts the impact of these structural features? When do people sense unfairness and what do they do about it? This section concludes with an analysis of intergroup dynamics, which raises issues regarding the structural, perceptual, attitudinal, and emotional processes that underlie the development of prejudice and discrimination and potential means to counter them.

The course provides substantive answers to the questions posed above by drawing on social psychological theory and empirical research. This knowledge allows students to discuss analytically social behavior in a wide variety of contexts and to formulate their own research questions. 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.

Main Text: Hegtvedt, Karen A. and Cathryn Johnson. 2018. *Social Psychology: Individuals, Interaction, and Inequality*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Noted on syllabus as *SP*.)

Readings: Other readings (listed with full citations below) are available through the course Canvas site.

PowerPoint slides: Available on course Canvas site, sorted by topic

## Course Requirements

### Overview

Description	Dates (tentative)	% of Grade
<b>Exam 1: Questions, Methods, Symbolic Interaction</b>	Monday, October 1	20
<b>Exam 2: Perceptual &amp; Affective Processes</b>	Monday, November 5	20
<b>Exam 3: Group/Intergroup Processes</b>	Tuesday, December 18 (9-10:30 a.m.)	20
<b>Research Proposal Paper:</b> Brief description of topic List of five empirical articles Completed paper	Wednesday, October 3 Wednesday, October 31 Wednesday, November 28, in class	30
<b>Participation</b>	Ongoing	10

### Participation/Application

*Timely* class attendance and regular participation in discussions is expected (20 points, 10% of your grade). 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. Participation points will cumulate with attendance (and decrease with unexcused missed classes), active engagement in class, and so forth.

On select days (to be announced) throughout the semester, students will share “social psychology moments,” consisting of a systematic example of course material encountered **outside** the classroom. Examples may come from a print/online article, photo, YouTube video, song, or story. In no more than 3 minutes, students will “apply” theories or research discussed in class to their example. To ensure examples on all course topics, I will ask students for several preferred topics and then construct a schedule of presentations. More detailed instructions to come.

## ***Exams***

There will be three 40-point **exams** (each 20% of your grade) during the semester. Each exam covers materials presented in readings, films, lectures, discussions, etc., for one part of the course (i.e., they are not formally cumulative). Exams include multiple choice and short essay questions. See policies below regarding make-up exams.

## ***Paper***

A 6-page **paper** (60 points, worth 30% of your grade) allows you to examine a social psychological phenomenon that you have experienced or observed. More specifically, you will write a mini empirical research proposal to study an issue of interest to you. In doing so, you will create a theoretical argument based on materials from the class and **five** additional published empirical studies, derive a hypothesis, and describe a means to test the hypothesis (e.g., using survey, experimental, or archival data). (You will not have to collect the data, but you will have to indicate what data patterns would provide confirmation or disconfirmation of your hypotheses.) A handout will provide more details on each part of the assignment.

First you must submit a brief description of your project or your ideas about what you might do by **Wednesday, October 3**. Second, I will review these short descriptions and provide feedback by **Wednesday, October 17**. In the meanwhile, you should begin researching empirical articles on your topic using Sociological Abstracts, Soc Index, and/or PsychInfo. The Sociology reference librarian developed [a guide](#) to assist you in this endeavor. By obtaining **five** empirical papers on your topic, you will be able to discern the types of methods that have been used to address questions such as yours. You must submit a list of your five empirical articles by **Wednesday, October 31**, which I will review to determine suitability. Then, following the guidelines in the paper handout, you will write your research proposal. A hard copy of the paper is tentatively due **Wednesday, November 28**, delivered in class. (Although you write a paper, this course does not fulfill the writing requirement.) Please note that I expect hardcopies of each portion of this assignment.

## **Policies**

***Make-up exams:*** Will generally **NOT** be given, except under extenuating circumstances (e.g., legitimated illness, documented family death, earthquake, local chemical spill). If you are affected by such circumstances, notify me *prior* to the exam (via email or message with the department, 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 an exam date, you must present in writing this conflict at least two weeks 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:*** Turning in parts of the paper or the paper itself any time after the class period in which they are due constitutes a late assignment. The final paper grade will consider “late parts.” Full papers will be docked 5 points each day after the official due date.

***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://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>.

**Disabilities:** Students with disabilities must contact the Office of Accessibility Services (<http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/index.html>; 727-9877) early in the semester to obtain proper documentation if accommodations are needed. Everything should be in order by the first exam.

**Canvas:** We will use the Canvas site for this course regularly. Please check the site several times a week 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:** Email is the best way to reach me. Please allow at least 24 hours for replies to emails. If you have an urgent concern about the course, contact me by calling the Sociology Department office (727-7510); the staff will be able to reach me by phone. All assignments should be submitted as hardcopies, not as emailed attachments (unless 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:** Electronics are only permitted in the classroom to the extent that they *facilitate* learning for you and do not distract others.

- **Ringling or vibrating gadgets:** Phones, pagers, watch alarms, etc. should be turned off during class! Failure to do so may result in confiscation of said gadget.
- **Computers:** Laptops and tablets may be used in class for taking notes and viewing articles. You must, however, send me an email to request permission to use your laptop in class. I will ask all computer users to 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. Instances of “surfing” unrelated to class activities will adversely affect your participation grade.

**Writing Center Access:** In composing your paper, you should feel free to avail yourself of the assistance available at the Emory Writing Center and the ESL Program. Tutors in these programs can assist with a range of projects and in a variety of forms, from inception of an idea, to structure of the document, use of sources, grammar, and word choice. (Proofreading, however, is outside of their purview!) Click to learn more about the [Writing Center](#) or about [ESL tutoring](#).

### **Course Outline**

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

Wed, 8/29     **Introduction**

Mon, 9/3     **Labor Day Holiday!!**

### **QUESTIONS, METHODS, APPROACH**

Wed, 9/5     **Social Psychological Phenomena: *What do social psychologists study?***

*SP. “Introduction to The Interrelated Processes of Social Psychology.” (Ch 1)*

- Mon, 9/10     **Methods: *What methods are appropriate, when?***  
                   *SP.* “Methods of Developing Social Psychological Knowledge.” (Ch 2, pp 9-15)
- Wed, 9/12     **Methods: *How do researchers study social interaction?***  
                   *SP.* “Methods of Developing Social Psychological Knowledge.” (Ch 2, pp 15-37)
- Wed, 9/17     **Methods: *Designing Studies*** (in-class exercise)
- Mon, 9/19     **Symbolic Interaction: *How do people socially construct their worlds?***  
                   *SP.* “Individual in a Social World.” (Ch 3)
- Wed, 9/24     **Symbolic Interaction: *How do individuals create identities?***  
                   *SP.* “Identity Processes.” (Ch 4)  
                   Lee, James David. 1998. “Which Kids Can ‘Become’ Scientists?” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 61:99-119.
- Mon, 9/26     **Symbolic Interaction: *How do identities play out in interaction?***  
                   Khanna, Nikki and Cathryn Johnson. 2010. “Passing as Black: Racial Identity Work among Biracial Americans.” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 73:380-97.
- Mon, 10/1     ***EXAM 1***
- PERCEPTUAL & AFFECTIVE PROCESSES**
- Wed, 10/3     **Social Cognition & Impression Formation: *How do people process information?***  
                   *SP.* “Intra-Individual Processes: Social Cognition.” (Ch 5, pp 91-107)
- Mon, 10/8     ***Fall Break!!!***
- Wed, 10/10    **Attribution Theory: *How do people determine the causes of behavior?***  
                   *SP.* “Intra-Individual Processes: Social Cognition.” (Ch 5, pp 108-14)  
                   Rosenhan, David L. 1973. "On Being Sane in Insane Places." *Science* 179:250-58.
- Mon, 10/15    **Attribution Biases: *How accurate are people’s perceptions of others?***  
                   *SP.* “Intra-Individual Processes: Social Cognition.” (Ch 5, pp 114-28)

- Wed, 10/17    **Attitudes: *How do evaluative beliefs develop and change?***  
 SP. “Intra-Individual Processes: Attitudes.” (Ch 6, pp 129-49)
- Mon, 10/22    **Attitudes: *When do attitudes shape behavior? When do behaviors shape attitudes?***  
 SP. “Intra-Individual Processes: Attitudes.” (Ch 6, pp 149-61)  
 De Leeuw, Astrid, Pierre Valois, Icek Ajzen, and Peter Schmidt. 2015. “Using the Theory of Planned Behavior to Identify Key Beliefs Underlying Pro-Environmental Behavior in High-School Students: Implications for Educational Interventions.” *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 42:128-38.
- Wed, 10/24    **Affect: *How do people experience emotions?***  
 SP. “Beyond Cognition: Affect and Emotion.” (Ch 7)
- Mon, 10/29    **Affect: *Why & how are emotions kept in check?***  
 Smith, Allen C. III and Sherryl Kleinman. 1989. "Managing Emotions in Medical School: Students' Contacts with the Living and the Dead." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 52:56-69.
- Wed, 10/31    **Attraction: *How do perceptions and affect influence relationship development?***  
 Aronson, Elliot. 2012. *The Social Animal*. NY: Worth Publishers. pp. 355-403  
 Treger, Stanislav, Susan Sprecher, and Ralph Erber. 2013. “Laughing and Liking: Exploring the Interpersonal Effects of Humor Use in Initial Social Interactions.” *European Journal of Social Psychology* 43:532-43.
- Mon, 11/5    **EXAM 2**
- GROUP AND INTERGROUP PROCESSES**
- Wed, 11/7    **Groups: *What is a group and does influence unfold in groups?***  
 SP. “Status Processes in Groups.” (Ch 8, pp 201-08)  
 SP. “Legitimacy: Shaping Behavior in Groups and Organizations.” (Ch 10, pp 251-56)
- Mon, 11/12    **Structure of Group Relationships – Status: *How do status differences affect interaction?***  
 SP. “Status Processes in Groups.” (Ch 8, pp 208-27)  
 Peck, B. Mitchell and Sonya Conner. 2011. “Talking with Me or Talking at Me? The Impact of Status Characteristics on Doctor-Patient Interaction.” *Sociological Perspectives* 54:547-67.

- Wed, 11/14 **Structure of Group Relationships – Status: *How can status-based interaction patterns be altered?***
- Brezina, Timothy and Kenisha Winder. 2003. “Economic Disadvantage, Status Generalization, and Negative Racial Stereotyping by White Americans.” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 66:402-18.
- Mon, 11/19 **Structure of Group Relationships – Power: *What constitutes power and power use?***
- SP*. “Power Relations in Groups and Social Networks.” *SP* (Ch 9)
- Wed, 11/21 ***Thanksgiving holiday!!!***
- Mon, 11/26 **Evaluating Relationships: *When is a relationship fair?***
- SP*. “Justice Processes and Evaluations within Groups.” *SP* (Ch 11)
- Wed, 11/28 **Evaluating Relationships: *How do people respond to injustice?***
- Hochschild, Arlie. 1989. *The Second Shift*. (Pp. 37-55). New York: Penguin.  
 Joyner, Kara. 2009. “Justice and the Fate of Married and Cohabiting Couples.” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 72:61-76.
- Mon, 12/3 **Intergroup Dynamics: *How do cognitions underlie behavior toward others?***
- SP*. “Intergroup Processes.” *SP* (Ch 12, pp 309-20)  
 Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* (pp. 77-98 “Blink in Black and White”). New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- Wed, 12/5 **Intergroup Dynamics: *How can prejudice/discrimination be eliminated?***
- SP*. “Dynamics between (Individuals in) Groups.” *SP* (Ch 12, pp 321-42)  
 Kanas, Agnieszka, Peer Scheepers, and Carl Sterkens. 2015. “Interreligious Contact, Perceived Group Threat, and Perceived Discrimination: Predicting Negative Attitudes among Religious Minorities and Majorities in Indonesia.” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 78:102-26.
- Mon, 12/10 **Wrapping up: *How do individual level processes shape social inequality?***
- Tues, 12/18 ***EXAM 3*** (9-10:30 a.m., shifted from 8 a.m. start on exam schedule!)