

PSY 255 Social Psychology

Course Description

This course is designed to offer a comprehensive introduction to social psychology as an applied science to study how people influence each other's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. We will explore and examine its core questions from both a theoretical and an applied basis.

Course Goals and Methodology

The main goal of this course is to understand what social psychology is; how this field of study has evolved into the current state of knowing; and how students can apply social psychology concepts to their own lives and experiences. The course combines lecture-based classes with a case study methodology. We will dedicate three classes to each unit. Every unit begins with several core questions, which gives way to class conversation and discussion. The instructor will present the theoretical contents of each unit in two lecture-based classes. In the third class of each unit, following a flipped classroom methodology, the students will prepare and present a number of case studies previously assigned by the instructor. Finally, each unit concludes with a self-check quiz and a number of broader questions to check students' progress and understanding are going well, and make sure students are prepared for the assessments across the course.

Learning Objectives

- By the end of the course, students will:
- Explain what social psychology is and what social psychologists do
- Analyze important questions about social thought and behavior
- Apply social psychology concepts to their own lives and experiences
- Understand how our self-perceptions are influenced by others, and how we adjust our social self to influence others
- Explain social cognition as a combination of intuition and logic to process social information
- Understand how attitudes and persuasion work within the social world
- Explain how groups provide social and practical benefits to individuals, and analyze how groups can both help and hinder individual efforts
- Describe how prejudice and discrimination emerges, and apply methods of prejudice reduction
- Explain general motives for why helping and aggressive behaviors occur
- Discuss, compare and contrast different "attachment styles" and what this means in intimate relationships

Required Texts

There is no textbook required for this course. Therefore, students are not expected to purchase any material. The instructor will post the class material (Google Slides, case studies handouts, in-class worksheets, announcements, links, and any additional reading) on Blackboard, which is accessible both on campus and off campus. To log in, you need to sign in on <https://campusvirtual.upo.es> using the username and password you received in your orientation folder.

However, the contents of the course are mainly based on the following two textbooks:

- Heinzen, T. E., & Goodfriend, W. (2018). *Social psychology*. Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore; Washington DC; Melbourne: Sage.
- Heinzen, T. E., & Goodfriend, W. (2019). *Case studies in social psychology critical thinking and application*. Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore; Washington DC; Melbourne: Sage.

Additional bibliography:

- Le <texier, Thibault. *Debunking the Stanford Prison Experiment* (2019)
- Doliński, D., Grzyb, T., Folwarczny, M., Grzybała, P., Krzyszycha, K., Martynowska, K., & Trojanowski, J. (2017). Would You Deliver an Electric Shock in 2015? Obedience in the Experimental Paradigm Developed by Stanley Milgram in the 50 Years Following the Original Studies. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 8(8), 927-933.
- Gilovich, T., Keltner, D., & Chen, S. (2019). *Social psychology*. New York: W. w. Norton & Company.
- Horwitz, S. R., & Dovidio, J. F. (2017). The rich—love them or hate them? Divergent implicit and explicit attitudes toward the wealthy. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 20, 3–31.
- Zebrowitz, L. A. (2017). First impressions from faces. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 26, 237–242.

Course Requirements and Grading

Student engagement policy

Student's engagement will account for 25 % of the final grade for this course. Students will receive two engagement grades: a mid-term grade (10%) and an end-of-semester grade (15%).

An engagement rubric is provided to ensure transparent and consistent grading.

Absences and lack of engagement

Absences during the add/drop period do not count against students' engagement grade, but may impact their performance in the course.

As a consistent lack of academic engagement may raise concerns about a student's overall academic performance, the following steps will be taken in order to support students' success:

Initial outreach – after missing 3 classes*

E-mail from professor reiterating engagement policy and consequences for additional absences.

Second outreach – after missing 4 classes*

E-mail from professor and notification of academic staff at the International office.

Academic probation – after missing 6 classes*

Student is called in for a meeting with academic staff at the International office. Automatic notification of home institution and further academic consequences.

Any additional absences will result in a failing grade.

In-class discussions will be encouraged at all sessions. Class participation will therefore be graded according to the students' previous work and reflections about the provided material. Active participation means not only attendance (being there \neq participation) but discussion with relevant basis (text-based and not just random personal experience and background), asking and answering questions in class, engaging in class discussions and conversations with classmates, questioning information presented and discussed. Students are also expected to actively participate in in-class exercises and to do some homework.

Student engagement points will be assigned based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Exemplary (9-10)	Proficient (7-8)	Passing (5-6)	Poor (0-4)
Attendance	Arrives on time and stays for the entire duration of class. No absences, or if absent once, demonstrates knowledge of course material missed.	Misses no more than two sessions or is occasionally late. Demonstrates knowledge of course material missed.	Misses 3 or 4 sessions or frequently arrives late/leaves early; exhibits little knowledge/interest regarding course material missed.	Misses 5 or more sessions and does not demonstrate knowledge of course material missed.
Preparation	Consistently well-prepared; demonstrates deep understanding of readings and completes assignments.	Usually prepared; completes readings with some understanding and usually completes assignments.	Occasionally prepared. Demonstrates limited understanding of materials and occasionally completes assignments.	Rarely prepared; minimal effort to engage with course materials.
Participation	Actively participates in discussions with thoughtful comments/questions ; demonstrates knowledge of the material and critical thinking skills.	Participates often demonstrating knowledge of material and critical thinking skills.	Participates once in a while or contributions lack depth or relevance.	Does not participate or is disruptive during discussions.
Attentiveness & Respect	Fully engaged and attentive during all sessions; respectful to professor and fellow students. Use of laptop/tablet for notetaking only; no cellphone use.	Generally attentive, with very infrequent lapses in focus and use of electronic devices for non-class related purposes. Respectful to professor and fellow students.	Occasionally inattentive or disengaged. Use of electronic devices for non-class related purposes thus showing disrespect towards professor and fellow students.	Rarely attentive, focused or responsive. Repeated use of electronic devices for non-class related purposes thus showing disrespect towards professor and fellow students.
Collaboration & Feedback	Effectively collaborates with peers in group or in-class activities following professor's instructions. Incorporates feedback to improve learning & performance.	Collaborates frequently with peers or in in-class activities. Incorporates feedback and makes moderate efforts to improve learning & performance.	Occasionally works well with peers but does not contribute substantially to in-class or group assignments. Responds to feedback inconsistently with minimal improvement.	Does not collaborate with peers, does not complete in-class or group assignments. Ignores feedback.

Exams

Two examinations will be given (midterm and final), which will cover the concepts in the course and test conceptual and critical-thinking skills. Both exams will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, essay and/or case analysis/reflection questions.

Paper

During the semester, students will be composing a final paper. A five-page summary and reflection on a social psychology applied topic that will be provided by the instructor. Students will be asked to write a final paper on one of the following topics:

- Behavioral economics
- Environmental sustainability
- Law and the courtroom
- Happiness and positive psychology
- Stress and health
- Relationship violence
- Industrial/organizational psychology
- Volunteerism and internships

This paper is to be typed, double-spaced, using black 12-point Arial font. Please abide by the deadline set by your professor. If you submit your paper after the due date, then you should expect to be penalized (5% for every working day that your paper is late). Your paper should be clear and concise using proper concepts, correct spelling, and appropriate attribution for all sources. All writing is to follow the American Psychological Association (APA) Style for citations.

Case Study Oral Presentation

Students are required to prepare a 10-minute oral presentation (in pairs or small groups) on a case study (which will be assigned by the instructor as soon as the add/drop period ends). This presentation will be graded on evidence of preparation (organized presentation, presentation/discussion flows well, no awkward pauses or confusion, evidence you did your own research), content (accurate & relevant information, appeared knowledgeable about the case study and the topic discussed, offered strategies for dealing with the problems identified in the case study), delivery (clear and logical organization, effective introduction and conclusion, creativity, relevant transitions between the different parts of the presentation, oral communication skills—eye contact, well-designed presentation slides, use attractive, relevant and illustrative images), and discussion (presenter initiates and maintains class discussion concerning the case study, use of visual aides, good use of time, involves classmates).

On your day to present, please arrive on time (or early, if possible) and prepared with your presentation (Google Slides preferred, so that you can access it from the classroom computer). All members of the group should be involved, both in preparing and in delivering the presentation. Students will be graded individually. Following each presentation, we will spend 5-10 minutes discussing the main ideas of the case presented. All students are expected to participate in the discussion, but some students will be designated discussants. These students should make sure that they have read the case study material before coming to class and note potential questions and points while listening to the presentation.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Student engagement (25%)
- Mid-term Exam (20%)
- Case Study Oral Presentation (10%)
- Final Paper (25%)
- Final Exam (20%)

Final Grade Expectations: The instructor will use the Spanish 10-point grading scale. The grades that will appear on your final transcript are also Spanish grades.

- Grade A/A- (9-10) — Outstanding performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course. The best possible grade.
- Grade B+/B (8-9) — Remarkable performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics. Next highest.
- Grade B/B- (7-8) — Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics. Indicates high average performance.
- Grade C+/C (6-7) — Fairly good performance showing an understanding of the course on a basic level. Indicates low average performance.
- Grade C/C- (5-6) — Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course's topics. Lowest passing grade
- Grade F (0-5) – Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Failing grade.

Please be aware that anything below a 5 (i.e. a C- on the U.S. scale) is a failing grade. There is no pass/fail option at UPO. If you do not officially withdraw from a class by the withdrawal deadline, a failing grade will appear next to the course name. Check out the Student Handbook for the grade conversion table (some universities may use a slightly different scale).

General Course Policies

Each student is expected to be familiar with the course syllabus. Students are expected to focus their full attention on the class, arrive on time, and stay until class ends. Leaving the classroom on repeated occasions is disturbing to both your professor and your classmates and may adversely affect your participation grade. Please make use of the 10-minute breaks in between classes to fill up your water bottle, use the restroom, etc.

Students are expected to listen and respect other points of view. Phone calls, social media, email, or Internet browsing at any time during class are not acceptable during class except for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor. You are responsible for any and all course material covered in class, announcements, and/or handouts if you are not present for any reason. Students will be held responsible to be up to date by attending to class regularly and checking both email and the Blackboard site of the course frequently (monitor your email and Blackboard announcements at least once every 24 hours).

Communicating with instructor: Please allow at least 48 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails. The weekend is not included in this timeframe. If you have an urgent request or question for your professor, be sure to send it during the week.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is a guiding principle for all academic activity at Pablo de Olavide University. Cheating on exams and plagiarism (which includes copying from the Internet) are clear violations of academic honesty. A student is guilty of plagiarism when he or she presents another person's intellectual property as his or her own. The penalty for plagiarism and cheating is a failing grade for the assignment/exam and a failing grade for the course. Avoid plagiarism by citing sources properly, using footnotes and a bibliography, and not cutting and pasting information from various websites when writing assignments.

Generative AI

AI can be a valuable learning tool when used ethically and responsibly. Here's how to use it correctly in this course. In this class, you are allowed to use AI tools (like ChatGPT) for initial brainstorming, improving your writing, grammar and style review, and support with preliminary research.

However, submitting AI-generated content as your own work or using AI to complete entire assignments without personal critical analysis is strictly prohibited and considered academic dishonesty. If you use AI in any assignment, you must clearly indicate which tool you used and how it helped you. This should be included as a footnote or in a paragraph at the end of your work.

Learning Accommodations

If you require special accommodations, or have any other medical condition you deem may affect your class performance, you must stop by the International Center to speak to Marta Carrillo (mcaroro@acu.upo.es) to either turn in your documentation or to confirm that our office has received it.

Behavior Policy

Students are expected to always show integrity and act in a professional and respectful manner. A student's attitude in class may influence his/her participation grade. The professor has a right to ask a student to leave the classroom if the student is unruly or appears intoxicated. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, that day will count as an absence regardless of how long the student has been in class.

Course contents

1. Applied Social Psychology: Social Thought and Behavior
 - a. What is social psychology?
 - b. What are the big questions in social psychology?
 - c. Is science a valid way to learn about complex social behavior?
2. The Social Self
 - a. What is the “self”?
 - b. How do we know the self is social?
 - c. How do we present different selves in different situations?
 - d. What is self-esteem?
3. Social Cognition and Person Perception
 - a. How do we think?
 - b. From where does intuition come?
 - c. How do we remember social information?
 - d. How do we form impressions of others?
 - e. How do we explain other people’s behavior?
 - f. Why do we misjudge one another?
4. Attitudes and Persuasion
 - a. What are attitudes, and do they predict behavior?
 - b. From where do they come?
 - c. How do they change?
 - d. What persuasion techniques are used to change attitudes?
5. Social Influence: Conformity, Social Roles, and Obedience
 - a. What types of social influence exist?
 - b. Why and when do we choose to conform?
 - c. How do social roles change our behavior?
6. Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination
 - a. How do we stereotype?
 - b. How do stereotypes turn into prejudices?
 - c. Is prejudice a personality problem?
 - d. Has prejudice decreased over time?
 - e. How can we reduce stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination?
7. Aggression and Violence
 - a. What does it mean to be "aggressive"?
 - b. Is aggression explained by biological instinct?
 - c. Is aggression explained by cultural influences?
 - d. Is aggression explained by situational influences?
8. Help and Cooperation
 - a. What motivates people to help others?
 - b. Why do some people help more than others?
 - c. What circumstances make helping more or less likely?
9. Intimate Relationships
 - a. What causes attraction?
 - b. What makes us physically attractive?
 - c. How do we decide to commit?
 - d. Do men and women act differently and, if so, why?
 - e.