

PSY 221A - Social Psychology  
Fall 2016, Monday/Wednesday/Thursday  
Time: 16:45 – 17:35  
3 credits

Instructor: Dr. Adimika M. Smith  
Phone: 054-984-8862  
Email: mikasmith@msn.com

**Course Description:**

Social psychology is the scientific study of the way in which people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the real or imagined presence of others. Social psychology seeks to understand individuals' subjective experiences and the way those experiences impact our behavior. One of the greatest things about studying social psychology is that it is relevant. It pertains to things you are probably already thinking about and want to know more. After this course you should have answers to questions such as "Why did so many people suddenly start wearing Ugg boots?" and "Why do women tend to underperform in comparison to men in math and science?" and "Do opposites really attract?"

So, be prepared to think. Be prepared to challenge some of your long-held assumptions about human mind and behavior. Be prepared to have fun!

**Course Goals:**

- To inform you about important theories and research findings in social psychology
- To help you become better a consumer of research in your daily life
- To give you a forum to develop as a critical thinker and writer

**Course Requirements:**

**Aronson, E., Wilson, T. D., & Akert, R. M. (2006).** Social psychology. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. isbn: 0-13-814478-8

**Cialdini, R. (2008).** *Influence: Science and Practice (5<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Allyn & Bacon, Publisher. **Only selected chapters**

**Gladwell, M. (2002).** *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. Back Bay Books, NY, NY. **Only selected chapters**

Other readings as assigned in class

**Assessment/Grading:**

**Exams.** There will be 3 exams in this course: 2 midterms and 1 final. The exams will include short-answer and essay questions. The exams will only cover material since the previous exam. Prior to the first exam, I will distribute a couple sample questions to give you a feel for what I will likely ask.

**NOTE:** Make-up exams will be scheduled only in exceptional circumstances -- for students with documented medical problems or emergencies.

**Papers.** Being able to clearly articulate in writing what you are thinking is critical both in the academic and non-academic worlds. There will be 1 paper in this class.

- **Breaking cultural norms (6-7 pages).** You are to identify an important cultural norm in today's U.S. society and break it – LEGALLY. Then analyze – from a social psychological perspective – the behaviors and events that follow from this violation of norm.

**Illustrations:** One thing I want to impress upon you, is that Social Psychology is highly relevant to the real world. In order to encourage you to use the concepts in this class to explain real world phenomenon, submit illustrations. Illustrations are **brief one page write-ups** (double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font) of examples in the real world that demonstrate a concept we learned either in the text book or in class. They should also explain how this course has given you a different perspective on or insight into the illustration. Examples of psychology at work can be drawn from television, movies, the news, personal experience, the internet etc. For example, you might write about something that is an example of a psychology concept, or an event that you can explain in terms of a psychological perspective. There will be 10 illustrations in the semester, each worth 1 point.

Please try to include full length accounts with complete reference information (date, volume, issue number, and page numbers, or web address in the case of an illustration from the World Wide Web).

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3 (final)	20%
Norm Violation Paper	25%
Illustration Paper	10%
Attendance and Participation	5%

**Attendance is mandatory for all class sessions. Should a student miss 20% or more of class sessions, he/she will be automatically withdrawn from the course and receive a W. To get an excused absence one must be ill and bring a doctor's note.**

**Course Schedule:**

- Topic 1: Introduction/Research Methods  
Chapter 1
  
- Topic 2: The Self  
Chapter 15
  
- Topic 3: The Self 2  
Chapter 6
  
- Topic 4: Social Perception  
Chapter 4
  
- Topic 5: Social Cognition  
Chapter 5
  
- Topic 6: Social Cognition/Attitudes  
Chapter 3
  
- Topic 7: Attitudes  
Chapter 7  
Tipping Point Chapters 1 & 2
  
- Topic 8: Conformity  
Chapter 8

- Topic 9: Persuasion  
Influence Chapter 6
- Topic 10: Group Influence  
Influence Chapter 5
- Topic 11: Stereotype, Prejudice, and Discrimination  
Chapter 13
- Topic 12: Aggression  
Chapter 11
- Topic 13: Bias Reduction  
Chapter 6
- Topic 14: Helping  
Chapter 12
- Topic 15: Interpersonal Attraction  
Chapter 10
- Topic 16: Relationships and Health  
Chapter 15