

**Psychology 3410, Section 001
Introduction to Social Psychology
Spring 2010**

Professor

Dr. Lisa G. Aspinwall
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Office Hours: Monday 3-4 p.m. & Tuesday 2-3 p.m.; other times by appointment

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(please put "3410" in the subject header)

Teaching Assistant

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Notes: Office hours are subject to change with advance notice. Please attend class for up-to-date information and/or check the web site for announcements.

Time & Location of Course

Lecture meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:25-1:45 p.m. in BEH-S 112.

Overview of the Course

Through a series of lectures, films, and demonstrations, this course examines the influence people have on each other's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. We will cover multiple aspects of the following topics: **social situations** (how immediate social factors influence both attitudes and behaviors); **social cognition** (how people think about people, including themselves); **social influence** (how and why people influence each other's thoughts, feelings, and actions); **group processes** (how and why people are influenced by groups); **attitude change** (how and why people are influenced by persuasion, propaganda, and advertising); **stereotyping and prejudice** (how and why people think about each other on the basis of group membership) and **intergroup relations** (how groups of people behave toward each other). In a special unit, we will examine research on the **effects of media violence**, including materials found in movies, video games, music videos, and music lyrics. We will also examine **interventions** designed to reduce stereotyping and prejudice, to reduce the effects of media violence, and to bolster people's resistance to unwanted forms of persuasion.

A detailed schedule of topics, readings, and exams appears on page 8.

Required Text

Myers, D.G. (2008). Social Psychology (9th edition). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Course Objectives

There are four major objectives of this course:

- 1) to show you the range and power of the influence people have on the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of others,
- 2) to present and to evaluate the major theories of social psychology,
- 3) to examine research methods used to understand social attitudes and behavior, and
- 4) to discuss how social psychological research may be applied to social problems, such as violence and intergroup conflict.

Class Web Site & Other Resources

Up-to-the-minute course information, additional resources for learning about social psychology, and most course materials (including lecture outlines, practice questions for the exams, study guides, and the paper assignment) may be found on the **course web site**:

www.olms.utah.edu

Requirements of the Course & Grading

Exams and Paper

1. Three exams -- two midterms and one noncumulative final (45 points each)
2. Paper #1 (required, due 3/11 by 4:30 p.m.; 20 points)

Total Points = 155

More information about the paper will be provided in class.

Participation Counts

Although no attendance will be taken, **strong consistent thoughtful participation** during small group activities and lecture will be recognized in cases where a student is 1-2 points away from a higher grade. Exceptionally good contributions will be recognized in cases where a student makes substantial and consistent contributions to the quality of the group's discussion during small group activities and/or by asking questions during the lecture. These judgments are made at the sole discretion of the teaching assistant and the professor. If you contribute regularly to small group activities or to the lecture, be sure to identify yourself to your teaching assistant or to the professor so that we may evaluate your contributions. Credit will not be given simply for attending lecture, and no attendance records will be taken.

Important Administrative Details

NOTE: The following rules are presented in the interest of fairness for all students.

Documented Scheduling Conflicts & Other Hardships

With two weeks advance notice, we may be able to help you out of a jam (e.g., 3 exams on the same day, 3 papers due before the midterm, 3 weddings to attend, etc.). Without advance arrangements, no exceptions will be made. If you have a schedule conflict, submit a written request to the professor as soon as possible. In the request, include the reason, documentation of the reason, your name, and phone # (with good times to call you) or e-mail address.

Missing Exams

Makeup exams are granted only for illness or extreme circumstances beyond your control. Except in emergencies, you must notify the professor in writing before the start of the exam that you will not be able to attend. If this is not possible, you must phone the professor at (801) 587-9021 before the start of the exam (your message will be time-stamped). In all cases, you will need written documentation of the reason for which you missed the exam (for example, if you had car trouble, bring in your towing and/or garage receipts; better yet, get a ride to the exam and fix your car later). Except in extreme cases, documentation of the reason for which you missed the exam must be presented within one week of the exam. Delays beyond one week will result in the loss of 1 letter grade per day or part of day. Once your excuse for missing an exam has been approved by the professor, we will schedule a specific time for the make-up exam, which will be held only on Thursday, April 29 (see below).

Make-ups for the first 2 exams will be offered on one day only: Thursday, April 29 (times to be announced). Although makeup exams will cover the same material (and be of the same difficulty) as the original exam, the professor reserves the right to administer the make-up exam in a different format from the original (for example, essays and short answers instead of multiple choice).

Students who miss the final exam **with a valid approved written excuse** will receive an incomplete for the course and may take a make-up exam during the first week of Summer Session 1, 2010 (May 17-21). Students who miss the final exam **without a valid approved written excuse** will receive a score of zero on the final exam.

Note about illness prior to or during the exam. If you are too ill to prepare for or take the exam, don't take the exam! Instead, call the professor before the exam and then get a written medical excuse. ***Once you have taken the exam or taken any part of the exam, you will not be able to take a make-up exam.*** (Why not? Because you will have seen the exam questions, and this would not be fair to other students.)

Missing Class to Observe Religious Holidays

Every effort will be made to ensure that students observing religious holidays are not placed at a disadvantage. With advance notice, we will tape lectures and put films on reserve. You can facilitate this process by giving us written notice of days on which you will be unable to attend by the end of the second week of class. The advance notice is especially important in the case of exams. Students missing exams for this reason may take a make up in advance of the April 29 make-up exam date.

Other Details

Withdrawals: The last day to drop or delete classes is January 20, and the last date for course withdrawal is March 5. Please consult University policies regarding withdrawals from medical or other personal circumstances.

Incompletes: Incompletes are given only for extraordinary circumstances. For an incomplete to be given, the student must be passing the course and have completed the majority of the assignments. Please see your registration guide for more detailed information.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

If you qualify for accommodations in classroom seating, test-taking, or other aspects of the course, *we encourage you to use them, starting with the first lecture and exam*. Please see the professor as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements.

Other Accommodations

Students wishing to discuss potential accommodations for religious or other personal reasons should plan to meet with Dr. Aspinwall during the first two weeks of the semester. Please see the notes on the reading list that describe sensitive materials that will be discussed during the special unit on media violence during the weeks of April 12 and 20.

Grading Disputes & Regrade Requests

After the return of any midterm exam or paper, you have **two weeks** to check your grade. To check your exam, please see the professor during office hours or set up a meeting at a different time. Delays beyond two weeks must be accompanied by written documentation and be approved by the professor. Questions about final exam scores and final grades must be addressed by Friday, May 28, 2010.

Academic Dishonesty

Don't even consider it. **Get help in office hours, ask for an extension, do anything but cheat.** The time you would spend studying to take an exam honestly or to write your own paper would be far less than you would spend trying to fight failing the class or being expelled from the university. More importantly, any grade you earn in this course will reflect your own effort and accomplishment.

As a student, it is in your best interest to try to prevent plagiarism and other forms of cheating. Please be attentive to such issues when you are preparing papers or taking exams for this class.

Although it is often helpful to discuss the paper assignment and course materials with other students, no group projects are allowed; your paper must represent your own individual original work. Papers that have substantial overlap in text with other submitted papers or with papers available on the Internet will be referred to the university as potential instances of plagiarism.

It is your responsibility as a student to understand how to discuss other authors' work in an appropriate way. It is our responsibility to answer any questions you may have about such issues. If you have any questions about appropriate ways in which to use and discuss another author's work in your own papers, please ask either the professor or the TA.

Information about Exams

Each exam will consist of 45 multiple-choice questions. These questions will require you to integrate and to apply course material, especially about key experiments and theories. **Very few questions will ask for definitions of concepts -- I will assume that you know these things from lectures, demonstrations, and readings.** You will not be tested on names of psychologists or specific dates, although I may use researchers' names in questions to jog your memory.

Midterm #1 will be on Thursday, February 11 during class time.

Midterm #2 will be on Tuesday, March 16 during class time.

The final exam will be Friday, April 30, 2010, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., as scheduled by the university.

All exams will be held in BEH-S 112. Plan to arrive about 5 min early to each exam.

Write Your Own Exam Questions

If you try your hand at writing exam questions, the professor will evaluate your questions for you and may even put them on the exam. Students who have taken the time to do this in the past have reported that it was helpful to find out before the exam whether they understood the material (and, of course, it's also helpful to take an exam consisting of questions you have written yourself). Each student may submit a maximum of 3 questions. **Questions must be typed and may be submitted via e-mail to lisa.aspinwall@utah.edu; please put "3410 exam questions" in the subject header.** The professor reserves the right to modify students' questions for exam use. More information will be provided in class.

Exam Reviews

Prior to each exam, there will be an exam review conducted by the TA. Students in Psych 3410 are expected to take an active role in their learning. Accordingly, the teaching assistant has been instructed NOT to prepare a formal exam review and not to repeat course lectures verbatim. Instead, **you should prepare questions** to ask during the review to stimulate discussion. Your TA may even require one question per person as an admission ticket to the review. As a result, the reviews will be as good as your questions and those of other students make them, so take the time to go through your notes to identify what you don't know. We will present additional information about the reviews prior to each exam. This information will be presented in class and on the web site.

Practice Questions

The class web site features "interactive" practice exams featuring real questions from past exams and explanations of why each option is or is not correct.

Using Earlier Editions of the Texts

We know that textbooks have become horribly expensive. A few copies of the Myers text will be placed on reserve at the Marriott Library. If you use an older version, please be sure to check with us or with a friend in the class to see if new information has been added to the current edition. You will be responsible for the information in the edition listed on the syllabus. You may also "visit" the current edition during Dr. A's office hours (no appointment required).

Book Buyback Program for Myers 9th Edition -- NEW!

Please note that we are participating in the University Bookstore's book buyback program, in which we have agreed to use the same textbook for the next three years. This means that you should be able to buy a used copy of the Myers 9th edition text at a better price, and get more money for it at the end of the class should you choose to sell it back to the bookstore.

General Information and Suggestions for Doing Well in Psych 3410

1. **Read the assignments in the text.** The exams will draw equally from the book and lectures. Additional material covered in demonstrations and other activities will also be on the exam. The #1 cause of low exam grades in this class is failure to do the assigned reading.

Study tip: If you do the assigned reading in advance of the week's lecture, you will have a conceptual framework on which to "hang" new information. That is, you won't be hearing everything for the first time in class, and you will have a good sense of why what you are hearing is important. Then you can relate the new information to what you have read, a strategy that has been proven to increase understanding and retention of complex material.

2. **Ask us** -- see us in office hours, send us an e-mail, or ask a question in class. **There is no such thing as a stupid question.** If you don't understand something, chances are another 50 students don't understand it either, and you will be doing them -- and yourself -- a favor by

asking us. We are here to help you learn. If you are shy, submit questions to Dr. A. or to your TA via e-mail, and we will answer your question in class or on the web site if it is of general interest (or individually if it is more specific or on a side topic).

3. Prepare seriously for the first exam. The first exam is usually the most difficult of the 3 exams, not because we are mean-spirited, but because the information is the most complex and conceptual. Please plan your study time accordingly.

4. Use campus resources & our practice questions. If multiple choice exams are not your strength, please get help from resources on campus and also use the practice questions that will be posted on the web site. Please do not wait until after you have had trouble on the first exam to get help.

5. Visit the Writing Center, our office hours, or both. If written assignments are not your strength, please get help from resources on campus. We will read a draft of your paper if you give it to us sufficiently in advance (please ask about requirements for advance notice).

Important Warning about Commercial Study Guides

The professor strongly discourages the use of the many commercial study guides available (for example, the one that accompanies the Myers text), because they encourage you to learn only the definition of key concepts (i.e., what something is) instead of how it works, why it might be important, and how it compares to other things. Instead, if you make your own study guide, the TA or the professor will evaluate it for you prior to the exam.

Important Warning about Commercial Note-Taking Services

Although such materials may be useful supplements to your own notes, you should know that these materials (even any that may be sold through the university) have not been reviewed for accuracy or completeness by the professor or by any teaching assistant, nor will they be.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have complete and accurate lecture notes.

Accurate note-taking is a skill that you can learn; the professor strongly recommends that students who want to take better notes take advantage of campus resources to learn study and note-taking skills instead of relying on second-hand, commercial notes. Additionally, the process of taking notes (listening, integrating, organizing, reviewing, reorganizing) has been shown to increase both understanding and retention of material (see study tip #1). You are cheating yourself of this benefit if you rely on other people's notes.

Schedule of Required Readings, Exams, & the Paper Assignment

I. Power of the Situation, Attitudes & Behavior, Attribution Theory, Social Cognition

Date	Readings
Week of 1/12	Myers 1
Week of 1/19	Myers 4
Week of 1/26	Myers 3
Week of 2/2	Myers 2 & 14
Week of 2/9	no new reading

MIDTERM EXAM #1 is scheduled on Thursday 2/11 during class time.

II. Social Influence: Power, Conformity, Group Processes, & Persuasion

Week of 2/16	Baumrind & Milgram articles (on web site); Myers 6
Week of 2/23	Myers 8
Week of 3/2	Myers 15 See <u>12 Angry Men</u> (in class 3/2)
Week of 3/9	Myers 7
Week of 3/16	no new reading

REQUIRED PAPER IS DUE by 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 11.

MIDTERM EXAM #2 is scheduled on Tuesday, March 16 during class time.

Week of 3/23	SPRING BREAK -- NO CLASSES, NO READINGS
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III. Intergroup Relations, Prejudice, & Stereotyping; Research Design; Aggression, Media Violence, & Public Policy

Week of 3/30	Myers 9
Week of 4/6	Myers 13
Week of 4/13*	reread Myers 1, pp. 17-29; Myers 10
Week of 4/20*	Readings on web site (details to follow)
Week of 4/27	no new reading

*Important Note: Materials discussed from 4/13 through 4/22 may be upsetting and/or offensive to some people. Please attend class for information that will allow you to make an informed decision about whether you wish to see optional films that are part of a special unit on media violence, including violent pornography. You may also choose to discuss this in advance with Dr. Aspinwall as per the course accommodations policy.

The **FINAL EXAM** will take place on Friday, April 30, 2010, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., as scheduled by the university. All regularly scheduled exams will be held in BEH-S 112.