Course Overview and Goals
This course will provide an overview of current theory and research on social cognition (how people make sense of themselves and others’ behavior), with a primary focus on the development of social cognition. It is an upper level (junior/senior) seminar in which we'll cover the development of self-concept, identity, and attachment. We'll also cover topics like romantic relationship development, academic achievement, gender identity development, and sexual orientation, as well as the intersection of gender, class, and race with these topics.

As an advanced undergraduate course in psychology, the class will be structured around group discussion, with some lecture material provided. Additional class activities will involve guest speakers, films, and small-group activities. The intent is to provide a stimulating environment in which to learn basic and applied principles of social cognitive development.

After completing this course, students should be able to:

(1) understand both past and current thinking in the field of social cognition, including knowledge of central psychological theories and research findings

(2) think critically about psychological theory and research, and

(3) consider the practical implications of current research on social cognition.

Note: A prerequisite for this class is PSYCH 161 or PSYCH 130 (or a similar introductory child development or social psychology course). If you have not completed this prerequisite, you may not take the course. Prior completion of PSYCH 109-110 is also strongly recommended for optimal success in this course.

Course Materials
- Required course readings:
  - All required readings for the course are available on Blackboard. Printing out the readings is likely to be useful so that you can take notes, integrate readings with course material, etc.
o NOTE: Because this course relies heavily on class discussion of reading material, it is imperative that you complete required readings BEFORE COMING TO CLASS. If necessary, pop quizzes will be used to ensure that students are keeping up to date on the readings (!).

• Midterm exam reading:
  o Students are required to read one of the following novels by **10/10/05** in order to successfully complete the midterm exam:

  Without a Map: A Memoir – by Meredith Hall
  The Kite Runner – by Khaled Hosseini
  Random Family: Love, Drugs, Trouble and Coming of Age in the Bronx – by Adrian Nicole LeBlanc

  Each of these books is available for purchase at local bookstores (e.g., Barnes & Noble, Borders, etc.) or at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (or any other on-line source you can find).

  Students are urged to purchase and begin reading their chosen novel as soon as possible.

  **Course Evaluation**
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integration Papers (2)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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  *See description of each requirement following course schedule.

  **Grading Scale**

  100%: A+  95-99%: A  90-94%: A-  87-89%: B+  84-86%: B  80-83%: B-

  77-79%: C+  74-76%: C  70-73%: C-  67-69%: D+  64-66%: D  60-63%: D-

  less than 60%: F

  **Note: I will only “round up” from the hundredths decimal (not the tenths) for final grades. Thus, you need at least .95 to move up to the next whole number.**

  **Extra Credit**

  Periodically, extra credit opportunities may be available for interested students. These experiences typically consist of participation in IRB-approved studies conducted within the psychology department. Typically, research participation will entail 1 extra credit point (on the midterm or final exam) for each study that you participate in.

  **Religious Holidays**

  Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. Each semester students should submit in writing to their instructors by the end of the second full week of classes their documented religious holiday schedule for the semester. Faculty must permit students who miss work for the purpose of religious observance to make up this work.
Description of Course Requirements

Integration Papers

Two times during the semester, each student will write a 3-5 page integration paper on that week’s course material. Papers should be double-spaced with one-inch margins. Do not use a font larger than 12-point. The format of these papers is relatively open; however, students should strive to think about the implications of the week’s material for their own understanding of social cognitive processes. Here is a suggested summary of what to include, as well as suggested page limits:

1. Clearly identify the week and topic you are writing about.
2. Include a brief summary of the material that was covered that week (1 page).
3. Critically discuss any points that were unclear and/or issues you feel require further investigation. Alternatively, you may choose to integrate this week’s material with previously covered course material, discussing similarities and/or differences. (1-2 pages).
4. Apply the week’s material to events or circumstances in your own life, adding a personal/applied component to the material (1-2 pages).

Evaluation

- Papers will be graded on the extent to which they conform to the suggested guidelines, as well as clarity of writing. Students should NOT focus solely on a summary of the course material, but focus on (1) critically thinking about this material and (2) applying it to experiences outside the classroom.

- Failing to complete both papers by November 19 will result in a 0 grade for this portion of the course. There are no exceptions to this policy. Students are encouraged to turn in their papers well before the deadline.

Exams and Class Participation

The take-home midterm exam will consist of a series of essay questions in which students will apply course material to the novel that they have read. Each of the selected novels involves a variety of characters grappling with self/identity issues, and deals with gender, class, and/or race in central ways. Mastery of these topics is a focus of the first half of the class, and students will be required to apply their knowledge of these topics to the material in the novel. Students will have one week to complete the exam. More information on the midterm will be passed out in class.

The take-home final exam will consist of a series of essay questions as well. More to come on this later… ☺

Class Participation

Students are expected to attend all classes and to actively participate in class discussions. To accomplish this goal, students must read the required readings prior to class. Evaluation will be based on attendance and the quality of comments/questions derived from readings and lectures. Be prepared to discuss and argue your views, and to respectfully challenge those of others (including mine). Students are encouraged to build on the comments of other students in addition to the professor’s material.

**Note: Students having difficulty with the writing in this course should feel free to contact the University Writing Center (656-4075) for advice and guidance. Please let me know if you need further info.
9/3  Introduction to Course

I.  Core Principles

9/8  What is “social cognition?”

9/10  Review of Research Methods

9/15  Self-Concept and Identity
           and adolescence.

9/17  Self-Concept and Identity (cont.)
Readings:  Group Identity

9/22  Attachment
Reading:  Infant attachment article
          Allen et al. (2004). Stability and change in attachment security across
           adolescence.

9/24  Attachment (cont.)
           research on close relationships.

9/29  Possible Selves

10/1  NO CLASS – Attend Susan Fiske colloq. instead (Friday, 10/3, 4 pm, 314 Dewey)

II.  Demographic Factors as Moderators

10/6  Socioeconomic Status/Class
          Ostrove (2003). Belonging and wanting: Meanings of social class
           background for women's constructions of their college
           experiences.
          Luthar (2005). The culture of affluence: Psychological cost of material
           wealth.
10/8 **Race/Ethnicity**
Smedley & Smedley (2005). Race as biology is fiction, racism as a social problem is real.
Helms et al. (2005). The meaning of race in psychology and how to change it.

10/13 **Race/Ethnicity (cont.)**

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**MIDTERM EXAM HANDED OUT (IN CLASS)**

10/15 **Gender**

10/20 **MIDTERM EXAM DUE – 5 PM**

10/22 **Gender (cont.)**

*Guest Speaker:* Annie Murray-Close, Ph.D. (Psychology)

**Nikki Crick colloquium: Friday, 10/24 – 4 pm – 314 Dewey Hall**

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**III. Socialization Processes**

10/27 **Gender Socialization**
Tenenbaum & Leaper (2002). Are parents’ gender schemas related to their children's gender-related cognitions?

10/29 **Gender Socialization (cont.)**
Reading:

11/3 **Achievement Socialization**

11/5 **Achievement Socialization (cont.)**
11/10  Romantic Relationships

11/12  Romantic Relationships (cont.)

11/17  Sexual Orientation & Identity
Case 7 – A step in the only direction, plus commentary and follow-up

11/19  Sexual Orientation & Identity
Panel Discussion - TBA

11/24 – 11/26  HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

12/1  Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Constructing the Self
Reading: TBA

12/3  Stereotypes about Adolescence
Reading: Nichols & Good (2004). The continuing myth of adolescence.
Guest Speaker: Joanne Kalisz, MA

12/8  I-Sharing
Reading: TBA
Guest Speaker: Leslie Crimin, MA

FINAL EXAM HANDED OUT (IN CLASS)

12/10  Wrap-Up and Review

12/19  FINAL EXAM DUE – 2 PM