GRADUATE SEMINAR: EMOTIONS ACROSS THE LIFECOURSE
Fall 2012
Mondays 9-11:30
Dewey 238
3 credits

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-3:45, or by appointment

Course Objectives

This course will provide a broad overview of key areas of theory and research on human emotions, as well as delve into some selected subtopics of interest. Although we will draw heavily from developmental perspectives on emotion, our ultimate goal will be to explore emotions and emotion-related processes across the lifespan. This course is intended for graduate students in psychology and related fields.

Required Readings

Most weeks, we will read a chapter from the Handbook of Emotions:


Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Class Format

This class will follow a seminar format, with an emphasis on discussion and active learning. Each week I will provide a brief lecture to begin our class meeting. I will also occasionally bring videos or other materials to illustrate concepts from the readings for that week.

Course Evaluation

1. Class Participation (25%) and Thought Papers (25%)

Critiquing and engaging in intellectual discussions of theory and research is a critical component of a career as a psychologist. Students must come to class alert and ready to engage with the material for that week; that means completing all readings before class. Active participation is essential for the success of this course. This includes listening attentively and responding to others as well as making contributions regarding your own thoughts and ideas. If you aren’t comfortable in discussions yet, our class meetings will provide you with the opportunity to
practice. Remember that the purpose of our class meetings is to develop skills as well as knowledge.

To facilitate class discussion, you will write weekly thought papers. Thought papers should be approximately one single-spaced page (1 inch margins, 12 point font) and are due to me via email by 5 PM on Fridays. You must complete a total of 10 response papers. You do not need to complete a response paper on the day of your class presentation; this will give you one “free” day of your choosing on which you do not need to hand in a paper. Use it wisely!

Your thought papers should NOT simply request clarification on minor points in the readings, but rather should demonstrate that you are reflecting on the material in a meaningful way. Your thought papers might include but are not limited to the following: synthesis across readings (within the topic or across topics); critiques of the conceptualization, methodology, statistical analyses, or interpretations of the readings; or reflection on applications to research, policy, or intervention. I will read everyone’s papers before our class meetings. Should I call on you in class, you should be prepared to elaborate on points raised in your thought paper and to lead the class discussion based on your thoughts.

2. In-Class Presentation (25%)

You will give a presentation and lead a class discussion on an empirical article (NOT a review) related to the primary topic being covered on the day they present. You will be allowed to select your own article, but I will need to approve it beforehand. Please bring your top 3 choices for presentation dates to class on 9/10. Dates eligible for presentations are starred on the schedule.

First, you must have your selected reading approved by me no later than two weeks before your presentation. Second, you must read 3-4 additional articles on the assigned topic, prepare a brief presentation of the topic (10 minutes), develop a list of discussion questions based on the reading you selected, and facilitate class discussion for approximately 30 minutes. Your brief presentation should integrate ideas from the additional readings that you completed along with the assigned reading and provide a broader framework for the group discussion. It is then your job to effectively facilitate a scholarly discussion amongst your classmates. We will discuss strategies for accomplishing these goals in class.

On the day of your presentation, please hand in: 1) a list of the additional articles that you read, and 2) a list of discussion questions/talking points that you developed for your presentation.

Examples of reputable journals that often publish original research related to emotions:

- Biological Psychology
- Brain and Cognition
- Child Development
- Developmental Psychology
- Cognition and Emotion
- Development and Psychopathology
- Emotion
- Journal of Abnormal Psychology
- Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology
- Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology
- Journal of Experimental Child Psychology
- Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
- Motivation and Emotion
- Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin
- Psychological Science
- Psychophysiology
3. **Take-home Final Exam (25%)**

On Monday 12/3, I will distribute a list of essay questions, from which you will select two. These questions are intended to assess your ability to synthesize research, integrate course materials with your own ideas, and present clear, articulate arguments. Each response should be approximately 5 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font) **not** including references. Your answers are due on 12/10 (printed copies only).

**Class Schedule**

This schedule is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.

9/10/12: **Theories of Human Emotion**

**DUE: TOP 3 PRESENTATION DATES!**

3) HoE Chapter 39: Appraisal theories

9/17/12: **Structure and Measurement of Emotions**

1) HoE Chapter 36: Emotion concepts
3) HoE Chapter 12: Vocal expressions of emotions.

9/24/12: **Evolutionary Perspectives**

1) HoE Chapter 8: Evolutionary psychology of emotions

10/1/12: Emotional Development I**

1) HoE Chapter 18: The emergence of human emotions
2) HoE Chapter 19: Children’s understanding of emotion

10/8/12: Emotional Development II**

1) HoE Chapter 20: The interface of emotional development with social context
2) HoE Chapter 21: Young children’s understanding of others’ emotions

10/15/12: Self-Conscious Emotions**

1) HoE Chapter 46: Self-conscious emotions

10/22/12: Social Emotions**

1) HoE Chapter 26: Intergroup emotions
2) HoE Chapter 27: Empathy and prosocial behavior
3) HoE Chapter 28: Social functions of emotions
10/29/12: Emotion Regulation**

1) HoE Chapter 31: Emotion regulation

11/5/12: Gender and Emotions**

1) HoE Chapter 24: Gender and Emotion in Context

11/12/12: Cultural Perspectives**

1) HoE Chapter 25: The cultural psychology of the emotions

11/19/12: THANKSGIVING BREAK

11/26/12: Topic to be selected by the class, readings TBA

12/3/12: Topic to be selected by the class, readings TBA