Instructor: Dr. Tracy McLaughlin-Volpe, Assistant Professor of Psychology
Office: 334 John Dewey Hall
Phone: 656-1041
Office Hours: by appointment
E-mail: tracy.mclaughlin-volpe@uvm.edu

Textbook:


I strongly recommend buying Myers’ textbook, but if you would rather not, a copy of Social Psychology is on reserve at the Library.

Computer accounts:

All students in this course are required to have internet access because class-related information will be disseminated via e-mail. If you have not yet activated or started to use your UVM e-mail account, please do so as soon as possible.

Course overview:

This course is an introduction to the discipline of social psychology. Social psychology is the scientific study of how people come to understand individuals, groups, and themselves as social entities. Social psychology processes influence how we perceive, judge, remember, and behave toward people. These processes shape, and are shaped by, our social expectations, social roles, social goals, and social interactions.

Although many people believe that social psychologists merely study "the obvious" (e.g., attractive people are liked better than unattractive people), the field itself has made a significant impact both theoretically (e.g., theories about the formation of group stereotypes and prejudice) and in an applied sense (e.g., making group decisions more effective in the workplace). Sometimes the research is
based on observable phenomena and everyday intuition, but even in these cases, an understanding of
the processes and limitations of folklore is very important. Moreover, social psychologists often find
that laypeople’s intuitions are wrong (e.g., you are more likely to get help with fewer, rather than
more, people around you). In such cases, the insights and contributions of social psychology are
especially striking.

This course has many goals...

- First and foremost, students should learn the corpus of research findings and theories of social
  psychology.
- Also, they should understand the research methods that social psychologists use and why
  they’re used.
- In addition, these techniques should demonstrate the value of using the scientific method and
  scientific reasoning in understanding our world.
- Lastly, you should be able to apply the lessons of social psychology in the real world. Social
  psychology is always operating in your everyday life: Why are some people more popular
  than others? How do advertisers use persuasion and influence in selling their products? Why
  is a person more likely to sabotage their best friend, relative to a complete stranger, in certain
  situations? Do subliminal cues really affect our behavior? Do people really treat others
differently because of their age, sex, or race?

Grading:

Grades will be based on scores from several assignments. The details of each assignment will be
announced in class. Late assignments or reports will not be accepted, so please be sure to back up
your computer files and print your work at least one day before it is due.

In-class demonstrations:

On occasion, in-class demonstrations will be performed to illustrate social psychology
principles. Although you do not have to participate in these demonstrations, your participation is
greatly appreciated and will allow you (and the class as a whole) to understand the topic in greater
detail (as well as contribute to the class experience). These demonstrations will be short (typically
about 5 minutes). Usually, the results will be presented in class so you can immediately see the
implications of the relevant psychological principles.

Class policies:

Attendance: Attendance is expected and will be checked occasionally.

Academic integrity: Any act of academic dishonesty will be punished to the fullest extent in
accordance with UVM’s policy on academic misconduct. Any evidence of academic misconduct by a
group of students will be considered academic misconduct by all parties involved.
Course notes: Attending class and taking notes are the student’s responsibility. If you plan on missing a class, ask classmates if you can borrow their notes (if you don’t know how to persuade others to do your bidding, read Chapter 7 right now).

Classroom conduct: While in the classroom, people are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and civil manner. It is quite all right (and downright encouraged) for people to express their opinions and beliefs in an impassioned fashion. It is quite another thing, however, to be disrespectful or rude to students or to the instructor. It is fine to disagree with others, and it is okay to express non-PC (politically correct) views. However, disrespectful conduct will not be accepted. In class, I expect you to listen to others, participate, and be involved. Please turn off your cell phone during class.

Semester schedule:

This is a tentative breakdown of the semester day by day. Reading assignments are from your textbook. Unless otherwise indicated by a range of page numbers in parentheses, the entire chapter is assigned. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Tu 5/24</td>
<td>Introduction to the course &amp; Research Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We 5/25</td>
<td>The Self</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Th 5/26</td>
<td>Social Beliefs and Judgments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Tu 5/31</td>
<td>Behavior and Attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We 6/1</td>
<td>Persuasion: Principles and Tactics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th 6/2</td>
<td>Conformity and Obedience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Tu 6/7</td>
<td>Social Reality, Persuasion, &amp; Conformity: An Integration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We 6/8</td>
<td>Group Influences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Th 6/9</td>
<td>Aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Tu 6/14</td>
<td>Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We 6/15</td>
<td>Reducing Conflict and Discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th 6/16</td>
<td>Altruism and Helping Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Tu 6/21</td>
<td>Attraction and Love</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We 6/22</td>
<td>Social Psychology and the Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th 6/23</td>
<td>Social Psychology and the Sustainable Future</td>
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</tbody>
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