

Social Psychology SOP-3004
Introduction to Social Psychology (Spring 2025)
Tuesdays 1:55-2:45 PM & Thursdays 1:55-3:50 PM
Psychology 130

Professor: Dr. Erin C. Westgate (she/her/hers)

Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 12:45-1:45pm | see also TA office hours

Office: McCarty C #508

Email: Please use Canvas email (Erin Westgate)

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

Social psychology is the scientific study of how people experience the world, and the ways in which our subjective *construals* – of ourselves, of others, of the situations we’re in – shape our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Three themes we’ll come back to again and again:

1. Construals matter
2. Situations are powerful
3. We are often “strangers to ourselves”

By the end of the course, it’s my hope that you’ll start to see the world as social psychologists do – as more complex, more interesting, and far less comprehensible than we give it credit for. And that you’ll recognize the incredible tool we have in scientific experimental methods to unravel this world that we live in, and ourselves.

REQUIRED TEXTS

We will be using two primary texts - a traditional textbook (Aronon et al.’s *Social Psychology*) and a popular press book (*Redirect*) that applies social psychology to everyday life. Both are available through the campus bookstore, or online. These texts will be supplemented with original empirical journal articles from time to time (see syllabus for these readings).

- Wilson, T.D. (2011). *Redirect: Changing the Stories We Live By*. **[any edition]**
- Aronson, E., Wilson, T. D., Sommers, S. R., Page-Gould, & Lewis (2022). *Social Psychology* **(11th edition)** Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

IMPORTANT: We recommend using the eTextbook version of this text, to save on costs. See the last page of this syllabus about how to access it. You do not have to use the e-version. If you would prefer a hard copy, you can rent one from the Pearson website or order a loose-leaf version to accompany the eText through the bookstore. The eText is also available through UF All Access.

ADDITIONAL COURSE READINGS

Reading original scientific papers is an important and helpful skill for knowing what the actual science has to say. Scientific literacy is a skill every person should have. In addition to our two

primary texts, many weeks we will also read original empirical scientific articles, which can be found as PDFs on the course website. These readings go beyond the basics covered in lecture and your texts, and will give you a deep dive into how social psychologists conduct and report scientific studies. They will also give you practice in reading and understanding scientific reports.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

The lectures will cover a good deal of material that is not in the readings, thus class attendance is a very important part of the course. Students are responsible for all announcements made in class and on Canvas. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus, including the dates of tests and due dates of papers. As discussed below, there will be opportunities to earn extra credit for participation and attendance in class. Students must be present in class to submit iClicker questions. **This class is scheduled as 100% in-person; lectures will not be streamed or available as recordings to be watched afterwards.**

That said, **please do not come to class** if you are sick or have been exposed to someone who is; instead, please contact one of the TAs as soon as possible so we can make alternative arrangements. The TAs are happy to meet with you individually to review lecture material you may have missed, and your study group leader can help coordinate shared lecture notes. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

LOW TECH ZONE: LAPTOP/TABLET/PHONE POLICY

Many students like to bring laptops to class so that they can follow along on the Powerpoints and take notes. Recent research shows, however, that college students do better on tests if they take notes by hand. Other research shows that students are not as good at multitasking as they think they are, thus, if you decide to text or check your email during lectures you will probably not retain the material as well. Lastly, research shows that students (and their instructors!) are distracted by other students who use their laptops or phones to text, check email, play games, etc. Therefore, use of laptops, tablets and phones is not allowed* during lecture. Please put your phone away and have it either off or set to airplane mode (even simply vibrating is a distraction to you).

**If you feel your note-taking will suffer without such a device, you can apply to Prof Westgate for special permission to sit in a designated laptop-use-area at the front of the lecture hall. A permission form is available on the course page.*

CANVAS

Information about the course, including this syllabus, is on Canvas. It is important that you check the Canvas course site *regularly* for announcements.

STUDY GROUPS

This is a very large class. To help you get to know your classmates better, and provide opportunities for additional studying, you will be assigned to a smaller study group of 20-30 students led by one of the undergraduate TAs. Study group assignments will be announced at the end of add/drop. Each study group meets weekly at an assigned time and location – please check on the first page of the syllabus for where and when your study group will meet. If this time does not work for you, you may request a transfer to another study group; to do so, please email *both* TAs (the one you are transferring from, and the one you wish to transfer to) for approval.

Study groups work on a drop-in basis – you can attend every week, just before exams or papers, or none of them. Your study group TA will be your first point of contact in the course – please feel free to email them with questions, or check in with them after class! Your TA will be in touch with additional information about how your particular study group will run. ***Participation in the study groups is optional, but highly encouraged.***

OFFICE HOURS

My office is in McCarty C #508 (take the elevator up to the 5th floor), and my office hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:45-1:45pm. Each of our head teaching assistants also holds office hours – their times and locations can be found at the top of the syllabus. What are office hours? Watch this [short video](#)! Office hours are a chance for you to get help on assignments; go over material covered in class; talk about some connections between class materials and your other extracurricular or academic work; think about future career or research opportunities, course selection, and so on. They are generally student-directed, but I can help you formulate questions to ask based on my sense of your strengths and weaknesses. **Please come see me, otherwise I will be sad and lonely with nobody to talk to.**

The TAs help design and grade all course assignments and exams, and are truly experts in the subject – **I highly encourage you to visit the TAs' office hours** and attend your study group for help in studying and study strategies, paper writing, reviewing past exams, and going over material you might have missed in class. They are experts in social psychology, and have all taken or taught this class before!

EMAIL POLICY

Ideally I would like to get to know each of you individually. Unfortunately, with a class this size, that becomes more difficult. Nor is it possible for me to have regular email conversations with all students in the class. Please do not email me or the TAs about matters that you can look up on the syllabus – just one or two questions from 170 students adds up quickly! And if you have questions about material or assignments, likely others do as well. If you miss a class, please do not expect us to answer questions about it over email; nor can we answer questions about the material or assignments over email.

If you have questions about the material or the assignments, **please use one of these options:**

- Email your study group leader (TA)
- See Prof Westgate after class
- Come to the head TAs' office hours or see Prof Westgate in office hours
- Post your question on the Canvas “**chat room**” or start a thread on the Discussion Board. We will try to read them regularly. Feel free to answer each others’ questions – we hope you’ll take advantage of this resource to pool notes and share answers.
- Start or join a class #GroupMe and ask your classmates

- If you have exhausted these options and do need to email Prof Westgate or one of the head TAs, **please use the Canvas email system** and include the topic of your question in the subject line, to help us respond more quickly.
- Please do not email multiple of us separately with the same question – instead, if you need to address an email to more than one of us, please “cc” all of us on the same email

Please feel free to call me Professor Westgate or Dr. Westgate, or Erin or Professor Erin, whatever you are most comfortable with. Please do **not** call me “Ms. Westgate” or “Mrs. Westgate” – if you are not comfortable using my first name, please use one of my professional titles (Prof or Dr.).

*(Side note: this is good practice for all your instructors! Please do not address university faculty as Mrs./Ms./Mr. unless **specifically asked** to do so – doing so makes assumptions about their personal gender, marital status, and education, and tends to exacerbate gender inequalities, i.e., studies show that male faculty are more likely to be addressed using professional titles like Dr or Professor than women are)*

We expect you to check your email at least once daily during business hours/weekdays; please allow 48-72 hours (2-3 “business” days) for us to get back to you – we generally are unavailable to answer questions on weekends, evenings (after 5pm), or university holidays. Finally, thank you for reading to this point in the syllabus! To indicate you have done so and earn one additional extra point on the first exam, please email a photo of your favorite sea creature to Prof Westgate on Canvas with “SOP 3004 syllabus extra credit” as the subject (yes, really).

HONOR POLICY

I trust every student in this course to fully comply with all the provisions of UF’s Honor Code. By enrolling in this course, you have agreed to abide by and uphold the Honor Code of the University of Florida, as well as the following policies specific to this course.

- You **may not** consult exams, answer keys, or any other material from previous times that this course has been taught, from any source; this includes material posted online
 - When taking a test online, you may not consult notes, the readings, or another person. You may not open other windows on your computer or take screenshots or otherwise make copies of exam questions.
 - You may not share exam questions with other students, make copies of exam questions or answers, or post exam questions online. Doing so is a violation of academic honesty.
- You may not use an iClicker other than your own or share your iClicker answers
- Your written work must be your own – no plagiarizing, and **no use of AI-assisted writing technology (e.g., ChatGPT)** is permitted. Always cite any resources you consult to complete an assignment.
- Suspected violations will be forwarded to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (SCCR) in the Dean’s Office at the instructor’s discretion.

- Regardless of any action taken by the SCCR, suspected violations may result in an immediate zero on an assignment, an F for the course, or a required resubmission of the original assignment.
- It is okay to read & peer edit each other's written assignments, and receive writing assistance from the writing center for this class
- It is okay to share lecture notes and study together for exams

For more information about the honor code, visit: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>

ACADEMIC POLICIES

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see this link : <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>.

SEEKING HELP ON CAMPUS

Accommodations for disability. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). **If you have not yet formally requested accommodation, or are experiencing a family/physical/mental health emergency, please contact Prof Westgate.** We are happy to arrange temporary accommodations to address your needs in the interim.

Mental Health and Stress. Stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with academic performance. The source of symptoms might be related to your course work; if so, please speak with me. However, problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or others personal struggles can also contribute to decreased academic performance. The University of Florida provides cost-free mental health services through the Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC; <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575). If you or a friend is in distress, you can also contact the “U Matter, We Care” team at umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575, and a team member will reach out. Please seek help if you feel you need it.

If you or a friend is a victim of a sexual assault, you can contact sexual assault recovery services (SARS) at the student health center at 392-1161.

Food, Shelter, and Other Material Needs. Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, is urged to contact the Field and Fork Food Pantry or the Dean of Students Office for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable doing so. This will allow us to put you in touch with additional resources that may be of service.

If you have any academic difficulties due to your financial situation, please let me know; I will work with you to find affordable alternatives.

Grading and Assignments

Grading

Your final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Midterm Exam #1	100 points
Midterm Exam #2	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Paper 1 (PSA Video)	100 points
Paper 2 (Social Network)	100 points
Department Research Requirement	5 points
Completing Course Evaluations*	
Participation in Class Demo/Review Questions: iClicker	extra credit
Virtual Labs	extra credit
Total Possible Points	505 points

* Completing course evaluations does not count towards your grade. However, it's important for us to hear from all students (sampling matters!). Providing feedback on the quality of instruction in this course is an expected part of class participation, and helps us make changes for future students. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>.

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can be completed through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/publicresults/>.

Final Grade Calculation

Total Points	Percentage	Grade
475-505	.94 – 1.00	A
455-474	.90 - .93	A-
440-454	.87 - .89	B+
424-439	.84 - .86	B
404-423	.80 - .83	B-
389-403	.77 - .79	C+
374-388	.74 - .76	C
354-373	.70 - .73	C-
339-353	.67 - .69	D+
323-338	.64 - .66	D
303-322	.60 - .63	D-
0-302	.00 - .59	E (Fail)

Please note that these cutoffs are non-negotiable. Grades are based on **points**, not percentages. For example, to get an A, you must earn **375 points**; 374 points will get you an A-. If you end up with a fraction of a **point** that is .5 or higher, we will round up. Grades cannot be raised by request; doing so is unfair to your classmates and research shows some students are more likely than others to feel comfortable asking for grade changes. You have one week after you receive a grade to dispute that grade (in writing, starting with the TA who graded it); after that, the grade stands as it is.

All students will have opportunities throughout the semester to earn extra credit (e.g., via the iClicker participation during lecture, virtual labs, etc) – we do not offer additional “emergency” extra credit at the end of the semester. We also cannot offer *individual* extra credit opportunities at the end of the semester, as that would be unfair to the rest of the class (who would not receive the same opportunity).

Pass/Fail

You may take the course on a pass/fail basis, but to pass *you must complete all of the assignments*. A grade of C or above counts as passing the course (“Satisfactory”). You can find corresponding grade points for each letter grade **and university grading policies** here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

TESTS (100 points each)

There will be three multiple-choice tests. Test 1 covers material from the first third of the class. Test 2 covers material from the second third of the class (i.e., all material after Test 1). The final third exam is cumulative (why cumulative? Empirical evidence suggests cumulative testing increases long-term memory for the material!). The dates are on the course outline below.

Students are asked not to look at any past or current tests from this course to which they might have access. It is also an honor offense to share information about a test given in this class with other students. Use of AI-assisted technology (such as ChatGPT) is **prohibited**. Suspected violations will be forwarded to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (SCCR) in the Dean’s Office at the instructor’s discretion. Regardless of any action taken by the SCCR, suspected violations may result in an immediate zero on an exam, an F for the course, or a required resubmission of a proctored make-up exam.

Before exams, the TAs will post a practice test on Canvas. We will provide time in office hours to review midterm exam performance after each exam; we ask students not to take screenshots or copy the text of question items or answers during this time; doing so will be considered an honor offense. To see exams, students should see the head TAs during their office hours; TAs are happy to bring up exams and answer questions about individual test items during this time.

MAKE-UP TESTS

If you cannot take an exam at the scheduled time due to religious holidays, athletic contests, medical emergencies, or other valid excuses, you may take a make-up exam, consistent with university policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Make-up tests are not multiple-choice, and consist of a short-answer format. Arrangements for known absences must be made with the instructor in advance of the exam date; if you miss an

exam due to an unexpected emergency, please contact Prof Westgate and your study group leader as soon as you are able. Ideally, you should aim to complete make-up exams within 2 weeks of the originally scheduled date so as not to fall behind.

PAPERS (100 points each)

Two short papers will be assigned. The specific assignments will be handed out in class. The **first paper** will take the form of a video assignment using scientific principles of persuasion to direct and film a public service announcement (PSA) due on Canvas on **FRIDAY, MARCH 6** by 11:59 PM; it may be completed alone or in groups of 2-4 students (one video and a single one-page-paper per group). The **second paper** will be a socioecological analysis of the social networks in your freshman dorm (or other equivalent small group environment, for students who have not lived in a dorm). This will be due on Canvas **FRIDAY, APRIL 10** at 11:59 PM.

We expect that all papers will be turned in on time. Because paper deadlines and instructions are announced well in advance, extensions are not available. If you need to submit a paper late, you can do so, but late submissions will be penalized five points per day. I encourage all students to take advantage of the UF writing studio for help in brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers (<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>). While TAs and I cannot read drafts or comment directly on the paper prior to submission, we are happy to discuss conceptual issues and help with topic selection or general questions. I also encourage you to get together with classmates and your study groups to read & peer edit each other's written assignments.

Paper Regrading: The TAs assigned to the class will grade the papers. There is no set curve; in theory, all students could get top scores. We work hard to standardize the grading such that all TAs use the same criteria. If you feel your grade is unfair, **you must first meet with the TA, during their office hours, and discuss it with them.** If you still think it is unfair, you have the option of having the paper regraded by another TA. However, you must agree to accept the grade given by the second TA, even if it is lower than the first grade. **You must request a regrade within one week of the day paper grades are released.**

DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH REQUIREMENT (5 points)

Psychology is an empirical science – that means what we know, we know because of research. We're going to be learning about a lot of research in this class. And, as a student in this course, you'll also be participating in research itself to “dig deeper” and see what that research actually looks like. You can fulfill this requirement in one of two ways: 1) by participating in studies yourselves as a research participant or 2) by completing an alternative assignment in which you read and report on published research papers.

You have the entire semester to earn 15 research credits. Because studies are posted throughout the semester, it is a good idea to check every week for studies you are eligible to participate in. **Note: in-person studies offer an additional 1 credit to compensate you for travel time to-and-from the study** (i.e., a 30-minute lab study is worth 2 credits, while a 30-minute online study is worth 1 credit).

Do not wait until the end of the semester to try to “squeeze in” this requirement. It is virtually impossible to write three well-written research reports (or participate in an equivalent amount of research) in the last few days of class. **I strongly recommend aiming to complete at**

least half the required studies prior to Spring Break. Among students who do this, virtually all are able to complete the required credits, even if enrolled in other classes with a similar requirement.

The research requirement is due April 22. If you decide to do Option 2 (Writing reports), you must let me know of your decision *in writing* via Canvas email no later than March 30. Once the March 30 deadline is past, you will not be able to switch between option 1 and option 2 at a later date.

CLASS DEMO/REVIEW (iCLICKER)

Students are expected to purchase an iClicker mobile app subscription for the class, which we will use for participating in class demonstrations/review questions. An iClicker subscription allows you to use your phone's Wi-Fi, instead of a separate iClicker device (which requires a classroom base).

Class demonstrations/review questions: There will be periodic class demonstrations and review questions using your iClicker. These are graded *on participation only - if you participate in at least 80% of the class demonstrations/reviews*, we will bump your final course grade to the next letter grade (e.g., B+ to A-).

VIRTUAL LABS (EXTRA CREDIT)

For each topic (see calendar at end of syllabus), there is a Canvas module containing a short activity. You can find the lab modules on Canvas; modules should be completed *outside* of class. The module *lab activities* are designed to give you hands-on experiences with the topics, and reflect on how they connect to course material. Feedback from previous students suggest they are also fun and very helpful in studying for exams!

These lab modules are optional, but highly recommended. They're designed to foster critical thinking, and get you thinking about how what we learn in class applies to the real world. Past students have found them helpful in staying up-to-date and not falling behind on the readings. Because the activities are closely related to the topics in class, you can think of them as a type of "virtual lab" (just like you might have for a chemistry or bio class). You can receive up to .5 extra credit points for *each* virtual lab you complete by the unit's deadline; although you are welcome to go back and complete any missed labs, you will not receive extra credit for doing so after the deadline has passed.

SOP 3004 Course Outline and Assigned Readings

Topic	Assigned Readings
Orientation to the Field (Jan 13)	Syllabus & Study Guide for Class (on Canvas) Redirect Ch. 1: “Small Edits, Lasting Changes” Aronson et al. , Ch. 1
Scientific Method (Jan 15)	Class Survey (on Canvas) Redirect Ch. 2: “Testing, Testing: Does It Work?” Aronson et al. , Ch. 2
Cognitive Dissonance (Jan 20 & 22)	Aronson et al. (1991) Aronson et al. , Ch. 6
Social Cognition (Jan 27 & 29)	Eberhardt et al. (2006) Aronson et al. , Ch. 3
Social Perception (Feb 3 & 5)	Gilovich, Medvec & Savitsky (2000) The spotlight effect in social judgement Aronson, et al. , Ch. 4 Social Psychology in Action 3 (Social Psychology and the Law)
First Test: Due Friday, Feb 6	
Self-knowledge (Feb 10 & 12)	Redirect Ch. 4: “Shaping our kids’ narratives” Dunning et al. (2003) Why people fail to recognize their own incompetence Aronson et al. , Ch. 5
Conformity (February 17 & 19)	Redirect Ch. 7: Everybody’s doing it...or are they? Cialdini (2003) Crafting normative messages to protect the environment Aronson et al. , Ch. 8
Attitudes (February 24 & 26)	Daumeyer et al. (2019)

	Aronson et al., Ch. 7
Group Processes (March 3 & 5) PSA (Paper #1) Due Friday March 6	Falk & Szech (2013) Morals and markets Aronson et al., Ch. 9
Friendship (March 10 & 12)	Redirect Ch. 5: “Just say...volunteer” Aronson et al., Ch. 10
SPRING BREAK: MARCH 16-20	
Second Test: DUE FRIDAY, March 28	
Prosocial Behavior (March 31)	Darley & Batson (1973) From Jerusalem to Jericho Aronson et al., Ch. 11
Aggression (April 2)	Redirect Ch. 6: “Scared Crooked: Reducing Teen Violence” Aronson et al., Ch. 12
Intergroup Relations (April 7, 9, 14) Social Network (Paper #2) Due Friday April 10	Redirect Ch. 8 & 9 Trawalter, Bart-Plange, & Hoffman (2020) Aronson et al., Ch. 13
Health & Happiness (April 16, 21)	Redirect Ch. 3: “Shaping our narratives” Aronson et al., Social Psychology in Action 1 & 2
Final Exam: TBD (see Registrar for assigned date/time)	