

# Psychology 15: Social Psychology

Spring, 2012  
M, W, 1-2:30, Sci Center D

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Prerequisites: SLS 20 or its predecessors, or permission of instructor.

This course explores the scientific study of social thought and behavior. Main topics include an overview of the field, the role of the mind in social life, the nature of social interaction, and the application of psychology to social problems.

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## Requirements

1. There are two midterm exams, each covering a third of the class and counting for 17% of your grade. The final counts for 26% and is cumulative, with about half its emphasis on the final third of the course. The exams cover both lecture and the text, and include multiple choice questions, definitions, short answers, and at least one essay.
  2. A research project will count for 30% of your grade. It has four components:
    - a. A *commentary* on a project source book (one you choose from the list below) due in your TF's electronic drop box before section the week of Feb 20.
    - b. A *proposal* due in your TF's drop box by March 9 at 5 p.m.
    - c. A *presentation* of your project to be given in section beginning the week of April 2.
    - d. A *final report* due in your TF's drop box by April 20 at 5 p.m.
  3. Participation at the 8 mandatory sections will count for 5% of your grade.
  4. Participation in the Department of Psychology Study Pool for 5 hours over the semester (Jan 23 - May 3) will provide 5% of your grade. You are encouraged to get half an hour of credit by filling out the prescreening questionnaire before Feb 23. Details are here: <http://studypool.wjh.harvard.edu>. An alternative to this assignment is a 5-page paper on a topic in social psychology chosen in consultation with your section leader. Students who choose the alternative assignment must notify their section leaders by Feb 23.
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## Outline

Date	Topic	Reading
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### OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

1-23	Organizational Meeting	
1-25	Introduction	1
1-30	Social Experiments	2
2-1	Obedience (the movie)	8 (pp. 293-304)

## THE SOCIAL MIND

2-6	Attitudes	9
2-8	Cognitive Dissonance	6 (pp. 196-219)
2-13	Self-Perception	6 (pp. 219-233)
2-15	Emotion	7
2-20	<i>Presidents' Day</i> - No class	
2-22	Exam Review	
2-27	Exam 1	

## SOCIAL INTERACTION

2-29	Attraction/Intimate Relationships	10-11
3-5	Mind Perception	4
3-7	Self-Awareness	3
3-12, 3-14	<i>Spring Break</i> - No class	
3-19	Social Influence	8 (pp. 274-292, 304-315)
3-21	Social Evolution	
3-26	Self-Fulfilling Prophecy	
3-28	Exam Review	
4-2	Exam 2	

## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

4-4	Morality, Justice, and Death: Part I	13
4-9	Morality, Justice, and Death: Part II	
4-11	Prejudice and Stereotyping	12
4-16	Crowds	14
4-18	Popular Delusions	5
4-23	Movie TBA	
4-25	Social Psychology Rules	
TBA	Exam Review	
TBA	Exam 3	

- Readings are chapters in Gilovich, Keltner, & Nisbett, *Social Psychology, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* and should be completed before the class for which they are assigned. A few copies of the textbook will be on reserve at Lamont Library. Do not buy the first edition.
- The project source books (get only one!) are: Buss, *The Evolution of Desire*; Cialdini, *Influence: Science and Practice*; Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*; Pennebaker, *The Secret Life of Pronouns*. Copies of each will be on reserve.
- Section meetings will begin the week of Feb 6.
- If you have special needs that must be accommodated please notify the head TF ([jebert@wjh.harvard.edu](mailto:jebert@wjh.harvard.edu)) at the start of the course.
- Class notes will be posted before each lecture on the course website at [my.harvard.edu](http://my.harvard.edu).