PSYC3017 – Social Psychology

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Format of Unit: 
2 x 1 hour lectures/week x 13 weeks  
1 x 2 hour tutorial/week x 10 weeks

Credit Point Value: 
6 Credit Points

Prerequisites: 
Intermediate Psychology units including  
PSYC (2013 or 2113) plus one other Intermediate Psychology Unit from PSYC (2011 or 2111), PSYC (2012 or 2112), PSYC (2014 or 2114).

Assessment: 
Classwork: 
40% of total mark, a practical report (based on a Group Work project). This report consists of sections written by the group (Group Work) and individually (Individual). Specifically you will receive two marks:

- **Individual mark** (80% of the total report mark): This is composed of the Introduction (40% of the total mark) & Discussion (40% of the total report mark) sections, which are written individually.  
  - The Introduction & Discussion are due Friday May 24th (Week 11). They will be returned prior to exams

- **Group mark** (20% of the total report mark): This is composed of the Method Section (10% of the total report mark) and Results (10% of the total report mark) which are written by the group.  
  - Method Section is due Week 7 (to be emailed to your tutor). It will be returned by your tutor in Week 8.  
  - Results Section is due during the tutorial, Week 9. It will be returned by your tutor in Week 10.

10% of total, a class presentation of research—Group Work (20 mins)  
Due Date: Week 13.

Examination: 
50% of total, multiple choice questions (0.40) and short answers or short essays (0.60)

TEACHING & LEARNIING COMMITTEE POLICY:
ALL pieces of students’ written assignments will be scanned by plagiarism detection software. Students must complete all assessment components in order to complete the course.

**Evaluation of teaching and learning:**
- **Date:** Week 13
- **Type:** ITL Questionnaire

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**Unit of Study General Description**

PSYC3017 continues the coverage of topics in Social Psychology begun in PSYC1001 and PSYC2013. The unit is divided into topic areas, where the emphasis is on evaluating theories and the relevant evidence. Topics areas include: the self, self-conscious emotions, stigma; anti-social behaviours and strategies for their reduction – aggression, racial discrimination, sex discrimination and age discrimination; Existential Psychology—philosophical underpinning, Terror Management Theory, Meaning Maintenance Model; Genes and the Psychosocial Environment—Interaction between genes and psychosocial variables, Genetic essentialism; social relationships, ostracism. Tutorials provide first-hand experience of research by involving students in a range of research projects, to be conducted by small groups, on the topics covered in the lectures.

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**Graduate Attributes and Student Learning Outcomes for Social Psychology**

This course is structured around the graduate attributes associated with the scientist-practitioner model, the basis for the training of psychologists in Australia and internationally. Graduate Attributes are the generic skills, abilities and qualities that students should acquire during their university experience and the School of Psychology is committed to providing an environment to promote these skills. In addition, this unit of study will provide students with generalised and transferable skills that will also be useful in careers outside psychology. The following graduate attributes and student learning outcomes will be developed through lectures, tutorial and assessment activities in particular. They will be assessed primarily in the laboratory report, presentation, and in the final examination.

**1: Core Knowledge and Understanding of Social Psychology**

During the lecture stream, students will be informed of the core knowledge pertaining to each of the Social Psychology topics outlined in the ‘Unit of Study General Description’, as well as recent trends and developments in these areas, in order to facilitate students’ understanding of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in Social Psychology.

**Specific Attributes & How they will be addressed in the course:**
- Acquire an understanding of core topics in the discipline (Social Psychology):
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Research Report, Presentation; Final Exam (multiple choice and short-answers).

**Student learning outcomes:**
(i) To stimulate an interest in the contribution of social psychologists to the understanding of changes in socialization, group processes (both inter and intra group), and interpersonal processes (viz. helping behaviour and interpersonal affiliation and attraction);
(ii) Ability to describe, explain and evaluate research studies examining a core area of social psychology.
(iii) Ability to chart the progression of theories in major areas in Social Psychology.

**2: Research Methods in Social Psychology**

In the tutorial program, students will complete a group research experiment that will form the basis of their research report and their group presentation. During the course of conducting and writing up this experiment, students will apply and evaluate basic research methods in Social Psychology, including research design, data analysis and interpretation, and the appropriate use of technologies.
Specific Attributes & How they will be addressed in the course:

- Describe the basic characteristics of the science of psychology
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Not formally assessed in this course.
- Describe, apply and evaluate the different research methods used by psychologists
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Not formally assessed in this course.
- Demonstrate practical skills in laboratory-based and other psychological research
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Research Report.
- Design and conduct basic studies to address psychological questions: frame research questions; undertake literature searches; critically analyse theoretical and empirical studies; formulate testable hypotheses; operationalise variables; choose an appropriate methodology; make valid and reliable measurements; analyse data and interpret results; and write research reports
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Research Report.

Student learning outcomes:
(i) To develop a critical understanding of the major methods of research in this area.
(ii) To critically assess the major theories and research findings in these areas.
(iii) To interpret statistical analyses.
(iv) Use basic web-search, word-processing, database, email, spreadsheet, and data analysis programs.
(v) Design and conduct basic studies to address psychological questions: frame research questions; undertake literature searches; critically analyse theoretical and empirical studies; formulate testable hypotheses; operationalise variables; choose an appropriate methodology; make valid and reliable measurements; analyse data and interpret results; and write research reports.

3: Critical Thinking Skills in Social Psychology

During the tutorial program, students will be taught to respect and use critical and creative thinking, sceptical inquiry, and to apply knowledge of the scientific method in thinking about problems related to behaviour and mental processes. Critical thinking skills in Social Psychology will be assessed in the Research Report; specifically, in the Introduction, where students will be required to evaluate their research question and critique the literature in the field to date; and in the Discussion, where students will be required to critique their experiment (i.e. discuss the strengths and weakness of the experiment and how it could be improved through future research).

Specific Attributes & How they will be addressed in the course:

- Apply knowledge of the scientific method in thinking about problems related to behaviour and mental processes
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Research Report.
- Question claims that arise from myth, stereotype, pseudoscience or untested assumptions
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Not formally assessed in this course.
- Recognise and defend against the major fallacies of human thinking
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Not formally assessed in this course.

Student learning outcomes:
(i) Demonstrate an attitude of critical thinking that includes persistence, open-mindedness, and intellectual engagement.
(ii) Evaluate the quality of information, including differentiating empirical evidence from speculation.
(iii) Evaluate issues and behaviour using different theoretical and methodological approaches.
(iv) Use reasoning and evidence to recognise, develop, defend, and criticise arguments and persuasive appeals.

4: Values in Social Psychology

In the tutorial program, students will be given a series of mini-lectures that detail: the value of empirical evidence; the importance of acting ethically and professionally in accordance with the ‘APA Code of Ethics’ when conducting research; and conducting research that addresses the complexity of sociocultural and international diversity.

Specific Attributes & How they will be addressed in the course:

- Evaluate psychologists’ behaviour in psychological research and other professional contexts in relation to the Australian Psychological Society “Code of Ethics” and the complementary “Ethical Guidelines”, as well as the Australian “National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce”
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Not formally assessed in this course.
- Use information in an ethical manner (e.g., acknowledge and respect work and intellectual property rights of others through appropriate citations in oral and written communication)
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Not formally assessed in this course.
Student learning outcomes:
(i) Recognise and respect social, cultural, linguistic, spiritual and gender diversity.
(ii) Use information in an ethical manner (e.g., acknowledge and respect the work and intellectual property rights of others through appropriate citations in oral and written communication)
(iii) Be able to recognise and promote ethical practice in research.
(v) Promote evidence-based approaches to understanding behaviour.

5: Communication Skills in Social Psychology
In the tutorial program, students will be given a series of mini-lectures that aim to inform students about how to communicate effectively in different contexts, with an emphasis on written communication (i.e. research reports using APA formatting) and oral communications (i.e. a group presentation).

Specific Attributes & How they will be addressed in the course:
- Write a standard research report using American Psychological Association (APA) structure and formatting conventions
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Research Report.
- Demonstrate effective oral communication skills in various formats (e.g., debate, group discussion, presentation) and for various purposes
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Class Presentation.

Student learning outcomes:
(i) Write a standard research report using American Psychological Association (APA) structure and formatting conventions.
(ii) Demonstrate effective oral communication skills in various formats (e.g., group presentation) and for various purposes.
(iv) Collaborate effectively, demonstrating an ability to: work with groups to complete projects within reasonable timeframes; manage conflicts appropriately and ethically.

6: Learning and the Application of Social Psychology
During the lecture stream, students will be taught how to: apply knowledge of Social Psychology to society, and (where appropriate) to specific contexts, such as the workplace (e.g., affirmative action, ostracism and workplace bullying etc); and apply Social Psychological knowledge of legislative frameworks (i.e. in the context of age, race, and sex discrimination legislation).

Specific Attributes & How they will be addressed in the course:
- Apply knowledge of legislative frameworks (including privacy, human rights)
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Final Exam (multiple choice and short-answers).
- Apply knowledge of consumer and carer participation in psychological care
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Not formally assessed in this course.
- Apply knowledge of psychology, society and the workplace/influencing systems
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Final Exam (multiple choice and short-answers).
- Describe major areas of applied psychology (e.g., clinical, organizational)
  - How it will be assessed in the course: Not formally assessed in this course.
- Demonstrate a capacity for independent learning to sustain personal and professional development in the changing world of the science and practice of psychology
  - How it will be assessed in the course: In the Introduction & Discussion sections of the Research Report (which are written independently of the group).

Student learning outcomes:
(i) To develop an awareness of the applications of the theories and research findings in Social Psychology.
(ii) Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings to solve problems in everyday life and in society.
(iii) Understand major areas of applied Social Psychology

Evidence of learning:
Assessment will take the form of: (1) an examination which will cover the full range of teaching outcomes (the examination will consist of multiple-choice and short answer or short essay questions); (2) a research report which will focus on the skills of designing, conducting, analysing data, and reporting results in a standard journal paper format; (3) an oral presentation of research by the research group, which will assess the ability to communicate background, research design and results in a 15 minute talk.
**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism**

1. It is your responsibility to know what academic dishonesty and plagiarism are. Here is the link to the University’s policy:


   Make sure that you understand what counts as academic dishonesty and the various types of plagiarism. The Library’s [http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/skills/ ‘Plagiarism and Academic Honesty’ program](http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/skills/) will help.

2. Note that:

   i) the School of Psychology will penalise all submitted work that is plagiarised.

   ii) Students should note that all assignments (including group projects) will be run through similarity detecting software. This software detects similarities between (a) your assignment and both print and online sources, and (b) assignments submitted by other students, from both current and previous years. If similarities are found, they will be investigated so as to determine the nature of the plagiarism. See Part 5 of the University’s policy.

**Avoiding plagiarism – key points**

- Plagiarism is a serious offence and may result in failure in the course. Even where students are completing an exercise together, each student must submit separate written work. Incorporation of any material from another student’s assignment is regarded as plagiarism.

- In writing essays or reports to meet coursework requirements, you should use your own words. In some contexts (e.g., theoretical research) it is appropriate to use an occasional quotation. This should be indicated in the conventional way by enclosing the passage within quotation marks and by providing a precise (page number) reference for the source of the quote. In many contexts, especially reports of empirical work, quotations are best avoided.

- “Using your own words” means that you should not borrow from the writing of others – whether from fellow students or published authors. For example, it is not acceptable to base an essay on text from various sources that you have then edited to some degree – even if you cite these sources. First of all, there is the ethical issue arising from the dishonesty of presenting as your own work something which is essentially the work of others. In addition, there are good educational reasons for avoiding this, even where you feel that someone else has expressed some idea far more clearly than you could. One reason is that you must learn to express yourself clearly in writing; like most other skills, this only comes with practice. Another, is the failure to understand information or ideas at all thoroughly if all you have done is reproduce (with some editing) what someone else has written about the topic.

- When you express in your own words what you have learned from various sources, you should cite each source. The standard convention for most written work in psychology is to list references at the end of your essay or report, rather than, for example, to use footnotes. To express some idea without giving a citation implies that it is your own idea. Therefore, if it is in fact an idea obtained from someone else, this needs to be acknowledged. Listing a set of sources implies that you have read them all. Therefore, you should list as references only those you have actually read. If you are depending on a secondary source, then make this clear, e.g., ... salivary conditioning (Pavlov, 1927; cited in Mazur, 1998).

- The points made here also apply to non-textual material. For example, graphs or tables of data included in a report should be your own work and not copied from others. Very occasionally you may need to ‘quote’ a figure from some other source; if you do so, you should make its origin quite clear.

- In general, avoid letting other students use your work for any kind of assessment. On the rare occasion where this may be appropriate, make sure that the other student acknowledges your contribution as the original author.

- In some cultures, students show their respect for a teacher by copying what the teacher has said or written. In Australian University education, copying a teacher (even if paraphrasing) is plagiarism if the source is not cited.

**Syllabus**
The Self
Models of the self, cultural and gender differences in defining the self, self-knowledge, self-enhancement, self-verification, self-esteem, the consequences of having a stigmatised identity, self-conscious emotions.

Antisocial Behaviours
Defining aggression and critically evaluating relevant theoretical frameworks underpinning this construct. Discussing the social application of aggression via the concept of violence; the impact of media portrayals of violence; the reduction and prevention of aggressions and violence.

Defining discrimination as the behavioural component of prejudice; identifying various forms of discrimination (age, sex, race); evaluating the effectiveness of state and Federal legislative Acts; and being introduced to various strategies and interventions to effectively reduce discrimination.

Existential Psychology
Philosophical underpinning, Terror Management Theory, Meaning Maintenance Model

Genes and the Psychosocial Environment
Interaction between genes and psychosocial variables, Genetic essentialism

Social Relationships
1. Ostracism (the act of being excluded and ignored); model of ostracism, ostracism in the real world, ostracism in the laboratory.
2. Interpersonal attraction: internal and external determinants of attraction, arousal, love
# Lecture Timetable

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Karen Gonsalkorale</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>March 6</td>
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<td>Karen Gonsalkorale</td>
<td>The Self I</td>
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<td>March 12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Karen Gonsalkorale</td>
<td>The Self II</td>
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<td>Karen Gonsalkorale</td>
<td>The Self III</td>
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<td>March 27</td>
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<td>The Self VIII</td>
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<td>Ilan Dar-Nimrod</td>
<td>Existential Psychology</td>
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<td>April 16</td>
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<td>Genes and the Psychosocial Environment</td>
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<td>April 17</td>
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<td>Fiona White</td>
<td>Aggression and violence</td>
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<td>April 23</td>
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<td>Strategies to reduce aggression and violence</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Anti-social behaviours --Age discrimination</td>
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<td>Anti-social behaviours -- Sex discrimination</td>
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<td>Anti-social behaviours -- Race discrimination</td>
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<td>Ostracism</td>
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<td>Interpersonal attraction: Introduction</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>Interpersonal attraction Self-disclosure &amp; Arousal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>June 5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Lisa Zadro</td>
<td>Interpersonal attraction: Love</td>
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**NOTE:** The exact content and/or order of the lecture topics may change if necessary. This is only a guide.

Lectures are held on Tuesday 10am (Wallace Lecture Theatre) and Wednesday 12pm (Bosch Lecture Theatre 4).

**RECOMENDED TEXT**

Please note: There is no textbook for this course. At a third year level, we would prefer you to refer to articles as opposed to secondary texts. Moreover, many of the topics presented in lectures will be discussed in far more detail than presented textbooks—you would not be able to pass the course by reading the textbook alone. However, should you want to refer to a textbook, the following may help you to understand or revise key terms and concepts.

Research and resource support for Psychology students

The University of Sydney Library has 12 libraries in different locations, on different subjects with different facilities. Fisher Library is where you will find the physical collection of most relevance to your Psychology studies. Fisher Library is located on Eastern Ave, Camperdown campus. We also have loads available online – find us at sydney.edu.au/library/

Matthew Davis is the Faculty Liaison Librarian for Psychology. Matthew is available to help you find and use library resources for your assignments or research. You can email him at library.psychology@sydney.edu.au or phone on 9351 3629. The Psychology Librarian is located at Badham Library, level 1, Badham Building, Science Rd, Camperdown Campus.

Psychology books in high demand

The 2 hour collection is located on Level 3 of Fisher Library. Most of your required and recommended items from the reading lists will be here. You can find a list of your required readings in the catalogue by searching under your Unit of Study code http://opac.library.usyd.edu.au/search/r. Some material in the list is also available to read online.

Psychology subject guide

There is a comprehensive subject guide that includes links to psychology databases, internet resources, information on tests and measurements, referencing guides, and much more. Take a look at http://libguides.library.usyd.edu.au/psychology. You can also enrol in free research, database and EndNote training classes on this site.

Need a refresher after the long vacation?

Watch and listen to these online learning objects and get back up to speed with information literacy skills on topics such as research, essay writing and referencing. http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/skills/