**SOC 336W Social Psychology**  
*(3 Hours)*

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**Course Description.** This is a course in social psychology. *Social Psychology* can be defined as a discipline that uses scientific methods to "understand and explain how the thought, feeling, and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others" (Allport, 1985: 3). This course examines the effect of social influence on the development of human behavior. Attitude formation, group behavior, cultural subgroups, and general systems theory are addressed. Additional topics include studies in the relationships between individual and social spheres with attention to such issues as conformity, role patterning, leadership, persuasion, self-justification, aggression, prejudice, attraction, and the influence of social systems context on patterns of relationship development. The course concerns social interaction in situations of (1) social influences on individuals, (2) dyads or face-to-face groups, and (3) larger social systems. Concepts, theories, data, research methods, and applications of varied substantive topics are examined. Critical thinking, writing, and the sharing of experiential knowledge by students are stressed.

The course is complimented by several reading selections of enduring intellectual value--classic articles, book excerpts, and research studies--that have shaped the study of social psychology and our contemporary understanding of it. These selections, written by some of the greatest thinkers in social psychology, are organized topically around major areas of study within social psychology: the social psychological approach; social cognitive processes; attitudes; social interaction and relationships; social influence and group processes; helping and aggression; and applications of social psychology.

The course participant will be involved in scholarly dialogue and class discussions. The student, in addition to assigned readings, will view video case studies and provide feedback and participate in class discussions. Grading will encompass participation in discussions, preparation, discussion content, and the quality of the course journal in terms of effort and content.

**Study Goals.** This course is designed to be a challenging academic experience. The goal is for the course participant to grow as a result of this scholarly pursuit by gaining a better understanding of “self” and the others in one’s life. In this regard, the course can help the participant obtain an understanding of social psychology and to be able to relate this understanding to real life situations, social interactions, and to the situation of others. Also important is for the participant to become a more proficient communicator, both in verbal and written communicative skills.
Course Learning Objectives. Through intellectual dialogue and critical evaluation of course materials and other sources of information, at the course conclusion, each participant should:

1. understand the definition of social psychology, and comprehend how social psychology bridges the gap between sociology and psychology;
2. understand the core concerns and important theoretical perspectives in social psychology;
3. comprehend social psychology as a science, major research methods used by social psychologists and associated ethical issues;
4. understand and be able to apply the critical thinking perspective to the evaluation of social psychological concepts and theory;
5. understand the social psychological concept of socialization and related components and issues; such as self, self-schema, self-image, self-concept, self-esteem, and social identity;
6. understand the social psychological concepts of social perception, social construct or lifeworld, impression formation, and attribution;
7. understand the social psychological concept of attitude, to include development, maintenance, and change relating to attitudes, and the various methods used to measure attitudes;
8. comprehend symbolic communication and language from a social psychological perspective;
9. understand the social psychological concepts of social influence and persuasion;
10. understand the social psychological concepts of self-presentation and impression management;
11. comprehend the social psychological concepts of helping and altruism, aggression, and interpersonal attraction;
12. comprehend the social psychological concepts of group cohesion and conformity, group structure and interaction, group performance, and intergroup conflict;
13. understand the social psychological concepts of life course and sex roles;
14. understand the social psychological concepts of social structure and personality;
15. comprehend the social psychological concepts of deviant behavior and social reaction;
16. comprehend the social psychological concepts of collective behavior and social movements; and
17. master the practical application of social psychological theory and concepts to everyday, real life situations.

Evaluation of Learning Objectives. The course participant will be evaluated to determine whether or not the learning objectives are achieved. Evaluations of learning objectives include discussions, focusing on learning objectives, and the application of theory and concepts (learning objectives) in the study’s journal. In total, these means of evaluations address all stated course learning objectives.

Course Requirements and Evaluations (Grading):

1. Attendance and participation in classroom discussions. This includes being prepared to discuss assigned readings, handouts, films and videos, etc. Twenty points toward the final grade will be based on participation and attendance. After reading the syllabus, you can understand that attendance is important to take full advantage of all the learning opportunities of this course. If you know in advance that you must miss a class, speak to me so that I can give you assignments to make-up the absence. One absence can be made-up. Two absences will result in the loss of 10 points, plus will require make-up work. If you anticipate more than two absences, please enroll for the course at a time more convenient to your schedule.

2. Oral Presentation in class on the assigned readings. The presentation is worth 10 points.
3. **Journal.** Students will maintain a course journal in which they will enter insights and reflections about readings from the text, presentations by other students, and class discussions. The journal should be integrative in that insights and reflections are tied together and relate to one’s counseling practice. For each chapter, generate brief questions or comments (maybe an insight or two), highlighting what’s interesting, convincing, unconvincing, confusing, or pointless, and what makes sense, and briefly, why. For presentations, summarize what was presented in a few sentences and provide the same analysis as for the text chapters. In class, use your comments, summaries, and objections as a basis for your contributions (participation). The journal is worth 70 points and is due one week after the final class session.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Scale:</th>
<th>Possible Points:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-97=A+</td>
<td>Journal 70 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>96-94=A</td>
<td>Oral Presentation 10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-90=A-</td>
<td>Attendance/</td>
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<tr>
<td>89-87=B+</td>
<td>Participation 20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>86-84=B</td>
<td>Total Possible Points 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-67=D</td>
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**Academic Integrity Policy.** The Doane College Academic Integrity Policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and written materials will represent your own work. The use of other's ideas and words shall be properly cited. Please ask if you are unsure as to how or what a proper citation of a source is.

**Required Text:**
A text is available in digital format online at the link provided below.

[https://students.flatworldknowledge.com/course/1747681](https://students.flatworldknowledge.com/course/1747681)

**Critical Thinking.** Remember, in seeking the elusive truth, we have two basic questions to ask:

*How do you know?...What does it mean?*

I hope that you will enjoy this learning journey.
Course Outline:

Reading Assignment: Chapter 1: Introducing Social Psychology
(Read prior to class)

Session One.
1. Introduction and explanation of the course and learning expectations.
2. Discussion of course requirements and assignments.
3. Introduction of course participants.


Topics Include:
- Definition of Social Psychology
- Four Core Concerns of Social Psychology
- Five Social Motives: Belonging, Understanding, Controlling, Enhancing Self, and Trusting
- Theoretical Perspectives of Social Psychology
- Allen Model of Social Psychology (Handout)
- Basis of Social Psychology as a Science
- Characteristics of Empirical Research
- Research Methods
- Ethics in Social Psychological Research

6. Discussion concerning video.
7. Overview of oral presentations.
8. LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED: 1, 2, 15, and 16.

Reading Assignment: Chapter 2: Social Learning and Social Cognition
(Read prior to class)

Session Two.
1. Discuss role theory, reinforcement theory, cognitive theory, and symbolic interaction theory from a critical thinking perspective.
2. Discuss term paper requirements. (View example papers)(Handout)
3. LECTURE: Who are you and of what worth?

Topics Include:
- Socialization Agents Processes Outcomes
  - Secondary Socialization
  - Impression Formation
  - Attribution Theory
  - Bias and Error in Attribution

5. Discussion of video (Self-image, self-worth, self-concept, reference groups)
6. ORAL PRESENTATIONS:
   a. Role Theory

      Presenter: ____________________________________________

   b. Cognitive Theory

      Presenter: ____________________________________________

7. LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED: 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 15, and 16.
Session Three.

   Topics Include: Schemas
   - Attitude Formation
   - Cognitive Dissonance
   - Balance Theory
   - Emergence and Source of Self
   - Self-Schema, Self-Image, Self-Concept, Self-Worth, and Self-Esteem (Handout)
   - Attitude Change Through Methods of Persuasion
   - Threats and Promises
   - Obedience to Authority
   - Social Power
   - Compliance
   - Obedience
   - Conformity Language and Verbal Communication
   - Nonverbal Communication
   - Social Structure and Communication
   - Self-Presentation
   - Impression Management
   - Socialization
   - Cultural Message
   - Peer Pressure
   - Gender Stereotypes
   - Gender-Based Evaluation Bias

2. VIDEO: "Time for Burning.” American Lutheran Church, 1965.
   “Creating Social Reality.” Discovering Psychology Series, Annenberg Foundation

3. Discussion of video.

4. Discuss social influence and persuasion.
   a. Communication-Persuasion Paradigm
   b. Obedience to authority

5. ORAL PRESENTATIONS:
   a. Reinforcement Theory
      Presenter: ______________________________________________________
   b. Symbolic Interaction Theory
      Presenter: ______________________________________________________

6. LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, and 17.
Session Four

1. LECTURE: Relax and Meet Shirley Valentine.
   Topics Include: Interpersonal Attraction, Love, and Intimacy
   - Physical Attraction
   - Matching Hypotheses
   - Homogeneity of Norms
   - Proximity
   - Same Sex Attraction
   - Components of the Life Course
   - Influences on Life Progression
   - Stages in the Life Course: Age and Sex Roles
   - “The Natural Order”
   - Historical Variations
   - Socialization, Cultural Message, Peer Pressure
   - Gender Stereotypes
   - Gender-Based Evaluation Bias

2. Discuss symbolic communication and language.

3. VIDEO: “Shirley Valentine.”

4. Discuss video.

5. ORAL PRESENTATIONS:
   a. Comparison of Perspectives
      Presenter: __________________________________________
   b. Comparison of Perspectives
      Presenter: __________________________________________

6. LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 16.
Reading Assignment: Chapter 9: Helping and Altruism
(Read prior to class)

Session Five.
1. LECTURE: Going my way?
   Topics Include: Motivation to Help Others
   Other Factors in Helping Others
   Status Attainment Individual Values Alienation Role Theory
   Social Influences on Health Symbolic Interaction Theory
   Alienation


3. Discussion of video (e.g., Social Psychological theory, impression
   management, interpersonal attraction and relationships, attitudes [prejudice], self-
   esteem, and social perception and attribution, etc.).

4. ORAL PRESENTATIONS:
   a. Article ________________________________________________________________
      Presenter: _____________________________________________________________________
   b. Article ________________________________________________________________
      Presenter: _____________________________________________________________________

5. LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16.

Reading Assignment: Chapter 10: Hurting Others: Why We Become Aggressive
(Read prior to class)

Session Six.
1. LECTURE: Having a hard time getting along.
   Topics Include: Aggression and the Motivation to Harm
   Other Aspects of Aggression
   Status Attainment Individual Values Alienation Role Theory
   Alienation

2. ORAL PRESENTATIONS:
   a. Article ________________________________________________________________
      Presenter: _____________________________________________________________________
   b. Article ________________________________________________________________
      Presenter: _____________________________________________________________________


4. Discussion of the video – aggression.

5. LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED: 1 - 16.
Session Seven.

1. **LECTURE:** Applying Social Psychological Concepts to the Real World.
   Topics Include:
   - Development of Intergroup Conflict
   - Persistence -- Effects -- Resolution
   - Group Cohesion
   - Group Goals
   - Group Norms
   - Minority/Majority Influence
   - Role Differentiation in Newly Formed Groups
   - Status Characteristics and Social Interaction
   - Equity and Reward Distribution
   - Stability and Change in Authority
   - Group Performance
   - Group Tasks
   - Leadership
   - Groupthink

2. Discussion relative to lecture and contemporary events.

3. **VIDEO:** "American Hollow." HBO, 2001

4. Discussion --- Bringing the course together --- How many Soc Psy concepts are identified in the video?

5. **ORAL PRESENTATIONS:**
   
   a. Article ________________________________________________________________
   Presenter: _____________________________________________________________________

   b. Article ________________________________________________________________
   Presenter: _____________________________________________________________________

6. **LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED:** 1 - 16.

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Session Eight.

1. **LECTURE:** Bringing It All Together.
   Topics Include:
   - Obedience to Authority
   - Social Power
   - Compliance
   - Obedience
   - Conformity Language and Verbal Communication
   - Nonverbal Communication
   - Social Structure and Communication
   - Self-Presentation
   - Impression Management
   - Norms Violations
   - Reactions to Norms Violations
   - Formal Social Controls
   - Labeling and Secondary Deviance
   - Crowds
   - Collective Behavior
   - Underlying Causes
   - Precipitating Events to Collective Behavior
   - Social Movement
   - Development
   - Social Movement Organizations
   - The Consequences of Social Movements


3. Discussion on the application of Social Psychological theories and concepts to real situations, as reflected in the video. Does this knowledge help us to better understand and explain human behavior in everyday life? How can this be beneficial to you and to society in general, and what are some ethical considerations?

4. **ORAL PRESENTATION:**

   Article ________________________________________________________________
   Presenter: _____________________________________________________________________

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED:** 1 - 16.