

San José State University
Psychology
PSYCH 154, Social Psychology, Spring 2025

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Christine Ma-Kellams
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Office Hours:	Tu 12-1 on Zoom
Class Days/Time:	T/R 4:30-5:45
Classroom:	Zoom
Prerequisites:	Psych 1 or equivalent

Course Format: online

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU on Spartan App Portal <http://one.sjsu.edu> to learn of any updates.

Course Description

Provides an examination of psychological theory and research related to prejudice and discrimination from the perspectives of both the holders and targets of prejudice. Includes individual and small group exercises to provide experiential learning.

Course Goals

This course will explore the theoretical and practical approaches to the understanding of human behavior within a social context. We will examine the scientific study of social thought and behavior to better understand how the real or imagined presence of other people shape our own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. 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.

Class will include lecture, in-class demos, small-group activities, videos, and presentations.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO): Upon successful completion of the course, students will have developed:

CLO1 -- Knowledge Base of Psychology -- Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

CLO2 -- Research Methods in Psychology -- Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.

Psychology of Prejudice, Psyc 191, Spring 2019 Page 8 of 16

CLO3 -- Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology -- Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

CLO4 -- Application of Psychology -- Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

CLO5 -- Values in Psychology -- Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs): Upon successful completion of the psychology graduate MA requirements:

PLO1 - Advanced Knowledge - Students completing the MA in Psychology program will understand the major theoretical perspectives and research methods across areas of experimental psychology, i.e., Developmental, Social, Cognitive, and Physiological.

PLO2 - Research Methods & Scholarship - Students completing the MA in Psychology program are required to complete a thesis. The thesis will demonstrate:

(a) creative problem-solving in the design, implementation of empirical research.

(b) project management skills in the implementation of empirical research.

(c) advanced competency in the statistical analysis and interpretation of empirical research findings.

(b) the ability to communicate (oral and written) their research findings at a professional level

PLO3 - Career Enhancement - Students completing the MA in Psychology program will achieve career enhancement through placement in a doctoral program or acceptance of a position requiring a master's in psychology in the public or private sector.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook & Readings

Required readings: Principles of Social Psychology. Available (free!) at

<https://open.lib.umn.edu/socialpsychology/>

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas

Recommended reading: The Band by Christine Ma-Kellams

(<https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Band/Christine-Ma-Kellams/9781668018378>)

Course Requirements and Assignments

Activities

In-class activities are an important part of this class and attending class requires active participation. Activities are meant as a space for you to apply the theories and findings from the psychology of prejudice to the real world.

Attendance

Timely attendance and participation are essential for success in the course. I will do my best to foster an environment where all students feel free to express their ideas. If you miss class, you will likely miss important material that may be covered on the exams, and you will lose points for any participation activities that you miss. You are responsible for all announcements, in-class handouts, lectures, and other materials from class whether you attend class or not. You should try to get missed notes from a classmate.

Course Readings

Readings should be done before each class. Useful discussions follow only when everyone has completed the readings thoroughly and thoughtfully.

Exams: All midterm exams are noncumulative; however, the final exam is cumulative. Prior to each exam, there will be an in-class review session; please prepare ahead of time and bring questions to the review. Exam material will come from lectures, in-class activities, and assigned readings.

Class participation: We will engage in a variety of in-class activities, including demonstrations, group discussions, quick-writes, videos, and interactive games. Attendance and participation in these activities are crucial for doing well in the course.

Project/Final Paper: Scientific understanding of social psychology is based on empirical research. As a student of this science, it's important that you be able to think critically and creatively about how social psychology is portrayed in the real world and whether this aligns with evidence. To facilitate this learning, you will choose one popular (i.e., written/produced for a lay audience, and NOT an academic one), fictionalized story related to social psychology and complete a project and paper on the topic.

For the research project, you will first choose a (fictional) novel or screenplay or transcribed podcast that portrays a story referencing one or more social psychological findings. Whatever you choose, it has to be in written format (e.g., a book, or a screenplay published online, or a podcast with a transcription available to read).

Next, you will read the novel/screenplay/podcast transcription and assess how social psychology findings are portrayed in the story being told. To this end, your paper will include a thorough review of the existing literature on the topic, your own critical analysis of the research that was portrayed in the story, and whether the pop cultural portrayal of the social psychology findings match the empirical evidence. The paper should include journal articles or books as references, and be in APA style; length should be 12-15 pages.

To allow for feedback and revision, the proposal and draft of your paper will be due at different points throughout the semester so that you can get preliminary feedback and make the necessary revisions.

Presentation: Students are required to present on the project. This could be in the form of a book or movie or podcast review (posted online and uploaded on Canvas), or a formal presentation (e.g., using slides) delivered to the class. Specific instructions for this assignment will be discussed in class.

****ALL written assignments need to use 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins.

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final exam will be on the time scheduled by the SJSU final exam schedule.

Grading Information

Grading

Assignment Grade Due Date

Activities/Assignments:

Project Proposal 10 pts
Draft 10 pts

Exams:

Midterm #1 40 pts
Midterm #2 40 pts
Final Exam 40 pts

Research Project:

Final Paper 75 pts
Research Presentation 10 pts

Determination of Grades

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

Classroom Protocol

Late assignments

An assignment turned in after the due date (and time) will receive a 10% penalty per day late. If you do not show up for the exam, you will receive a zero on it. There are no exceptions to this rule except for emergencies with official documentation (e.g., doctor's note). Note the deadlines in the class syllabus and plan accordingly.

Electronics

Cell phones, mp3 players, and all other electronic devices should be turned off in class. Texting or answering calls during class is not acceptable. If electronic devices are visible during an exam, you will receive a zero on the exam.

Laptops are strongly discouraged: Social media is bad for your happiness (studies show) and addictive (so is email). Please consider the limitations of "multi-tasking" and make an informed choice when deciding to bring computers to class.

Academic Honesty

You are held to the highest standard of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. You may never use the ideas or work of another person without proper citation (i.e. noting the name and source according to APA style). The work you turn in for all assignments should always be your own. I am interested in your original ideas, as well as your ability to properly cite others' ideas. Keep in mind that plagiarism does not necessarily have to be intentional to be serious. When in doubt, cite!

Contact

I check my email on a daily basis Monday-Friday and should respond to most queries within 24 hours. Please feel free to approach me before/after class, or make an appointment for office hours.

Accessibility

Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations should talk with me by the end of the second week of the term. University Policies (Required)

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>. **Make sure to visit this page, review and be familiar with these university policies and resources.**

In the following pages, you will find an outline of the topics and readings we will be covering. Please note that the syllabus may be updated during the semester to reflect changes in course readings, shifts in lecture topics, etc. You will be notified each time a change takes place.

DATES, TOPICS, AND READINGS

Week 1: 1/23

Social Psychology as a Science

Forgas, J. P., Goldenberg, L., & Unkelbach, C. (2009). Can bad weather improve your memory? An unobtrusive field study of natural mood effects on real-life memory. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45(1), 254-257.

Shariff, A. F., & Rhemtulla, M. (2012). Divergent effects of beliefs in heaven and hell on national crime rates. *PloS one*, 7(6), e39048.

Reading: Ch 1.3

Week 2 1/28-30

Social Cognition

Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J., & Glick, P. (2007). Universal dimensions of social cognition: Warmth and competence. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 11(2), 77-83.

Jost, J. T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A. W., & Sulloway, F. J. (2003). Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological bulletin*, 129(3), 339.

Reading: Ch. 2

Week 3 2/4-6 (FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE)

Emotion & Motivation

Frijda, N. H. (1988). The laws of emotion. *American psychologist*, 43(5), 349.

Niedenthal, P. M. (2007). Embodying emotion. *science*, 316(5827), 1002-1005.

Reading: Ch. 3

Week 4 2/11-13

The Self

Leary, M. R., Tambor, E. S., Terdal, S. K., & Downs, D. L. (1995). Self-esteem as an interpersonal monitor: the sociometer hypothesis. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 68(3), 518.

Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg, J., Solomon, S., Arndt, J., & Schimel, J. (2004). Why do people need self-esteem? A theoretical and empirical review. *Psychological bulletin*, 130(3), 435.

Reading: Ch. 4

Week 5 2/18-20

Attitudes (Conscious & Unconscious)

Crano, W. D., & Prislin, R. (2006). Attitudes and persuasion. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.*, 57, 345-374.

Reading: Ch. 5

Week 6 2/25-27

Close Relationships

McNulty, J. K., Olson, M. A., Meltzer, A. L., & Shaffer, M. J. (2013). Though they may be unaware, newlyweds implicitly know whether their marriage will be satisfying. *Science*, 342(6162), 1119-1120.

Reading: Ch. 8

Week 7 3/4-6 MIDTERM #1

Week 8 3/11-13
Aggression

Lieberman, J. D., Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., & McGregor, H. A. (1999). A hot new way to measure aggression: Hot sauce allocation. *Aggressive Behavior: Official Journal of the International Society for Research on Aggression*, 25(5), 331-348.

Ritter, D., & Eslea, M. (2005). Hot sauce, toy guns, and graffiti: A critical account of current laboratory aggression paradigms. *Aggressive Behavior: Official Journal of the International Society for Research on Aggression*, 31(5), 407-419.

Reading: Ch. 10

Week 9 3/18-20
Intergroup Relations

Arkes, H. R., & Tetlock, P. E. (2004). Attributions of implicit prejudice, or "would Jesse Jackson fail the Implicit Association Test?". *Psychological inquiry*, 15(4), 257-278.

Enos, R. D. (2014). Causal effect of intergroup contact on exclusionary attitudes. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111(10), 3699-3704.

Reading: Ch. 12

Week 10 3/25-27
Morality

Haidt, J., Koller, S. H., & Dias, M. G. (1993). Affect, culture, and morality, or is it wrong to eat your dog?. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 65(4), 613.

Schnall, S., Benton, J., & Harvey, S. (2008). With a clean conscience: Cleanliness reduces the severity of moral judgments. *Psychological science*, 19(12), 1219-1222.

Week 11 4/1-3 SPRING BREAK

Week 12 4/8-10 DRAFT DUE & MIDTERM #2

Week 13 4/15-17
Culture

Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2006). Toward a psychological science for a cultural species. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 1(3), 251-269.

Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world?. *Behavioral and brain sciences*, 33(2-3), 61-83.

Week 14 4/22-24
Judgment & Decision-Making

Lerner, J. S., Li, Y., & Weber, E. U. (2013). The financial costs of sadness. *Psychological science*, 24(1), 72-79.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. *science*, 185(4157), 1124-1131.

Week 15 4/29-5/1 (FINAL PAPER DUE)
Social Neuroscience

Eisenberger, N. I. (2012). Broken hearts and broken bones: A neural perspective on the similarities between social and physical pain. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 21(1), 42-47.

Macrae, C. N., Mitchell, J. P., Tait, K. A., McNamara, D. L., Golubickis, M., Topalidis, P. P., & Christian, B. M. (2015). Turning I into me: Imagining your future self. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 37, 207-213.

Week 16 5/6-8 (PRESENTATIONS DUE)
Review

FINAL EXAM