

GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS

Course: PSYC 335: Social Psychology
Credits: 3 Credits
Instructor: Silia Passeri



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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Social psychology is the scientific study of the way people think about, feel, and behave in social situations. It involves understanding how people influence, and are influenced by, others around them. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the work of social psychologists. Students who develop a good grasp of the materials presented in this course should be able to understand some of the basic components underlying the behaviors and mental processes of people involved in social interaction, and the methods used to ascertain them. Students should then be able to comprehend the various discussions going on around them -- in the media and in private -- that have to do with the reasons and tendencies of human interaction and the functioning of the human mind as it is influenced by social interaction. Topics include: the role of others in shaping self-concepts, as well as the formation of person perception, attitudes, attribution theory, obedience, conformity, and social relations. We will look at the causes and methods of reducing prejudice and aggression, as well as exploring altruism, the development of gender roles, stereotypes, non-verbal behavior, and social influence. In addition, since this course is taught in Florence, Italy, it provides a natural opportunity to compare and contrast the influence of culture on individuals. Living for even this short period in another country helps the student to see and understand the relationship between the individual (self) and society, and a chance to see the student's own culture from a distance.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

During this course students will:

1. Gain knowledge of key concepts and issues necessary to understand people and their behavior.
2. Become familiar with research methodology commonly employed in the field of social psychology. Students will also become more familiar with the strengths and limitations of various research methods employed by social psychologists.
3. Develop a range of presentation skills.
4. Develop analytical skills essential in the field of social psychology.
5. Increase awareness of how biases affect a person's thoughts, emotions, and actions.
6. Increase awareness of the factors that shape a person's thoughts, emotions and actions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students will attend class, complete all readings and participate in class discussion. Each student will lead class discussion for one half-hour time slot during the semester and provide feedback on classmates' work.

There will be two exams over the course of the semester. The first exam, will be given mid-semester, based on material covered up to that point. The final exam will be comprehensive and require the student to draw from knowledge gained over the semester from class notes, assigned readings, class presentations, and class discussions.

There will also be two assignments for this class.

Brief Reaction Paper: Students will write a brief reaction paper (2-3 pages) on a topic related to social psychology. Students will expand upon an issue in social psychology by using materials from their text as well as from outside sources.

Final Paper & Presentation: students are required to make a group presentation that more closely examines a relevant issue in the area of social psychology in which the group is interested. One week after the presentation, the final paper (2000 words, double-spaced, Times, 12 Font) will be due.

The paper needs to be written in APA Style, including references. The paper will be graded according to content and organization.

COURSE GRADE:

The course is scored on a 500 (100%) point scale, as follows:

Mid-term exam	100 points (20%)
Final exam	150 points (30%)
Brief reaction paper	100 points (20%)
Final paper and presentation	100 points (20%)
Attendance and Participation	50 points (10%)

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Textbook:

-*The Social Animal, 10th edition.* Aronson, E. (2008)

-Journals articles assigned weekly.