

Course Syllabus  
Winter 2012  
Psychology 308A: Social Psychology

Section 001: TTH 9:30-10:50 SWING 222

Section 002: TTH 11:00-12:20 SWING 222

### Instructor

Dr. Ara Norenzayan

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604-827-5134

Office hour: Tue 12:30-2:00, or by special appointment.

### Teaching Assistants

Please contact your capable Teaching Assistants first before coming to me. In most cases they can offer help and attend to your problems. If they are unable to help you they will refer you to me. TA office hours will be announced at the beginning of the term.

Dan Randles (9:30 AM class). Office: Kenny 111; Email: [dan3791@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:dan3791@psych.ubc.ca)

Office hour: Mon 4:30-6:00.

Rita McNamara (11 AM class). Office: Kenny 1111; Email: [ramcnama@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:ramcnama@psych.ubc.ca)

Office hour: Wed 12:30-2:00.

### Course Goals

Human beings are social beings. Much of our psychology operates in a richly structured social and cultural environment. This course is a broad overview of social psychology, the scientific study of social thought and behaviour. We explore how people perceive, think about, and feel about the social world, and how these processes shape behaviour towards others. We then explore how human thinking and behaviour is influenced by the social context, from interpersonal relationships to groups, to society and culture. Throughout the course, we consider evolutionary perspectives as well as the central role of culture in explaining human social behavior.

### Textbook and Lectures

Gilovich, T., Keltner, D., & Nisbett, R. (2010). *Social Psychology, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* New York: Norton. Students are required to read the assigned chapters for each week before coming to class. Lectures are based on 1) the assigned readings from the textbook, as well as 2) novel material that is NOT in the textbook. I post online basic lecture outlines. These are skeletal outlines, they do not contain all the details of the lectures. If you miss a class, be sure to consult the lecture outlines on the course website AND borrow notes from a classmate (I do not share detailed lecture notes with students).

## Evaluation

Students' mark will be based on two non-cumulative exams containing multiple choice and short essay questions. Exams will cover the assigned readings as well as lectures and class activities (e.g., films). The Midterm Exam (worth 50% of your total mark) is on **Thursday, October 18, 2012**. **The Final, Non-cumulative Exam** (worth 50% of your total mark) will be scheduled by the university, during final exam period sometime **between December 5-19, 2012**. Marks will be posted on the course website (by student ID# only).

There will be NO make-up midterms (if you miss the midterms due to a documented emergency, your final exam will be weighed 100%). This applies only in extraordinary cases of validated medical and personal/family emergencies. **This means that if you miss an exam without validation you will simply lose the percentage of points associated with it.** Contact your TA as soon as possible and be prepared to provide documentation in such cases.

## Communication

*Email Policy.* Due to the large size of these classes, email communication is limited. Here is the proper email etiquette to follow. If you have a simple question that can be answered in a single sentence, email is an appropriate way of communicating with me. If not, and if your question cannot be answered by your TA (see below), please see me right before or after class, or come to office hours and I will be happy to discuss it with you at more length. Emails requiring responses longer than 1-sentence will not be answered. Please allow at least 48 hours before a response can be expected. I do not answer Emails over the weekend.

*Who to contact for your concerns or questions.* If you have a question, please consult the course website and the syllabus first. There is a good chance that the answer to your question is provided. Second, contact your Teaching Assistant. Your TAs are highly capable, knowledgeable graduate students specializing (doing a PhD) in social psychology. They are eager to provide information on course logistics and material, and help you prepare for exams. Finally, if your question is not answered on the course website and cannot be answered by your TA, you may contact the professor.

## Extra Credit

SUBJECT POOL EXTRA-CREDIT POINTS. One way to learn more about psychology is to be a participant in ongoing research projects. You may earn up to 3 points of credit toward your course grade by participating in studies that are posted on <https://hsp.psych.ubc.ca/> Please register in this online system no later than the end of September. You can also earn your first half hour of credit by completing pretesting survey that will make you eligible for a wider variety of studies. Please note that in a given term, you can earn no more than one hour of credit for online studies (not including the pretesting).

As an alternative to participating in studies, you may choose to complete library writing projects, in which you read and summarize a research article; each article summary counts as one hour of research participation. More information about this option can be found at: <http://www.psych.ubc.ca/resguide.psy>. All of your credits for study participation or the library option will be added to your final course grade, after any scaling that may have been applied.

## Tentative Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

<u>Week</u>	<u>Lecture Topic</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
Sep. 6	Overview of Course & Introduction	Chapter 1
Sep. 11	Research Methods	Chapter 2
Sep. 18	The Social Self	Chapter 3
Sep. 25	Understanding Others	Chapter 4
Oct. 2	Social Judgment	Chapter 5
Oct. 9	Attitudes and Behaviour	Chapter 6
Oct. 16	Attitudes and Behaviour (cont) <b>Midterm Exam (Thur. Oct 18)</b>	
Oct. 23	Emotion	Chapter 7
Oct. 30	Social Influence	Chapter 8
Nov. 6	Attraction	Chapter 10
Nov. 13	Prejudice and Discrimination	Chapter 12
Nov. 20	Helping, Hurting, Cooperating	Chapter 13
Nov. 27	Groups	Chapter 14

Note. Chapter 9: Persuasion, Chapter 11: Relationships, and Chapter 15: Social Psychology Applied, are not assigned.

### **Psychology Department's Policy on Grade Distributions and Scaling**

In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology courses are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions. According to departmental norms, the mean grade in a 300-level class is 70 for a good class, 68 for an average class, and 66 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 13. **Scaling** is likely to be used in order to comply with these norms; grades may be scaled up or down as necessary by the professor or department.

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### **Psychology Department's Position on Academic Misconduct**

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them. In the first place, the Department has implemented software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple-choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students' responses. In addition, the Department subscribes to *TurnItIn*--a service designed to detect and deter plagiarism. All materials (term papers, lab reports, etc.) that students submit for grading will be scanned and compared to over 5 billion pages of content located on the Internet or in TurnItIn's own proprietary databases. The results of these comparisons are compiled into customized "Originality Reports" containing several, sensitive measures of plagiarism; instructors receive copies of these reports for every student in their class.

In all cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript.

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently by individuals. Do **not** use Google/Yahoo/MSN Search/etc. to find articles for assignments in this course. **Do** use any of the indexes and databases listed under Indexes and Databases, Subject Resources, OneSearch or Metasearch on the Library's website at <http://www.library.ubc.ca>. (Not sure which index to use? Click HELP on the library homepage at [www.library.ubc.ca](http://www.library.ubc.ca) or try Subject Resources.)

If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is even a borderline case of academic misconduct, please consult your instructor. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>).

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