

PSYC 308A: Social Psychology
(Winter 2021-2022, Term 2 / Sections 003 and 004)

Before reading further, please read this:

This course has asynchronous components (e.g., pre-recorded videos) as well as a weekly “live” class meeting. These live meetings will occur on *Wednesdays* during the scheduled class time. The live meetings will either be on Zoom, or in-person (in our scheduled classroom), depending on UBC policies regarding in-person classes. If you’re signed up for this course, we assume that you will actually be able to attend the weekly live sessions, regardless of whether these sessions are on Zoom or in-person. There will be no formal penalty for missing a live class session; but if you are unable to regularly attend these sessions, it’s likely to have a negative effect on your comprehension of course material, and on your performance in this course.

Schedule for Live Class Sessions:

(Make sure to attend the live session for the section that you’re actually registered in!)

| Section | When and where | Zoom info |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Section 003 | Wednesdays 1:00 – 1:50 pm On Zoom or in Buchanan A104 | Meeting ID: 691 3466 3970 Passcode: 037865 Click here to join |
| Section 004 | Wednesdays 2:00 – 2:50 pm On Zoom or in Buchanan A104 | Meeting ID: 610 2312 0449 Passcode: 142001 Click here to join |

Teaching Team:

Instructor: Dr. Mark Schaller (he / him)

Office: CIRS 4353 / Email: schaller@psych.ubc.ca

In-person drop-in student hours: Mondays 1:00 – 3:00 in CIRS 4353

Zoom student hours by appointment: Fridays 1:00 – 3:00

(Book appointment on Calendly: <https://calendly.com/markschaller>)

(Zoom information provided automatically after booking appointment)

TA (Section 003): Will Jettinghoff (he / him)

Office: Kenny 2202 / Email: will.jettinghoff@psych.ubc.ca

In-person drop-in student hours: Mondays 11:30 – 12:30 in Kenny 2202

Zoom student hours by appointment: Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:00

(<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75683141840?pwd=OMLdM7CHtfv1GUZBxIOBa4R23L0Lp.1>)

(Book appointment via email)

TA (Section 004): Gordon Heltzel (he / him)

Office: Kenny 1355 / Email: gheltzel@psych.ubc.ca

In-person drop-in student hours: Thursdays 1:30 - 2:30 in Kenny 1355.

Zoom student hours by appointment: Wednesdays 1:00 - 2:00

(<https://zoom.us/j/93455842384?pwd=cThpdTZiWHlvUmFBWU12bGZtSE1mdz09>)

(Book appointment via email)

Course Overview and Learning Objectives

Social psychology is the subfield of psychology that investigates the many ways in which our thoughts and behaviors are influenced by the real or implied presence of others, and how this affects our interactions with other people. Research in social psychology covers a wide range of topics, including such things as self-concept, impression formation, stereotypes and prejudices, attitudes and attitude change, interpersonal attraction, altruism, aggression, and group behavior. This course provides an overview of research findings on these and other topics.

These topics are relevant to the lives of all human beings. For this reason, one of our goals in teaching this course is to engage, and inform, your natural curiosity about people. If we are successful, by the end of this course, you will be able to draw upon many different lines of research in social psychology in order to better understand yourself, other people, and important world events.

Psychologists are scientists and, accordingly, study these topics using scientific methods. For this reason, another goal of this course is to expose you to the methods that social psychologists use to study these topics. If we are successful, by the end of this course you will have a deeper understanding of the process through which hypotheses about human behavior can be rigorously tested.

By providing deeper insights into the causes and consequences of human behavior, many social psychological research findings can inform the strategies that people use to help address real-world problems and to make people's lives better. For this reason, a third goal of this course is to encourage you to think carefully and creatively about ways in which social psychological research findings can be usefully applied in the real world. If we are successful, by the end of this course, you will be better equipped to harness the power of social psychology to improve people's lives and, more generally, to improve the world that we share.

We have designed all aspects of this course (including the methods that we use to assess your performance) in order to accomplish these objectives.

Course Format and Structure

This course is organized in the form of weekly "modules" on Canvas (You will need to log into Canvas with your UBC CWL. Only students officially registered in this course can access the course webpage on Canvas.) Each weekly module is devoted to a specific topic or theme. For each module, assigned course material includes videos to watch; and readings to read.

Videos: For each module, important course material will be delivered in the form of pre-recorded "lecture" videos that were prepared specifically for this course, and which you can only access via Canvas. Occasionally, these lecture videos will be complemented by web-based videos that will be linked on Canvas. Please watch these videos carefully and thoughtfully. (In order to help you stay engaged, the lecture videos will periodically have questions embedded within them, and you will need to respond to those questions before proceeding to watch the rest of the video. Your responses to these inside-the-video questions won't be marked. They are there simply to help you to stay attentive and mentally engaged.)

Readings: Other important course material is presented in the form of weekly reading assignments—all of which can be accessed directly from Canvas. Most of the readings are articles published in scholarly journals in psychology (most of these are from the journal *Current*

Directions in Psychological Science). There are also readings of other kinds too (e.g., blog posts on the *Character & Context* blog—hosted by the Society for Personality and Social Psychology—in which social psychologists provide summaries of their recent research findings.) You will be expected to read all the readings on the reading list.

These videos and readings are designed to be complementary. There will be some overlap, of course. But there is lots of important material in the readings that won't be covered in the videos; and the videos present lots of important material that doesn't appear in the readings. You are responsible for learning all of it! If you want to do well in this class, be sure to keep up with the readings, and be sure to watch each of the videos thoughtfully, from beginning to end.

Live Class Sessions: This class is officially scheduled to meet three times a week, but we won't do that. We will meet as a class just once a week—on Wednesdays (during the scheduled class time). The live meetings will either be on Zoom, or in-person (in our scheduled classroom), depending on UBC policies regarding in-person classes. These live class sessions will *not* be lectures (and so will *not* be recorded). Rather, these sessions will be devoted to discussion (including discussions in small break-out groups), and to other interactive activities that are designed to help achieve the learning objectives of this course. You are expected to attend these live class sessions (regardless of whether they are on Zoom or in-person), and you will almost certainly benefit from doing so (in terms of better learning and better performance on the methods—quizzes and term papers—that we will use to assess your learning.)

Of course, if you are sick, it is important that you stay home, no matter what you think you may be sick with (e.g. Covid-19, cold, flu, other illness). (You can complete a [self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms](#) if needed.) If you do miss a live class session, it would be a good idea to reach out to one or more your classmates to find out what you missed.

Summary of Topics and Themes Covered During Weekly Course Modules

| | |
|---------|-------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | Introductory Material |
| Week 2 | Some Basic Principles of Social Cognition |
| Week 3 | Self-Concept and Self-Esteem |
| Week 4 | Causal Attribution and its Implications |
| Week 5 | Appearances and Attractiveness |
| Week 6 | Liking and Loving |
| Week 7 | Attitudes and Attitude Change |
| Week 8 | Social Norms and Social Influence |
| Week 9 | Prosocial Behavior |
| Week 10 | Stereotypes and Prejudices |
| Week 11 | Useful Real-World Applications |
| Week 12 | Some Final Thoughts |

Guidelines for Using Email to Contact Instructors and TA's

You might have questions about the course or course material that you're unable to ask during a live class session, or you might want to have some other outside-of-class conversation about an issue that is specific to you. If so, that's great. We would be thrilled to talk. But *not* via email. You might use email to arrange a meeting, but email is an inefficient way to have a real conversation. (You shouldn't expect more than a one-sentence response to email inquiries. Nor

should you expect any immediate response to an email inquiry, especially on evenings or weekends.) Instead, for any kind of substantive question or substantive conversation outside of class time, please use student hours—either in-person drop-in student hours, or schedule a Zoom appointment.

Course Logistics Discussion Board

We hope everything goes smoothly and that you'll have no problems accessing course materials on Canvas. But unexpected glitches might arise. Instructors and TA's are *not* information technology experts. For technical issues, or logistical issues of other kinds, you can often get better assistance by drawing on the collective wisdom of other students. For this reason, we have created a "Course Logistics Discussion Board" on the course website on Canvas (it's on the "Discussions" tab). So if you do have a question about something technical or logistical related to the course, we recommend that you post your question on Course Logistics Discussion Board. It might help you get help faster (and it might also help other students who may be facing similar logistical issues).

Assessments of Learning

Weekly Quizzes

To assess your comprehension of the course material, each module (except for the very last week of term) concludes with short Weekly Quiz that you must complete on Canvas. Weekly Quizzes will be comprised by multiple choice items designed to assess your comprehension and understanding of the material (on videos and in readings) assigned within that module. These Weekly Quizzes have weekly deadlines, specified on Canvas.

For all Weekly Quizzes after Week 1, the deadline is Friday at 5:00 pm (Vancouver time). In order to accommodate unexpected last-minute personal crises and/or technical glitches, there will be a 3 day "grace period" (until the following Monday at 5:00 pm) during which you can still submit your Weekly Quiz with no penalty. After the grace period ends, Weekly Quizzes will be locked and, if you haven't submitted your responses by then, you will receive a mark of 0. (For Week 1 only, the Weekly Quiz deadline is extended by several days, and the grace period is extended a bit longer too.)

Important: You must complete each Weekly Quiz *by yourself*, without discussing it with or receiving input from any other student (past or present). If you either provide information about the contents of a quiz to another student, or receive information those contents from another student, that would be cheating—and there are harsh penalties for that. (See the section on academic integrity and academic misconduct, below.)

Your performance on each Weekly Quiz counts 5% toward your overall course grade. There will be 11 Weekly Quizzes total; so, cumulatively, your performance across all Weekly Quizzes will count 55% toward your overall course grade.

Term Papers

There will be two Term Paper assignments. These Term Papers will provide opportunities for you to demonstrate your learning of course material, and to show off deep, thoughtful intellectual engagement with this course material. They will be marked accordingly. (Term Papers will be marked on a 0 – 100 scale corresponding to the UBC grading scale, with the

expectation that the distribution of marks will be consistent with the Department of Psychology's policy on overall grade distributions [see below].) You will be required to submit Term Papers on Turnitin. Detailed instructions and guidelines will be posted separately on the course website.

Term Paper 1 (maximum length of 3 pages, double-spaced) will be due on *Monday, February 14*, and will count 20% toward your final course grade.

Term Paper 2 (maximum length of 4 pages, double-spaced) will be due on *Friday April 8*, and will count 25% toward your final course grade.

Important: For these Term Papers (unlike the Weekly Quizzes) you are invited and encouraged to collaborate with one or more other students in order to produce a co-authored paper. There are several good reasons to do this. Collaboration (and group-work more generally) provides an opportunity to experience first-hand and learn about group dynamics and group decision-making, which are important topics of inquiry within social psychology. Collaboration also provides an opportunity for you to get to know other smart and interesting people (other students!) that you otherwise wouldn't. Most students benefit from that opportunity, and find it fun. And, in our experience, these co-authored papers generally end up being more impressive (and get higher marks) than papers written by a solo student. (For co-authored Term Papers, each author on that paper will receive the same mark.) Anyway, there are lots of benefits—both intellectual and personal—that accrue from co-authoring a Term Paper with one or more other students. We won't actually require you to work collaboratively on Term Papers, but we will encourage you to do so (and we will use the "groups" feature on Canvas as a mechanism to help do so; more details soon.)

Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct (Cheating, etc.)

All students are expected to know, understand, and follow UBC policies regarding academic integrity and student conduct (which you can read here, in the [UBC Calendar](#)). Harsh sanctions are imposed on students who violate these policies by engaging in cheating (e.g., receiving unauthorized assistance on a quiz, or providing unauthorized assistance to another student), plagiarism (e.g., copying the work of others and pretending that it's work done by you), or other forms of academic misconduct. Incidences of cheating or plagiarism may result in a mark of zero, and more serious consequences may apply when the matter is referred to the Office of the Dean.

Let me put it more plainly: Don't cheat and don't plagiarize. Not only because it violates UBC's policies on student conduct, but also because it's dishonest, unethical, and morally wrong. For your own sake—for the sake of your self-concept and happiness as a human being—don't do it.

Extra Credit: Department of Psychology Research Participation System

You may earn up to 3 extra credit percentage points added to your final course grade by serving as a participant in one of the many different psychological studies that are being conducted by the department. For each hour of experimental participation, you can earn 1 credit (up to a maximum of 3) towards your final grade in this course. To do so, you must use the Department of Psychology's Research Participation System: <https://ubc-psych.sona-systems.com/>. (As an alternative to serving as a research participant, you can also earn these extra credit points by completing a "library option, for which you must write detailed summaries of peer-reviewed research articles, submitted on Turnitin.) To obtain detailed instructions about how you can earn

these extra credits, and to sign up for studies (or to do the library option), please go to <https://psych.ubc.ca/hsp>.

Scaling of Grades

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. In accordance with the policy of the Psychology Department, the expectation is that the grades in this course (as in all 300-level courses) will be normally distributed around an average grade of approximately 73 (i.e., right around a B- or B) prior to the addition of any extra credit points. Grades may be scaled—and very likely *will* be scaled—at the end of the term in order to comply with these norms. (Grades are not official until they appear on a student's academic record. You will receive both a numerical and a letter grade for this course. See the UBC Course Calendar for additional information about [UBC grading scale](#)—showing letter grades and corresponding numerical grades.)

Let me explain what this is all about: The primary function of grades is to inform you (and other people) as to your performance *relative* to other students who take this course. In order for grades to serve this function, it's important that average performance is reflected in an average grade, that better-than-average-but-not-great performance is reflected in a better-than-average-but-not-great grade, and so forth. This is something we really pay attention to in the Psychology Department (especially in courses like PSYC 308 for which there are multiple sections taught by multiple instructors). Grade scaling ensures fairness to all students in all sections, and ensures that your grade accurately reflects your performance *relative* to other students.

Anyway, as a matter of policy, the average final grade in this class is required to be in the low-to-middle part of the B range (prior to the addition of any extra credit points that students earn); and, depending on how the numbers look at the end of the term, final grades may be scaled—either scaled up, or scaled down—in order to conform with that policy.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Academic accommodations help students with a disability or ongoing medical condition overcome challenges that may affect their academic success. Students requiring academic accommodations must register with the [Centre for Accessibility](#). The Centre will determine that student's eligibility for accommodations in accordance with [Policy LR7: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Academic accommodations are not determined by your instructors, and instructors should not ask you about the nature of your disability or ongoing medical condition, or request copies of your disability documentation. However, instructors may consult with the Centre for Accessibility should the accommodations affect the essential learning outcomes of a course.

Academic Concession

Under [UBC's academic concession policy](#), students who are unable to complete required coursework in a timely way *might* qualify for academic concession for any of three reasons: conflicting responsibilities; medical circumstances; and compassionate grounds. You should make sure that you are familiar with these policies prior to seeking any form of academic concession. If you miss marked coursework and, after reviewing those policies carefully, you believe that you qualify for academic concession, here's what you should do:

If you are a student in the Faculty of Arts, review the Faculty of Arts' [academic concession page](#) and then complete Arts Academic Advising's [online academic concession form](#), so that an Arts Academic Advisor can evaluate your concession case.

If you are a student in a different Faculty, please consult [your Faculty's webpage on academic concession](#), and then contact your instructor if appropriate.

Unanticipated Events that Might Disrupt the Delivery of this Course

Just as students sometimes experience a health crisis or disruptive personal event, it is possible that the instructor or a TA might also experience such a thing—which could potentially affect plans for the course (e.g., delivery of course material, timeliness of feedback, etc.). If so, we will let you know about it as soon as possible using the announcements and/or email features in Canvas, along with any modifications to course planning. We sure hope this doesn't happen! But if it does, we will ask for your patience, flexibility, and compassion, as well as continued dedication to your own and classmates' learning during that time.

Equity and Inclusion and Diversity and Respect

University courses should be conducive to learning and rigorous intellectual inquiry within a context in which everyone feels included and respected—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, political or religious affiliations, ability, age, social status, etc. All students in this class are encouraged to express themselves thoughtfully when discussing course material; and, when you do express yourself, it's important that you do so in a manner that shows respect for every other member of this class. Therefore, please make sure that you're familiar with UBC's [Student Code of Conduct](#) and with UBC's policies on building and maintaining a respectful environment. You can find additional information about resources pertaining to equity, diversity, and inclusion on the Psychology Department's website: <https://psych.ubc.ca/about/equity-inclusion/>

Additional Useful Resources for Students

Additional resources may also be helpful as you contend with the challenges of taking university courses during a pandemic, and just dealing with life's challenges more broadly.

- Guidance for online classes: <https://keeplearning.ubc.ca/>
- Assistance with working remotely: <https://it.ubc.ca/ubc-it-guide-working-campus>
- Guidance on useful skills for students: <https://learningcommons.ubc.ca/student-toolkits/>
- Student's guide to Canvas: <https://students.canvas.ubc.ca/>
- COVID-19 health guidance: <https://covid19.ubc.ca/health-guidance-and-vaccines/>
- Mental health support: <https://students.ubc.ca/health/mental-health-during-covid-19>
- Counselling Services: <https://students.ubc.ca/health/counselling-services>
- Wellness Centre: <https://students.ubc.ca/health/wellness-centre>
- Student Health Services: <http://students.ubc.ca/health/student-health-service>

Copyright and Intellectual Property

All readings for this course are copyrighted, and cannot be redistributed without permission of the copyright owner. Lecture videos and other course materials are the intellectual property of the instructor and these also cannot be redistributed (e.g., posted on any other website, or shared in any other way) without instructor permission. Violation of these policies may lead to academic discipline.

Potential for Changes to This Syllabus

This syllabus provides a roadmap for how this course will proceed. But, let's face it: This course is being offered in an unusual format under unusual circumstances, and it's possible that some aspects of this roadmap will be revealed to be less-than-optimal. Consequently, it's possible that some revisions (in course materials, in scheduling, in policy, etc.) may have to be made as we proceed through the course, in order to achieve the learning objectives. Any such revisions—which will be posted on the class website on Canvas—will “count” just as much as policies outlined in this syllabus.

Land Acknowledgement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, occupied, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people. I acknowledge the land rights of the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

Authorship of this Syllabus

This syllabus was authored by Mark Schaller (schaller@psych.ubc.ca) with helpful input from Liz Dunn, Rachele Benjamin, Lillian May, Catherine Rawn, the UBC Psychology Community of Practice, and the Faculty of Arts Syllabus Guide