

## PSYD15H3 Current Topics in Social Psychology

**PROFESSOR:** Dr. Oren Amitay, Ph.D., C.Psych. (Registered Psychologist)  
**CLASS TIMES:** Tuesdays 3:00 to 5:00 (BV 516)  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Mondays: 2-3 or 5-6; Tuesdays: 5-6; please book ahead for an appointment  
**TELEPHONE:** (416) 666-7763  
**EMAIL:** oamitay@ryerson.ca ask\_my\_prof@hotmail.com askmyprof@gmail.com  
**IF YOU DO NOT HEAR BACK FROM ME W/IN 24 HOURS, PLEASE CONTACT ME AGAIN**  
**MSN "LIVE" CHAT:** ask\_my\_prof@hotmail.com  
**BLACKBOARD:** \*\*\*YOU are responsible for checking **BLACKBOARD** frequently for the readings and critical class news/updates/information\*\*\*\*

This course is intended to advance students' understanding of various issues in personality theory and research. Each week we will examine journal articles on different themes in personality psychology to help you recognize the strengths and limitations of the different constructs involved in this field and the methods employed in investigating these phenomena.

### METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Take-Home Exam (June 16)	25%	Covering May 5 – June 9
Class Work/Participation	10%	Evaluated over all 11 classes
Presentation and Discussion Leader	10%	
Term Paper	25%	<b>Due June 23</b>
Final Exam (During Final Exam Period)	30%	Covering June 16 – July 28

You are responsible for reading the articles **BEFORE** class and your participation grade will reflect both your attendance (mandatory) and ability to understand and discuss the course material. The **Final Exam** will be comprised of a variety of types of questions, from short answer to essay to objective measures, and will test your understanding of material/information covered in class and in the journal articles. If you miss either exam, you will have to provide proper medical documentation and petition to be allowed to write a special Midterm Exam (harder than the original) or a deferred Final Exam during the next exam period (up to four months away). I am very strict about medical documentation and do not give make-up exams easily. **\*\*ALL components must be completed to pass this course.\*\***

### TERM PAPER:

**BLACKBOARD** contains a detailed document explaining the **Term Paper**. In short, you are required to choose a story in the news/media and explain how it illustrates two different phenomena in Social Psychology. You will then describe how you would conduct an experiment to address one or both of these phenomena, making sure to show how you would rule out one or more alternative explanations for your hypotheses. This paper should demonstrate your appreciation for some of the problems that limit theory and research in the field of Social Psychology and should go beyond anything you hear in class. This is an **eight- to ten-page paper** (approximately **2500 words**) with at least **ten acceptable references**. **BLACKBOARD** contains a step-by-step guide on how to present your work in the "gold standard" of psychology, **APA style**. Please read these documents so you do not unnecessarily lose points.

If you are not comfortable with your writing abilities, or would like a quick refresher on specific topics, then be sure to make use of the following two excellent resources:

**UTSC Writing Centre:** AC 210, <http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~tlweb/TWC/index.htm> (offers 20 min. drop in sessions, or 50 min. 1-1 sessions)

**U of T Advice on Academic Writing:** <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/advice.html> (great source of materials on writing)

### COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS (Subject to change; any changes will be discussed beforehand):

- May 5** Introduction to course/overview \*\*\*NO READINGS\*\*\*
- May 12** Cognitive Dissonance and Rejection (to be read **AFTER** this class)

## **COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS (continued):**

### **May 19** Cognitive Dissonance and Implicit vs Explicit Attitudes

Rydell, R.J., McConnell, A.R., & Mackie, D.M. (2008). Consequences of discrepant explicit and implicit attitudes: Cognitive dissonance and increased information processing. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44*, 1526–1532.

### **May 26** Affective Forecasting

Hoerger, M., Quirk, S.W., Lucas, R.E., & Carr, T.H. (2009). Immune neglect in affective forecasting. *Journal of Research in Personality, 43*, 91–94.

Koo, M., Algoe, S.B., Wilson, T.D., & Gilbert, D.T. (2008). It's a wonderful life: Mentally subtracting positive events improves people's affective states, contrary to their affective forecasts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*, 1217-1224.

### **June 2** Trait Emotional Intelligence

Petrides, K. V. & Furnham, A. (2003). Trait emotional intelligence: Behavioural validation in two studies of emotion recognition and reactivity to mood induction. *European Journal of Personality, 17*, 39-57.

### **June 9** Attitudinal and Behavioural Change

Williams, R. H., & Williams, A. J. (2007). In pursuit of peace: Attitudinal and behavioral change with simulations and Multiple Identification Theory. *Simulation and Gaming, 38*, 453-471.

### **June 16** Sex Differences in Conformity **\*\*\*Take-Home Exam is Due Today (11:59 pm)\*\*\***

Reysen, S. & Reyson, M.B. (2004). Sex differences on a measure of conformity in automated teller machines. *Psychological Reports, 95*, 443-446.

### **June 23** Group Presentation 1\* **\*\*\*Term Paper is Due Today (11:59 pm)\*\*\***

### **June 30** **\*\*\* READING WEEK – NO CLASS \*\*\***

### **July 6** Group Presentation 2\*

### **July 13** Group Presentation 3\*

### **July 20** Group Presentation 4\*

### **July 27** Group Presentation 5\*

The articles referenced above are available to PSYD15H3 students for download from **BLACKBOARD**.

\* Each group will provide me with an **electronic copy** of your article **at least one week prior** to your presentation, and I will upload it to Intranet for your colleagues. The format and expectations of the presentations will be discussed further in class and on Blackboard.

### **Policies on academic integrity:**

Please review the UTSC Code on Academic Behaviour:

[http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/courses/calendar/University\\_of\\_Toronto\\_Policies.html#Code\\_of\\_Behaviour\\_on\\_Academic\\_Matters](http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/courses/calendar/University_of_Toronto_Policies.html#Code_of_Behaviour_on_Academic_Matters)

### **AccessAbility:**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible. The UTSC AccessAbility Services staff (located in S302) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations (416) 287-7560 or [ability@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:ability@utsc.utoronto.ca). The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

*The preceding schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change. Any changes will be discussed in class and agreed upon by students beforehand.*