PSYD15: Social Psychology of the Internet
Summer 2013 – Syllabus

Course
PSYD15H3: Special Topics in Social Psychology: The Social Psychology of the Internet
Class Time and Location: Mondays 11am-1pm, MW223
Website: https://portal.utoronto.ca/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp

Instructor
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Office Hours: Mondays 10-11am or by appointment

Course Description, Goals, and Objectives
The course provides an introduction to theory and research in internet psychology. It covers topics including (1) expressing, validating, and managing self-image online, (2) trust in computer mediated communication, (3) interpersonal relationships, sexuality, and online dating, (4) social networks, groups, and online communities, (5) internet persuasion, propaganda, and collective action, and (6) the internet and health behaviours.

The *general goals and objectives* of the course are to help students:
1. Learn and gain mastery over major research findings, terminology, principles, and theories important in various areas of internet psychology.
2. Gain a basic understanding of the topics listed above.
3. Practice and develop critical thinking skills, written and oral communications skills.
4. Analyze current issues and controversies in the field of internet psychology.
5. Find ways to apply psychological findings to everyday life.

Course objectives may be obtained through reading and studying the course readings, through satisfactory completion of assignments, and by attention to and active participation in class lectures, discussions, and activities.

Required Readings
Joinson, A., McKenna, K., Postmes, T. & Reips, U. (2010). *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Supplemental articles can be found in electronic form at the UTOR library (http://www.library.utoronto.ca/home).

Reaction Papers
A one-page reaction paper will be submitted each week about the readings for that week. The reaction paper is just as it sounds – a "reaction" to the readings. The assignment is designed to ensure that students think critically about the readings and deliberately express their thoughts and opinions about the topic. The paper should highlight components of the reading that students find interesting, insightful, controversial, and/or confusing. Bullet points will not be accepted. Instead, it should be formatted with complete thoughts, sentences, and paragraphs.

Each reaction paper is worth 15 points. Each paper is due by 12pm on the Sunday before class. The reaction papers should be submitted via Blackboard. Five points will be deducted

from the student's score for late submissions (between noon and midnight on Sunday). Reaction papers submitted after Sunday will not be accepted.

Class Participation

As a special topics seminar, this class is structured primarily around class discussion. Thus, it is imperative that students actively participate in discussions, activities, and exercises. This will greatly enhance the classroom experience. It will make learning more interactive, more fun, more personally relevant, and more enduring. Class participation will be monitored as a whole throughout the course, worth 30 points.

Guided Discussion

Throughout the semester, each student will pair up with another student to guide class discussion around one research article. These articles are not included in the textbook. Instead the articles are supplementary to the text. Only the pair of students who are assigned to present the research article will be responsible for reading it. They will then briefly summarize the theory and findings and guide class discussion around the principles from the article in a 20-minute class discussion. Detailed instructions will be provided in class. The article presentation and guided discussion is worth 50 points.

Final Presentation

The final presentation will involve pairing up with a fellow student in the class and presenting a collaborative research proposal. The proposal will involve researching a topic of the students' own interest in internet psychology and designing a research study to examine a set of questions that will advance our knowledge in the field. The presentation should include (a) an overview of the model, theory, hypothesis, or phenomenon that the research proposal is designed to examine, (b) details of the sample, method, and expected results of the proposal, and (c) a conclusion about how the proposal is important and innovative. Visual aids are recommended (e.g., Powerpoint presentation, overhead slides, and handouts). The presentation should last approximately 12 minutes with a few minutes for questions. The final presentation is worth 50 points.

Written Proposal

The final paper will involve writing a detailed description of the proposal (from the final presentation) – each student will write his/her own paper. The topic for the written proposal can be the same as the collaborative research presented in the final presentation; however, it doesn't need to be identical. Detailed instructions for the final paper will be provided in class. The outline & annotated bibliography is worth 15 points. The final paper is worth 100 points. Late papers will be accepted up to one week late however 10 points will be deducted from the score for every day that it is late.

Disabilities

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities who are registered with Access*Ability* Services. Students who register and utilize the Access*Ability* services will not be identified on their transcript as receiving accommodations. Information disclosed to the service is confidential and is disclosed only with the student's permission. Students in need of disability accommodations should schedule an appointment with me early in the semester to discuss appropriate accommodations for the course. Talking with me well in advance is always better. There is little to nothing that I can do for you *after* an assignment is due.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students

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enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences.

"S*cholastic Dishonesty*: Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis."

Grading System

Class Engagement:	Reaction Papers (15 pts/each)	90 pts
	Class Participation	30
Presentations:	Guided Discussion	50
	Final Presentation	50
Research Proposal:	Outline and Annotated Bibliography	15
	Final Proposal	100
Total points		335 pts

Course Calendar

Date	Topic	Deadlines	Readings
6-May	Introduction to Course		
13-May	Expressing, Validating, & Managing Self-Image	Autobiography Due	Chap 13, 14, & 15
20-May	Victoria Day - No Class		
27-May	Trust in Computer Mediated Communication		Ch 4, 5, & 19
3-Jun	Relationships, Sexuality, & Online Dating		Ch 3, Articles 1 & 2
10-Jun	Social Networks, Groups, and Communities		Ch 9, 10, & 11
17-Jun	Reading Week - No Class		
24-Jun	Persuasion, Propaganda, & Collective Action		Ch 12, 18, & Art 3
1-Jul	Canada Day - No Class		
8-Jul	Internet & Health		Ch 21 &22
15-Jul	Prep for Final Proposals & Individual Meetings	Outline Due (Sun, July 14th)	
22-Jul	Student Presentations		
29-Jul	Student Presentations		
5-Aug	Civic Holiday - No Class	Paper Due (Sun, Aug 4th)	

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Reading List

May 6 – Introduction to the Course
No Readings

May 13 – Expressing, Validating, & Managing Self-Image
Text – Chapter 13. Amichai-Hamburger, Y. (2010). Personality, individual differences, and internet use. In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 187-204). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Text – Chapter 14. McKenna, K. Y. A. (2010). Through the internet looking glass: Expressing and validating the true self. In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 205-222).

Text – Chapter 15. Chester, A., & Bertherton, D. (2010). Impression management and identity online. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 223-236).

> Empirical Articles
> Vasalou, A., & Joinson, A. (2009). Me, myself, and I: The role of interactional context on self-presentation through avatars. *Computers in Human Behavior, 25*, 510-520.
>
> Gonzales, A. I., & Hancock, J. T. (2008). Identity shift in computer-mediated environments. *Media Psychology, 11*, 167-185.

May 20 – Victoria Day – No Class

May 27 –Trust in Computer Mediated Communication
Text – Chapter 4. Green, M. C. (2010). Trust and social interaction on the internet. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 43-52).

Text – Chapter 5. Riegelsberger, J., Sasse, M. A., & McCarthy, J. D. (2010). Trust in mediated interactions. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 53-70).

Text – Chapter 19. Hancock, J. (2010). Digital deception: Why when and how people lie online. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 289-302).

> Empirical Articles
> Houghton, D. J., & Joinson, A. N. (2010). Privacy, social network sites, and social relations. *Journal of Technology in Human Services, 28*, 74-94.
>
> Gibbs, J. L., Ellison, N. B., & Lai, C. (2011). First comes love, then comes Google: An investigation of uncertainty reduction strategies and self-disclosure in online dating. *Communication Research, 38*, 70-100.

June 3 – Interpersonal Relationships, Sexuality, and Online Dating

Text – Chapter 3. Whitty, M. (2010). Love letters: The development of romantic relationships through the ages. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 31-42).

Non-text – Article 1. Whitty, M. (2008). Liberating or debilitating? An examination of romantic relationships, sexual relationships and friendships on the net. *Computers in Human Behavior, 24*, 1837-1850.

Non-text – Article 2. Ross, M. (2006). Typing, doing, and being: Sexuality and the internet. *The Journal of Sex Research, 42(4)*, 342-352.

>### Empirical Articles
>Couch, D., & Liamputtong, P. (2008). Online dating and mating: The use of the internet to meet sexual partners. *Qualitative Health Research, 18(2)*, 268-279.
>
>Muise, A., Christofides, E., & Desmarais, S. (2009). More information than you ever wanted: Does Facebook bring out the green-eyed monster of jealousy? *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 12*, 441-444.

June 10 – Social Networks, Groups, & Communities

Text – Chapter 9. Haythornthwaite, C. (2010). Social networks and online community. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 121-138).

Text – Chapter 10. Tanis, M. (2010). Online social support groups. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 139-154).

Non-text – Article 3. Amichai- Hamburger, McKenna, K. Y. A., & Tal, S. (2008). E-empowerment: Empowerment by the internet. *Computers in Human Behavior, 24*, 1776=1789.

>### Empirical Articles
>Wang, H., & Wellman, B. (2010). Social connectivity in America: Changes in adult friendship network size from 2002 to 2007. *American Behavioral Scientist, 53*, 1148-1169.
>
>Hampton, K. N., Lee, C., & Her, E. J. (2011). How new media affords network diversity: Direct and mediated access to social capital through participation in local social settings. *New Media & Society, 13*, 1031-1049.

June 17 – Reading Week, No Class

June 24 – Persuasion, Propaganda, & Collective Action

Text – Chapter 12. Postmes, T. (2010). The psychological dimensions of collective action, online. In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 165-186).

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Text – Chapter 18. Sassenberg, K., & Jonas. K. (2010). Attitude change and social influence on the net. In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 271-288).

<u>Empirical Articles</u>
Hampton, K. N. (2010). Internet use and the concentration of disadvantage: Glocalization and the urban underclass. *American Behavioral Scientist, 53*, 1111-1132.

Green, M., & Donahue, J. K. (2011). Persistence of belief change in the face of deception: The effect of factual stories revealed to be false. *Media Psychology, 14*, 312-331.

July 8 – Internet and Health
Text – Chapter 21. Morahan-Martin, J. (2010). Internet use and abuse and psychological problems. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 331-346).

Text – Chapter 22. Sillence, E., & Briggs, P. (2010). Examining the role of the internet in health behavior. . In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 347-360).

<u>Empirical Articles</u>
Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2007). Internet communication and its relation to well-being: Identifying some underlying mechanisms. *Media Psychology, 9*, 43-58.

Kim, J., LaRose, R., & Peng, W. (2009). Loneliness as the cause and the effect of problematic internet use: The relationship between internet use and psychological well-being. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 12, 451-455.