



**Introduction to Social Psychology
PSYB10H3**

Summer 2023

Instructor

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Teaching Assistants

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Course Description and Goals

Broadly defined, social psychology is the study of how our minds and behavior shape – and are in turn shaped by – other people. As we will see, the influence is deeper and more far-reaching than we realize. Whether we are shuffling through a crowded mall or sitting alone in the privacy of our living room, our minds – and the thoughts, emotions, and judgments that inhabit them – appear to be shaped by other minds, real or imagined.

I have four goals for the course. First, we will aim to understand the key theories and findings within various subdomains of the field, such as self-perception, social influence (e.g., conformity), social cognition, and prosocial behavior. Second, we will aim to strengthen our ability to critically evaluate the rigour of scientific findings, and to generate novel ideas and hypotheses about social processes of our own. Third, we will strengthen our written communication skills by completing a report in which we apply principles and findings from social psychology to analyze portrayals of human behaviour in the media. Finally, we will discern the significance of social psychology to broader issues outside of the classroom, including politics, environmental change, and personal/professional development.

Reading Material/Textbook(s)

Myers, D., Twenge, J., Jordan, C., & Smith, S. (2021). Social Psychology, 8th Edition. Toronto, ON, Canada: McGraw Hill.

ISBN: 1264159536

You can purchase the textbook online by using this link:

<https://www.mheducation.ca/social-psychology-9781260327014-can-group>

**Note that you can obtain the textbook for cheaper than the standard price by renting it for 180 days (link found at the bottom of the webpage)*

Course Email

All course-related emails must be sent to the following address:

Thiruchselvam.PSYB10@gmail.com

Messages sent to other addresses (e.g., to Quercus or the instructor's and TAs' individual email accounts) may not be answered. Please ensure that the correct email address is used in all your course-related communications.

Course Evaluation/Marking Scheme

Grade Components

Midterm Exam I (date TBD): 27%
Media Analysis Report (Due June 19th): 10%
Midterm Exam II (date TBD): 27%
Final Exam (date TBD): 36%

**Note that, as described below, the weight assigned to the lower-scoring Midterm Exam is adjustable based on Interaction Points the student earns throughout the term.*

Midterm and Final Exams

The midterms and final exam will be administered online and will consist of multiple choice and written-response short-answer questions. Exams will be open-book but will have a time constraint. To help protect academic integrity, questions will be presented sequentially, and once an answer is selected, backtracking will not be possible. Although exams will be open-book, you are required to complete the exams independently and not to communicate or collaborate with anyone else during the exam about course-related content. Midterm exams will be non-cumulative, whereas the final

exam will be mostly non-cumulative (80%) with a cumulative written-response component (worth 20%) that will ask you to reflect on and integrate key ideas we have learned throughout the course.

Media Analysis Report

Social psychology is about how humans relate to each other, and not surprisingly, these relationships are richly portrayed in our media, including film, literature, music, and other artistic products. For this assignment, you will be asked to review a particular work in the media (e.g., a film or documentary). You will then summarize and analyze it by relating it to the ideas and findings we explore in this course. A detailed description of this assignment and grading rubric will be made available on Quercus. It will be due on **June 19th at 11:59pm** and will count towards 10% of the course grade.

Interaction Points

Throughout the term, you will have the option to earn up to 6 *Interaction Points* by actively engaging with the course material. This may be done by writing brief reflection pieces about either our optional live Zoom discussions (described below) or about research articles that I post on Quercus. Any *Interaction Points* that you earn can be used towards reducing the weight of your lower-scoring Midterm Exam. This means that the weight of the lower-scoring Midterm Exam can be reduced by the total number of *Interaction Points* you have collected, and your *Interaction Points* will in turn be added to the overall course grade. More specifically, for a student who collects *Interaction Points* and wishes to use these points to offset the weight of their lower-scoring Midterm Exam, the student's final course grade will be calculated as follows:

Higher-scoring Midterm Exam: 27%
Interaction Points: X% (up to 6%)
Lower-scoring Midterm Exam: 27% - X%
Media Analysis Report: 10%
Final Exam: 36%

To make this concrete, we can consider an example. Suppose that a student scored 63% on Midterm Exam 1, 73% on Midterm Exam 2, 70% on the Media Analysis Report, and 71% on the Final Exam. Without any adjustment, this student's final course grade would be 69.28% or a C+ $[(63 \cdot .27) + (73 \cdot .27) + (70 \cdot .10) + (71 \cdot .36)]$. But if this student earned 6 *Interaction Points* throughout the term, the student will be able to reduce the weight of their lower-scoring Midterm Exam by 6% such that it will now be worth 21%, and the student's 6% *Interaction Points* will be added to their overall course grade. Thus, the student's *adjusted final course grade* will become 71.50% or a B- $[(63 \cdot .21) + (73 \cdot .27) + (70 \cdot .10) + (71 \cdot .36) + 6]$.

I invite and encourage you to actively participate in both the optional discussion meetings on Zoom and reflect on the research articles I post on Quercus. However, *Interaction Points* are an optional part of this course. This means that you are not

required to complete them but earning these points can help you improve your final course grade by reducing the weight that is assigned to your lower-scoring Midterm Exam. More details on *Interaction Points* will be provided on Quercus.

Course Webpage/Quercus

The website associated with this course is accessible on Quercus via <http://q.utoronto.ca>. The syllabus, lecture slides, and all relevant course documents will be posted there. I strongly recommend you check Quercus regularly.

Lecture Delivery

This is an asynchronous web-based course and all lectures will be pre-recorded and made available online. Lectures will be uploaded on a week-by-week basis and will remain online for the full duration of the term. A PDF outline of the lecture slides will also be posted on Quercus to facilitate note-taking during the lecture. For any given week, the lecture material will be available online before Friday at 4pm.

Please note that lectures will only partly overlap with assigned readings. That is, lectures will have content that is not contained in chapter readings, and vice versa. Both lecture and textbook material are testable on exams. I encourage you to make use of office hours and our live Zoom sessions to clarify any questions that may arise from both assigned readings and lectures.

Live Discussion Meetings on Zoom (Optional)

Over the semester, we will have an opportunity to meet as a class on Zoom to discuss key questions in social psychology. These meetings are optional and are offered for those students who wish to engage directly with me and their classmates about course content. A few days before each meeting, I will post 2-3 discussion questions related to lecture on Quercus to give you a chance to reflect on them. We can then discuss these questions together during the live meeting that week. You can think of these meetings as an informal “social psychology café”. Although these are not mandatory for you to attend, I encourage you to make use of at least some of these meetings throughout the course. They will be held multiple times throughout the term on specific dates. The dates and Zoom link will be announced on Quercus.

Office Hours

I will also be available for virtual office hours meetings **Tuesdays 10:30 – 12:00pm** or by appointment. If you have questions about course content, performance in the class, or psychology more broadly, feel free to schedule a meeting. To do so, please email me at: Thiruchselvam.PSYB10@gmail.com

COURSE OUTLINE

| LECTURE | TOPIC | READING |
|---------|---|-------------------|
| Week 1 | Introduction to Social Psychology + Methods | Chapter 1 |
| Week 2 | The Self | Chapter 2 |
| Week 3 | Social Cognition | Chapter 3 |
| Week 4 | Interpersonal Attraction | Chapter 10 |
| Week 5 | <i>Midterm Exam I</i> <i>Covers Lecture weeks 1-4 and Chapters 1,2,3 and 10</i> | None |
| Week 6 | No class - Reading week | None |
| Week 7 | Attitudes and Persuasion | Chapters 4 and 5 |
| Week 8 | Conformity | Chapter 6 |
| Week 9 | Group Influence | Chapter 7 |
| Week 10 | <i>Midterm Exam II</i> <i>Covers Lecture weeks 7-9 and Chapters 4,5,6 and 7</i> | None |
| Week 11 | Aggression | Chapter 9 |
| Week 12 | Prejudice & Polarization | Chapter 11 and 12 |

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| Week 13 | Prosocial Behaviour and Psychological Well-being | Chapter 8 |
| Date TBA | <p><i>Final Exam</i></p> <p><i>The Final Exam will be 80% non-cumulative and 20% cumulative. The non-cumulative portion will cover Lecture weeks 11-13 and Chapters 9, 11, 12, and 8.</i></p> <p><i>Held during the Final Examination Period (Date to be determined)</i></p> | None |

Final Exam: Held during the Final Examination Period; the specific date will be announced later in the course.

Course Policies on Assessments

Disability-Related Accommodations

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 contact the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible.

AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm AA142, Arts and Administration Building) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. Please contact 416-287-7560 (tel/TTY) or email ability.uts@utoronto.ca for more information. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

University's Plagiarism Detection Tool

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Late Assignment Submission

To maintain fairness and consistency across the class, assignments submitted late that are not supported with legitimate documentation are subject to a penalty of 10% per day. If there are valid reasons warranting an accommodation (e.g., a medical illness), please follow the Missed Term Work policy outlined above.

Academic Integrity

The University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. 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. Potential offences in papers and assignments include using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement, submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor, making up sources or facts, obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software, including (but not limited to) ChatGPT, to construct your assignments and/or complete your exams is prohibited and would be treated as an academic offence.

On tests and exams cheating includes using or possessing unauthorized aids, looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test, misrepresenting your identity, or falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>

Religious Accommodations

The University has a commitment concerning accommodation for religious observances. I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. According to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (like a test, or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

Masks in the Classroom

While the mask mandate has been paused as of 1 July 2022, the use of medical masks continues to be strongly encouraged at U of T Scarborough in indoor settings where physical distancing is not possible. We ask everyone to respect each other's decisions, comfort levels, and health needs. Masks are available at all building entrances at U of T Scarborough and in all classrooms.

Department of Psychology – Missed Term Work Policy

For missed term work (assignments and term tests) due to illness, emergency, or other mitigating circumstances, please follow the procedures outlined below.

Note:

- The following reasons are not considered sufficient for missed term work: travel for leisure, weddings, personal commitments, work commitments, human error.
- [Missed Final Exams](#) are handled by the Registrar's Office and should be declared on eService.
- Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, accommodations are only possible via the Registrar's Office [petition process](#).

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| The email address to submit missed term work accommodation requests in PSYB10 is: Thiruchselvam.PSYB10@gmail.com |
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ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY accommodations:

For missed work due to ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY, complete the following process:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Declare your absence on [ACORN](#) (Profile & Settings > Absence Declaration)

3. Email **both** of the following items to the course email **WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS** of the missed work:
 - a. the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#)
AND
 - b. a screenshot of your Self-Declared Absence on ACORN

Note:

- *If you are unable to submit your request within 2 business days, you must still email your instructor within the 2 business day window to explain the nature of the delay. Exceptions to the 2 business day deadline will only be made under exceptional circumstances.*
- *If your absence is declared on ACORN, we do not require any additional supporting documentation (e.g. medical notes) to support your missed term work accommodation request.*

ACADEMIC CONFLICT accommodations:

For missed term work due to an ACADEMIC CONFLICT (e.g. two midterms at the same time):

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Take screenshots of your course Quercus pages that demonstrate the conflict.
3. Email the form and screenshots to the course email **at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity**, or as soon as possible if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier. Requests sent after the activity deadline may not be accommodated.

Note:

- *Multiple assignments due on the same day are not considered conflicts. Students are expected to manage their time effectively to meet assignment deadlines.*
- *Back-to-back tests/quizzes are not considered conflicts. Only overlapping activities are conflicts.*
- *Students are responsible for keeping their course timetables conflict-free. Students who register in two courses with overlapping lecture/tutorial/lab schedules will not be accommodated.*

RELIGIOUS CONFLICT accommodations:

For missed term work due to a RELIGIOUS CONFLICT:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Email the form to the course email **at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity**, or as soon as possible if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier. Requests sent after the activity deadline may not be accommodated.

ACCESSABILITY SERVICES accommodations:

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to ACCESSABILITY REASONS:

- **Contact your AccessAbility consultant** and have them email the course email detailing accommodations required.

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to ACCESSABILITY REASONS:

- If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 3 days):
 1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
 2. Email the form ***AND*** your **Accommodation Letter** to the course email specifying how many days extension you are requesting.

- If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that):
 1. **Contact your AccessAbility consultant** and have them email the course email detailing the accommodations required.

Accommodation Procedure:

After submitting your documentation, you will receive a response from your instructor or TA. This form does not guarantee that you will be accommodated. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request. **You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily**, as accommodations may be time-critical.

For missed assignments, **do not wait for the instructor’s response to resume work on your assignment**. Extensions may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency. Complete your assignment as soon as you’re able, and email it to your instructor.

For an **anticipated absence** (e.g. a scheduled surgery or an illness with a prolonged recovery period), if you would like to request accommodations in advance, submit a [Verification of Illness Form](#) completed by your doctor AND the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) to the course email. Absences can be declared up to 14 days into the future on ACORN.

Missed Accommodations

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting its requirements, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations. **Please make it clear in your subject line that you are requesting a second accommodation**. E.g. If you are given an extension but are still sick and need more time, or if you miss a make-up term test, you must submit *another* [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) and declare your extended absence on ACORN. *Note: In the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not necessarily