



**Introduction to Social Psychology
PSYB10H3F**

*Fall 2023
Wednesdays 2-5pm
AC 223*

Instructor

Dr. Ravi Thiruchselvam

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 three 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. 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>

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 (October 4th at 2pm): 30%
Midterm Exam II (November 8th at 2pm): 30%
Final Exam (Date to be determined): 40%

**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 held in-person. They will consist of multiple choice and written-response short-answer questions. Midterm exams will be non-cumulative, whereas the final exam will be mostly non-cumulative (80%) with a cumulative component (worth 20%) that will ask you to reflect on and integrate key ideas we have learned throughout the course.

Interaction Points

Throughout the term, you will have the option to earn up to 5 *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* 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: 30%
Interaction Points: X% (up to 5%)
Lower-scoring Midterm Exam: 30% - X%
Final Exam: 40%

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

Lectures will be delivered in-person and recordings will be available on Quercus. A PDF outline of the lecture slides will also be posted ahead of class on Quercus to facilitate note-taking during the lecture.

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 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. The dates and Zoom link will be announced on Quercus.

Office Hours

I will be available for virtual office hours meetings Thursdays 4-6pm. You can use this link to log in at that time:

<https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/89903064105>

More generally, if you have questions about course content, performance in the class, or psychology broadly, feel free to schedule a meeting outside of office hours. To do so, please email me at: Thiruchselvam.PSYB10@gmail.com

COURSE OUTLINE

LECTURE	TOPIC	READING
Week 1 September 6 th	Introduction to Social Psychology + Methods	Chapter 1
Week 2 September 13 th	The Self	Chapter 2
Week 3 September 20 th	Social Cognition	Chapter 3
Week 4 September 27 th	Interpersonal Attraction	Chapter 10
Week 5 October 4 th	Midterm Exam I <i>Covers Lecture weeks 1-4 and Chapters 1,2,3 and 10</i>	None
Week 6 October 11 th	No class - Reading week October 8 -14	None
Week 7 October 18 th	Attitudes and Persuasion	Chapters 4 and 5
Week 8 October 25 th	Conformity	Chapter 6
Week 9 November 1 st	Group Influence	Chapter 7
Week 10 November 8 th	Midterm Exam II <i>Covers Lecture weeks 7-9 and Chapters 4,5,6 and 7</i>	None
Week 11 November 15 th	Aggression	Chapter 9

Week 12 November 22 nd	Prejudice & Polarization	Chapter 11 and 12
Week 13 November 29 th	Prosocial Behaviour and Psychological Well-being	Chapter 8
Date TBD	<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, 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

Academic Integrity

The University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) 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.

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.

University's Plagiarism Detection Tool

Normally, students will be required to submit their course written assignments 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 web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools

Unless otherwise stated, students may not use artificial intelligence tools for taking tests, writing research papers, creating computer code, or completing course assignments. The *unauthorized* use of generative artificial intelligence tools, including ChatGPT and other AI writing and coding assistants, for the completion of, or to support the completion of, an examination, term test, assignment, or any other form of academic assessment, may be considered an academic offense in this course.

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 feel free to approach me and/or 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 416-287-7560 or email 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.

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.

The University of Toronto is a richly diverse community and as such is committed to providing an environment free of any form of harassment, misconduct, or discrimination. In this course, I seek to foster a civil, respectful, and open-minded climate in which we can all work together to develop a better understanding of key questions and debates through meaningful dialogue. As such, I expect all involved with this course to refrain from actions or behaviours that intimidate, humiliate, or demean persons or groups or that undermine their security or self-esteem based on traits related to race, religion, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability, receipt of public assistance or record of offences.

Recording of Classroom Material by Students

Recording or photographing any aspect of a university course - lecture, tutorial, seminar, lab, studio, practice session, field trip etc. – without prior approval of all involved and without written approval from the instructor is not permitted.

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 procedure outlined below.

Procedure:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) ("MTW Form").
2. Email **BOTH** your MTW Form and Supporting Documentation to thiruchselvam.psyb10@gmail.com according to the instructions specified below.

Supporting Documentation Requirements and Deadlines:

Reason for Missed Work	Documentation required for a first absence in the term	Documentation required for subsequent absences in the term	Deadline for submitting MTW form and supporting documentation
Illness or Injury	ACORN Absence Declaration	UofT Verification of Illness Form	<u>WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS</u> of the missed work
Bereavement	ACORN Absence Declaration	A death certificate or funeral announcement	<u>WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS</u> of the missed work
University-sponsored athletic or artistic obligation at the varsity/provincial/national level	ACORN Absence Declaration	A note from a university staff member (advisor, coach, residence staff, etc.) who can substantiate the obligation, sent directly to the course email	<u>10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE</u> of the missed deadline
Disability-related reasons for students registered with AccessAbility Services	<p>For missed TERM TESTS,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact your AccessAbility consultant and have them write to the course email detailing the accommodations needed. <p>For missed ASSIGNMENTS,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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), send your Accommodation Letter to the course email and specify 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 		<u>PREFERABLY IN ADVANCE OF THE MISSED WORK, OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE</u>

	of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that), contact your AccessAbility consultant and have them write to the course email detailing the accommodations needed.	
Academic Conflict (e.g. two midterms at the same time)	Screenshot from Quercus demonstrating the conflict.	<u>10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE</u> of the missed work
Religious Conflict	None required	

Notes:

- The following reasons are not considered sufficient for missed term work: social activities, recreational travel, technological issues, avoidance of assessments or deadlines, work commitments
- [Missed Final Exams](#) are handled by the Registrar’s Office and should be declared on eService.
- For ACORN absence declarations, the date you declare the absence is required to fall within the seven-day declaration period (i.e.) the absence cannot be submitted proactively or retroactively.
- 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](#).
- If you are unable to submit your request within the specified number of business days, you must still email your instructor within that window to explain the nature of the delay. Exceptions to the deadlines are made only under exceptional circumstances.
- Multiple assignments due on the same day are not considered academic conflicts. Students are expected to manage their time effectively to meet assignment deadlines.
- Back-to-back tests/quizzes are not considered academic 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.

Next Steps:

After submitting your documentation, you will receive a response from your instructor or TA. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations 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.

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**. Examples: If you were granted an extension for a paper but are still unable to meet the new deadline, or if you miss a make-up term test, you must submit *another* MTW form and supply documentation according to the "subsequent absences" column in the chart above. *Note: In the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not necessarily be provided.