

Introduction to Social Psychology

Course code: PSY 250

Term and year: Spring 2021

Day and time: Thursdays, 11:30-14:20

Instructor: Dr. Angel Hoekstra

Instructor contact: Angel.Hoekstra@aauni.edu

Consultation hours: Before class, 11:00-11:30 & by email appointment

| | | | |
|------------------------|----------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Credits US/ECTS | 3/6 | Level | Introductory |
| Length | 15 weeks | Pre-requisite | TOEFL IBT 71 |
| Contact hours | 42 hours | Course type | Bachelor Required/Elective |

1. Course Description

This course is designed to help students understand the diverse connections between the individual and society. The course explores how modern social institutions (e.g. media, education) and culture shape us as unique individuals. We will examine key concepts and theories in social psychology written by a variety of social theorists. In this course, you will be asked to think critically about your status/es and roles in society. We will discuss the dynamic tension between the individual and society: exploring how the individual is influenced by various aspects of their environment and how s/he may shape the environment as agent of change. In addition to studying various approaches to understanding – or theorizing – the self, we will work together to form a safe and productive learning community.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Think critically about the dynamics between the individual and society
- Analyze social identity and the social development of the individual
- Recognize forms of social behavior (e.g., prejudice, ethnocentrism, altruism)
- Explore how social structures and culture influence the individual, and in return how s/he can affect their environment as an agent of change
- Apply social psychological theories in analysis of the presentation of self
- Cultivate a safe and productive learning community
- Encourage students to develop their writing skills
- Facilitate useful, engaging discussions of the self/selfhood

3. Reading Material

Required Materials: Textbooks

Meyers, David, G. 1999. *Social Psychology*. 6th edition.
 Shulman, David and John P. Hewitt, 2009. *Self and Society: A Symbolic Interactionist Social Psychology*. 11th edition.

Required Materials: Articles

Becker, Howard. 1953. "Becoming a Marihuana User." Selected reading.
 Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Pgs. 1-16.
 Kvale, Steiner. 1996. Selection from *Interviews, Introduction to Qualitative Interviewing*.
 Mills, C. Wright. 1959. "The Promise" – excerpt from *The Sociological Imagination*.
 → Additional readings, as recommended during the semester, will be posted to NEO.

4. Teaching methodology

Use of strong *pedagogy* – defined as the art or science of teaching – is crucial to engaging students in the learning process. In this course, we will use a variety of methods to support engagement, conceptual application and critical thinking. Students are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings before class. Class time is devoted to helping students explore social psychology by means of lecture, in-class writing exercises, discussion and media analysis. In class, we will work to form a learning community where all participants can feel connected to the larger group. If you need help this term, feel free to email me to schedule a chat in office hours. Note: This course schedule is subject to changes as needed due to decisions by AAU for learning format (e.g., in the classroom or online).

5. Course Schedule

| Date | Class Agenda |
|--|--|
| FEB 11 2021 | <p>Topic: Introducing Social Psychology I Description: Introductions, Syllabus, Learning goals; <i>Break</i> Introduction to basic concepts (agency, culture, structure, institutions; psychological vs. sociological analysis, social psychology); <i>Break</i> <i>VIDEO clip:</i> What is social psychology? (5 minutes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjTsx44-jeY), Discuss course assignments and letter to the instructor, due next time</p> <p>Handouts: Syllabus; Letter to the Instructor handout</p> |
| FEB 18 Letter to Instructor Due | <p>Topic: Introducing Social Psychology II Description: Lecture: "What is the Self?" & create a self-schema diagram Lecture: Introduction to Social Construction theory; <i>Break</i> More key concepts: ethnocentrism & cultural relativism; Lecture: Mills and the Sociological Imagination; <i>Break</i> Finish syllabus, ask Qs & discuss technology use in this class</p> <p>Reading: Shulman & Hewitt, Chapter 1: pgs. 1-9 C. W. Mills, <i>The Promise of Sociology</i> (All readings are on NEO)</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Letter to Instructor Due</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>FEB 25</p> | <p>Topic: Theoretical Approaches Description: Lecture: Basics of Social Psychology (Myers), Introduction to Symbolic Interactionism & Major Tenets (Hewitt); <i>Break</i> Theoretical Approaches in PSP vs. SSP; Application: Levels of analysis Reading: Shulman & Hewitt, Chapter 1: pgs. 22-30 Myers, Chapter 1: pgs. 3-15 (stop at "I knew it...") Handout: Levels of Analysis handout</p> |
| <p>March 4 2021</p> | <p>Topic: Theory & Research in Social Psychology Description: Lecture: How is research done in Social Psychology? Experimental vs. Ethnographic research <i>VIDEO:</i> Lab Experiments: Critical Social Psychology (8 minutes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VN0z0Y1q4-E) <i>Break</i> Methods lecture: Correlation vs. Causation, Experiments, Ethics, <i>Break</i> <i>VIDEO:</i> 5 Psychology Experiments You Couldn't Do Today (11 minutes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZ3l1jgmYrY); Discuss components of research paper assignment, interviews Reading: Myers, Chapter 1: pgs. 19.5 – 33 Kvale, Qualitative research interviewing, pgs. 1-16 Assignment: Begin reviewing for Quiz 1, next class</p> |
| <p>March 11 Quiz 1</p> | <p>QUIZ 1 (MC, T/F, & Fill in the blank questions) Description: Quiz 1 in class; begin designing your research project Reading: Kvale, Qualitative research interviewing, pgs. 27-37 Assignments: QUIZ 1 (all material from classes 1-4) Write draft of interview question set, due next class</p> |
| <p>March 18 Interview Question Set Due</p> | <p>Topic: Key Concepts in Symbolic Interactionism Description: Lecture: History of Identity Development in Europe & North America; Lecture: Significant Symbols, Writing Workshop I, <i>Break</i> Lecture: Social Objects; <i>Activity:</i> Cell Phone Exercise, <i>Break</i> Workshop time: Discuss research projects, ask Qs, get clarification on Research project assignment parameters, writing informed consent form Reading: Hewitt, Chap. 2 (pgs. 35-69) Handout: Writing Workshop I Assignments: Upload a first draft of the interview question set you will use in your project, due in NEO by 25 March, before class</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>March 25</p> | <p>Topic: The Self in the Social World Description: Lecture: Self-Concept, Social Self, Self & Culture, <i>Break</i> Perceived Self-Control, Learned Helplessness, Self-Presentation; <i>Break</i> Discuss writing your informed consent form for your research, ask Qs Reading: Myers, Chapter 2 (pgs. 38-74) Assignments: Draft of informed consent form, due in NEO by 01 April</p> |
| <p>April 1</p> <p>Draft of Informed consent due</p> <p>Learning Goal Evaluations</p> | <p>Topic: The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life Description: Lecture: Introduction to Goffman, Definition of the Situation <i>VIDEO:</i> Erving Goffman, the Performed Self & Class Discussion, <i>Break</i> (2 minutes; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Z0XS-QLDWM&t=1s) Complete learning goal evaluations Reading: PDF, Erving Goffman, <i>The Presentation of Self</i>, pgs. 1-16 Handout: Learning Goal Evaluations</p> |
| <p>April 8</p> | <p>Spring Break – No class... ☺</p> |
| <p>April 15</p> | <p>Topic: Social Beliefs and Judgments Description: Lecture: Attributing Causality, The Fundamental Attribution Error, Persuasion, Judging Others, Self-Fulfilling Beliefs, <i>Break</i> <i>VIDEO:</i> Social Thinking, Crash Course Psychology #37 (11 minutes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6HLDV0T5Q8) Class discussion: The Stanford Prison Experiment Reading: Myers, Chapter 3 (pgs. 77-124) Assignment: Begin reviewing for Quiz 2, next class Begin conducting research interviews for your project</p> |
| <p>April 22</p> | <p>Quiz 2 (All material from second part of the course, March 18-April 15)</p> |
| <p>April 29</p> | <p>Topic: Attraction and Intimacy: Liking and Loving Others Description: Lecture: Friendships, Physical Attractiveness, Attribution, Gaining another’s esteem; Writing Workshop 2 (citations); <i>Break</i> Lecture: Passionate love and married love, Cultural differences in Arranged vs. Love Marriages; Class Discussion: Rewards of Relationships Reading: Myers, Chapter 10 (pgs. 427-463) Assignment: Continue conducting research interviews for your project</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>May 6</p> | <p>Topic: Self, the Physical body, Deviance and Drug Use</p> <p>Description: Lecture: Self & the Physical Body, Short Writing Exercise: Relationship to your own physical body as it affects you as a self; <i>Break</i> Lecture: Deviance, Ethanol, and effects of alcohol use for identity Group discussion of norms for alcohol use across countries; <i>Break</i> Lecture: Marijuana & social norms for use across cultures (Becker)</p> <p>Reading: Becker (1953, PDF on NEO) "Becoming a Marihuana User"</p> <p>Assignment: Finish conducting interviews (3 required, see assignment)</p> |
| <p>May 13</p> | <p>Topic: Application of theories and methods to your research data</p> <p>Description: Begin reviewing your data/findings from interviews, ask Qs about how to incorporate course readings/concepts/themes into project, Re-read the assignment instructions together on NEO... Discuss how to include quotes from interviewees, how to cite and create a bibliography; <i>Break</i>; Complete faculty course evaluations on NEO Review for the final exam</p> <p>Assignment: Submit your final research paper to NEO by May 20, 11:00</p> |
| <p>May 20 2021</p> <p>Final exam</p> <p>Closing Letter to Instructor due in NEO</p> | <p>Topic: Course wrap-up & Final exam</p> <p>Description: Discuss course overall... Which components worked well, What might be changed? ☺ - <i>Break</i> Short, informal student presentations of research questions & results Final Exam & Closing Letter to Instructor due</p> <p>Final exam structure (MC, T/F, and Fill-in-the-blank questions) 40% of the final exam covers the material since quiz 2 60% is a cumulative review of all key terms, concepts, theories</p> |

The **Research Project** is a hands-on assignment in which the student completes original interview research to explore a topic of his or her interest as related to the course materials studied in Social Psychology. Each student will create a set of interview guiding questions. The interview guide must include at least three - but no more than five - major research questions. Each research question will also include two to five guiding sub-questions, which will be used to guide the interview process in a structured way. Each student is required to conduct three interviews (length, 15-30 minutes each) and you may do up to eight, but no more. Your research project write-up will include 4-5 pages of data summary and analysis, and must incorporate concepts, theories, and/or citations from at least two course readings.

For a full description of Research Project Assignment, see Instructions on NEO.

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

| Assignment | Workload (average) | Weight in Final Grade | Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes | Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes* |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Letters to the Instructor (Introductory; Closing letter) | 2 hours | <u>8%</u> 40/500 | Critical thinking about one's personal learning needs and goals for the course; reflection on how well s/he achieved them | 1, 2 |
| Learning Goal Evaluation | 1 hour | <u>4%</u> 20/500 | Short written reflection on how well we as a learning community are achieving the learning goals of the course | 1, 2, 3 |
| Quiz 1 | 30 hours (to read, prepare) | <u>20%</u> 100/500 | Evaluation of the extent to which the student understands and can apply key terms, theories and concepts | 1, 2, 3 |
| In-class Participation | 42 hours | <u>8%</u> 40/500 | Speaking in class helps students to think critically and "on their feet." Develops ability to react well to diverse interpretations of problems & potential solutions | 1, 2, 3 |
| Quiz 2 | 30 hours (to read, prepare) | <u>20%</u> 100/500 | Evaluation of the extent to which the student understands and can apply key terms, theories and concepts | 1, 2, 3 |
| Research Project | 15 hours | <u>12%</u> 100/500 | Use of self-designed research instruments to conduct 3-8 interviews on a topic of one's choice related to Soc. Psych; Incorporation of assigned reading material into written presentation of research data | 1, 2, 3 |
| Final Exam | 30 hours (to read, prepare) | <u>20%</u> 100/500 | Evaluative measure of how well student understands and can apply terms, concepts, theories | 1, 2, 3 |
| TOTAL | 150 | 100% | | |

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Assignment 1: Introductory & Concluding Letters to Instructor – Due Feb. 18 & May 20

To provide the instructor with an initial understanding of your individual learning needs, you will write a brief letter providing some background information about your interests and what you hope to learn in social psychology. If you have information you need to share with me (e.g. you are working in addition to school, you have a learning disability or ADHD, you're an athlete, on academic probation, have kids, etc.), this letter offers "space" for you to do so. Your letter must be typed. On conclusion of the course, you will also complete a Concluding Letter reflecting on your progress in class. Instructions are provided in the handout on NEO.

Assessment breakdown

| Assessed area | Percentage |
|---|-------------------|
| Responds comprehensively to each of the questions asked | 25 |
| Demonstrates critical thinking about personal learning needs | 25 |
| Signs letter at end agreeing to parameters of the course syllabus | 25 |
| Written expression conforms to acceptable scholarly standards | 25 |

Assignment 2: Learning Goal Evaluation – Completed in class on April 1

At mid-semester we will evaluate how well we as a learning community believe we are achieving the goals of the course. This assignment allows us to assess how the course is going and to make any improvements needed before the end of the semester. Learning goal evaluations are completed in class, so be sure to attend on this day. I will provide instructions in a handout in class and we will spend 30-40 minutes evaluating our goals.

Assessment breakdown

| Assessed area | Percentage |
|---|-------------------|
| Responds comprehensively to each of the questions asked | 30 |
| Demonstrates ability to think critically about the aspects of the learning community the student chooses to evaluate, per course learning goals as stated in the syllabus | 40 |
| Written expression conforms to acceptable scholarly standards | 30 |
| Demonstrates willingness to evaluate fairly the level of achievement of one's personal learning goal, if the student chooses to set one (in the letter to the instructor) and provides evidence to support claims | Extra credit |

Assignments 3, 5, 7: Course Quizzes & Final Exam (due dates in the course calendar)

Quizzes consist of multiple-choice, T/F, Fill in the blank and/or short essay questions; to be given either in class or online as an examination in NEO, depending on instruction format.

Assessment breakdown

| Assessed area | Percentage |
|---|-------------------|
| Ability to demonstrate mastery of the terms, concepts, and theories covered in class lectures and assigned readings, and apply concepts | 80 |
| Demonstrates ability to apply theories and concepts in a written response to a short essay question | 20 |

Assignment 4: In-class Participation

Assessment breakdown

| Assessed area | Percentage |
|---|-------------------|
| Verbal participation in analysis of the readings, offering examples of concepts discussed in class, asking appropriate questions, listening respectfully to the comments of one's peers and of the instructor | 50 |
| Demonstrates ability to participate in group discussions in a respectful, scholarly manner to support a safe and effective learning community | 50 |

Assignment 6: Research Project: Final packet of materials due in NEO by May 20, 11:00

The **Research Project** is a hands-on assignment in which the student completes original interview research to explore a topic of his or her interest as related to the course materials. The interview guide must include at least three - but no more than five - major research questions. Each research question will also include two to five guiding sub-questions, which will be used to guide the interview process. Each student is required to conduct three interviews (length, 15-30 minutes each); you may do up to eight, but no more. Your research project write-up will include 4-5 pages of data summary and analysis, a bibliography, and must incorporate concepts, theories, and/or citations from at least two course readings.

Assessment breakdown

| Assessed area | Percentage |
|---|-------------------|
| Interview guiding questions and sub-questions are reasonable, concise | 10 |
| Informed consent paragraph/form is comprehensive; student carefully considers how the interview may affect subjects given the topic | 10 |
| Student is able to use terms and concepts from assigned readings to critically reflect on the data gathered in interviews | 50 |
| Written report & bibliography conform to acceptable scholarly standards for undergraduate-level written expression and appropriate citation | 30 |

8. General Requirements and School Policies

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work.

Electronic communication and submission

The university and instructors shall only use students' university email address for communication, with additional communication via NEO LMS or Microsoft Teams. Students sending e-mail to an instructor shall clearly state the course code and the topic in the subject heading, for example, "COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question". All electronic submissions are through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take-home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

Attendance

Attendance, i.e., presence in class in real-time, is expected and encouraged. However, the requirement that students miss not more than 35% of real-time classes is temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Absence excuse and make-up options

Should a student be absent from classes for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), s/he can submit to the Dean of Students an Absence Excuse Request Form supplemented with documents providing reasons for the absence. These must be submitted within one week of the absence. If possible, it is recommended the instructor be informed of the absence in advance. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if s/he submits an Absence Excuse Request Form along with the finalized add/drop form.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean of Students are entitled to make up assignments and exams provided their nature allows. Assignments missed due to unexcused absences which cannot be made up, may result in a decreased or failing grade as specified in the syllabus.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week of the date the absence was excused to arrange for make-up options.

Late work: No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

Electronic devices

Electronic devices (e.g. phones, tablets, laptops) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information, etc.). Any other use will result in the student being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during tests or exams unless required by the exam format and the instructor.

Eating is not allowed during classes.

Cheating and disruptive behavior

If a student engages in disruptive conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the class and shall report the behavior to the Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misconduct, the exam or assignment will be failed and the student will be expelled from the exam or class.

Plagiarism and Academic Tutoring Center

Plagiarism is “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work.” (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993)

Turnitin’s White Paper ‘The Plagiarism Spectrum’ (available at <http://go.turnitin.com/paper/plagiarism-spectrum>) identifies 10 types of plagiarism ordered from most to least severe:

1. CLONE: An act of submitting another’s work, word-for-word, as one’s own.
2. CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.
3. FIND-REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.
4. REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.
5. RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one’s own previous work without citation; To self-plagiarize.
6. HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.
7. MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.

8. 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources
9. AGGREGATOR: The "Aggregator" includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.
10. RE-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text's original wording and/or structure.

At minimum, plagiarism from types 1 through 8 will result in a failing grade for the assignment and shall be reported to the Dean. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Allegations of bought papers and intentional or consistent plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU.

If unsure about technical aspects of writing, students are encouraged to consult with the tutors of the AAU Academic Tutoring Center. For more information and/or to book a tutor, please contact the ATC at: <http://atc.simplybook.me/sheduler/manage/event/1/>.

Course accessibility and inclusion

Students with disabilities are asked to contact the Dean of Students as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodations. Academic accommodations are not retroactive. Students who will be absent from course activities due to religious holidays may seek reasonable accommodations by contacting the Dean of Students in writing within the first two weeks of the term. All requests must include specific dates for which the student requests accommodations.

9. Grading Scale

| Letter Grade | Percentage* | Description |
|---------------------|--------------------|---|
| A | 95-100 | Excellent performance. The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject. |
| A- | 90-94 | |
| B+ | 87-89 | Good performance. The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort. |
| B | 83-86 | |
| B- | 80-82 | |
| C+ | 77-79 | Fair performance. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work. |
| C | 73-76 | |
| C- | 70-72 | |
| D+ | 65-69 | Poor. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student's work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives. |
| D | 60-64 | |
| F | 0-59 | Fail. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course. |

* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Prepared by: Dr. Angel Hoekstra

Date: January 2021

Approved by: School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Date: January 2021