

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
Honours Social Psychology

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY 3Y03

Winter 2020

Instructor: Dr. Griffin

Office: KTH 241

Office Hours: By appointment

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TA: TBA

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Office Hours: TBA

Email: TBA

Day and Time of Classes:

Monday 11:30am – 1:20pm

Wednesday 12:30pm – 1:20pm

Class Location: LRW 1055

Course website: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the instructor.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY IN ACTION

This course will provide an introduction to Applied Social Psychology, wherein we will explore the application of social psychological methods, theories, principles, and research findings to the understanding and/or alleviation of social problems and contemporary issues. Applied Social Psychology covers a diverse set of research areas, and focuses on social problems that affect such variables as relationships, diversity issues, organizational systems, the justice system, education, the media, personal health and the health care industry, and community concerns. The methodologies employed, common theoretical underpinnings, and the interest in social issues tie these areas together. In this course, an overview of the historical roots of Applied Social Psychology will be presented. This will be followed by a review of key Social Psychological theories and perspectives, and research techniques employed within the field. The applications of these theories and methods in our social world will then be explored, as they relate to a selection of empirical topic areas. Through lectures, discussions, readings and reflections, students will acquire a thorough grounding in the practical application of Social Psychological theories and perspectives to contemporary social issues – and the relevance of Applied Social Psychology in understanding our social world.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the term, students should be able to:

- Understand the dominant theoretical and methodological perspectives employed to study social psychology in various applied settings;
- Gain a critical understanding of the multitude of applications of social psychology, addressing numerous social issues within a wide variety of realms such as: relationships, diversity issues, organizational systems, the justice system, education, the media, personal health and the health care industry, and community concerns;
- Engage in scholarly debate with classroom colleagues through in-class participation in lectures and group-based activities;
- Demonstrate improved skills in critical thinking and reflection, analysis, research and writing through completion of assignments.

Optional Text

Gruman, J.A., Schneider, F.W., & Coutts, L.M. (Eds). 2017. *Applied Social Psychology: Understanding and addressing social and practical problems, 3rd edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

The content of this course draws upon material from the above text. Students may well find it helpful as a reference text. That said, it is **not required**/assigned (& is therefore not available at the bookstore). Further, you will only be responsible for textbook material that is ALSO covered in lecture.

There is an instructor copy sitting on reserve at Mills Library, and/or you can find it as an e-text here: <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/applied-social-psychology/book242500>

Required Reading

Articles: Links to online readings corresponding to weekly topics may be found on the course website: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

Course Evaluation - Overview

Tutorial Attendance/Assignment Completion: **20%** - throughout term

Test #1: **25%** - **Monday, February 3rd**

Group Assignment: **25%** - **Monday, March 23rd**

Final Exam: **30%** - during formal examination period, **April 13-28**

Evaluation Components – Details

1. Tutorial Attendance/Completion (20%)

On specified Wednesdays (10 throughout the term, see schedule below on p.7-8), we will be meeting **primarily** virtually **BUT occasionally** in-person for tutorials. Announcements on

tutorial type will be made during the Monday lecture (prior to the Wednesday tutorial), and confirmed via Avenue to Learn. Tutorials are an integral part of the course, and attendance/completion of tutorial tasks (virtual and in-person) is critical to your success. Mini-assignments/activities will be assigned during these tutorials that must be handed in by Dropbox (via Avenue to Learn) before the specified deadline (i.e., will **not** be accepted late, or by email). These assignments will be evaluated and returned the subsequent week, collating to 20% of your final mark.

2. Test #1 (25%)

The first test will cover all course content from Weeks #1 - 4. It will consist of multiple-choice questions and will take place on **Monday, February 3rd**.

3. Group Assignment (25%)

In groups of 2-3, this assignment involves identifying a social issue or phenomenon that interests you, and writing an 8-10 page, typed, double-spaced paper regarding how one might approach the study of that phenomenon as an Applied Social Psychologist. The inspiration for this paper can come from a variety of different sources, including personal experience, observation, articles in the popular press/media (newspapers or magazines), television or film. A list of possible topics and full instructions will be posted and distributed early in the term, and the assignment will be due on **Monday, March 23rd**.

4. Final Exam (30%)

The final exam will be cumulative (covering all course content), with emphasis on Weeks #5 through 12. It will consist of multiple-choice questions and will take place during the formal examination period, **April 13-28**, as scheduled by the Registrar.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING POINTS CAREFULLY:

Assignments, Exams, and Late Policies

All assignments, tests, and exams must be completed in order to pass the course.

Please submit your assignments electronically via the course website *by midnight* on the day they are due (or *in class* via *hard copy*, on the day they are due). Faxed and emailed assignments will not be accepted.

Please do not bring assignments to the main Social Psychology office. The Social Psychology staff do not date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers. Assignments will be returned to you in class, or via Avenue to Learn.

Your assignments should be typed and double-spaced. Barring exceptional circumstances (i.e., serious illness, with documentation provided), there will be a deduction of 5% per day for all late assignments.

Absences, Missed Work, & Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulations in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015.

****FYI: for the midterm test, no make-up dates will be held. If a student misses the test for a valid and documented reason, a replacement written/essay assessment will be assigned****

Grading and Review of Grades

Your final mark will be converted to a letter grade according to the scale used by the Registrar and available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

All course work will be graded carefully. On occasion, students may disagree with the mark they receive. If this occurs, I would be happy to review the mark, provided the request is serious and the following procedure is followed.

Write a one-page statement describing in detail why you think a marking error was made. Support your argument with examples from your paper/test of how you believe you satisfied the criteria better than your grade reflected.

The statement should be submitted, along with the marked assignment or test, to me for review. You may submit the request for a re-mark no sooner than one week and no later than one month after the assignment or test was returned. I will review your mark and get back to you with written feedback.

Please note that there is a possibility that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

Registered students are automatically enrolled in this space, which can be accessed at the following web address: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>

If you are unable to access this space, please contact your instructor to enrol you. Please keep in mind that it takes 24 hours (and sometimes longer) after you have registered for you to have access to Avenue to Learn.

Computer & Cell Phone Use

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off (or asked to leave) for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study, **at the beginning of the term**. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Email/Class Communication

While you can reach me by email at griffmb@mcmaster.ca, I strongly encourage you to ask questions about the syllabus and course assessments during class time. My preference is

for our conversations to take place in person rather than via email, thus allowing us to get to know each other better and fostering a more collegial learning atmosphere. If you use email, please include the course code in the subject line, and your full name and student number in the body of the email. I will endeavour to respond within 24 hours (**excluding** weekends and holidays).

It is my preference that you first post your questions in the discussion section of Avenue to Learn, in the thread labelled 'General Course Questions'. If you bypass this option and email me a question, I may well ask you to post your question on Avenue before answering it there. This is particularly so when I imagine it to be a question that your peers may also have!

In the context of a university course, email is a mode of professional communication. Please keep the conventions of professional communication in mind when composing messages (e.g., use full sentences with proper punctuation, be polite, and refrain from using informal abbreviations).

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.

3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

TOPIC AND READING SCHEDULE

The following schedule is meant to provide a sense of order and direction. We may modify it slightly as we move through the material. Announcements about any such changes will be made in class.

Week	Date	Topic	READING
1	6	Intro & course outline Introduction to Applied Social Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gergen (1973)
	9	Tutorial 1: Introductions & Expectations	
2	13	Background & Key Social Theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Azjen (1985)
	16	Tutorial 2: Theories	
3	20	Research Methods in Applied Social Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dickerson et al. (1992)
	23	Tutorial 3: Methods	
4	27	Intervention & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stice et al. (2006)
	30	Tutorial 4: I & E	
5	February 3	**TEST #1** held in T13 123	
	6	*No class*	
<p>What follows is an outline using examples of course topics that have been covered in the past. Early in the term, I will ask all students to complete a survey to give you some influence regarding in the directions taken (and topics covered) in the latter portion of the course. Likely, some of these topics will remain, and some may be replaced with others of students' choosing. The dates and deadlines (for weekly numbered tutorials and group assignment due date) will remain the same.</p> <p>THIS OUTLINE WILL BE UPDATED WITH FINALIZED TOPICS AND ASSOCIATED READINGS AFTER THE SURVEY HAS TAKEN PLACE, IN THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF TERM.</p>			
6	10	Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nathanson & Cantor (2000)
	13	Tutorial 5: Media	

		17	**NO CLASS: MID-TERM RECESS**	
		20		
7		24	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spoth et al. (2002)
		27	Tutorial 6: Health	
8	March	2	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dunham et al. (1998)
		5	Tutorial 7: Community	
9		9	Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jones & Foley (2003)
		12	Tutorial 8: Diversity	
10		16	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Astor et al. (2005)
		19	Tutorial 9: Education	
11		23	Law & Criminal Justice *Group assignment due*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lipton (1998) - <i>*excerpts</i>
		26	Tutorial 10: Law & CJ	
12		30	Personal Relationships Well-being & optimism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shapira & Mongrain (2010)
	April	2	*Make-up tutorial (#11)*	
13		6	Open office hours – exam review	