

PSYC S220: Social Psychology

Spring 2025



1 Course information

Class schedule Section 01: M/T/Th/F 12:00–12:50 pm
 Section 02: M/T/Th/F 1:00–1:50 pm
 E104

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Open meeting time Thursdays 2:00–3:00 pm (on Teams)

2 Overview

Social psychology is the study of how people interact, how people think about other people, and how people influence one another's behavior. Some of the questions we will consider are:

- How do we form impressions and make judgments about other people?
- Is it possible to influence someone to do something they don't want to do?
- Do violent video games increase violent behavior?
- What makes people prejudiced against other groups of people?
- What methods are most effective for reducing prejudice?

- What makes for a good relationship?

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Read a psychology research article, understand its main conclusions, and identify some of its limitations.
- Summarize and discuss a psychological study or theory with someone else.
- Describe several famous experiments in social psychology, like the Stanford Prison Experiment and the Milgram Studies, along with their nuances and limitations.
- Apply one or more psychological theories to better understand events from your own life.

3 Assessment

Component	Points
Quizzes (9)	80
Assignments (3)	90
Online participation	110
In-class participation	90
Leading discussion	50
Final project	110

3.1 Quizzes

There will be an in-class quiz at the beginning of class on Friday of every week (except for the first and last weeks). These quizzes will be multiple choice and completed on Moodle, so remember to bring a device with you. They will ask questions about the readings and class content from the preceding weeks. You may not access notes or any of the online readings when taking the quizzes.

No make-up or late quizzes will be allowed unless you have a doctor's note, are away on a Rose-affiliated trip, or have accommodations from Student Accessibility Services. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped to account for any unexpected events that arise.

3.2 Assignments and final project

There are three assignments throughout the quarter. Each one will require you to think more deeply about a topic or apply it in some way and then write a short paper.

You will also complete a final project which will require you to write up a research proposal describing how you will test an application of a concept from the course. In the last week of the course, you will give a short presentation describing your idea and your approach for testing it.

3.3 Participation

This course will be heavily dependent on discussion. Therefore you are expected to come to class having already completed the required reading and prepared to discuss it thoughtfully.

3.3.1 Online score

To make discussions more productive, some pre-discussion of the materials will happen online through [Perusall](#). See Moodle for details about signing up and using this site. Your online Perusall scores will be based primarily on the number of thoughtful, high-quality comments you make and the number of upvotes and responses you make to other students' comments. In general, the more thoughtful and engaged you are in the discussion, the higher your score will be.

Your score for the first reading and your lowest score will be dropped. Additionally, scores for readings with student discussion leaders will not count toward your online participation score (though you are still expected to do those readings and come to class prepared to discuss them.)

Note: Signing up for Perusall is required and costs \$10. If you cannot pay the \$10, please contact me right away.

3.3.2 In-class score

The Perusall discussions will serve as a jumping-off point for our discussions in class. Your in-class participation will be self-assigned using a rubric I will provide you. At three points in the quarter, you will use the rubric to determine what participation score you have earned for that third of the quarter. I will review these scores and may make adjustments if I feel they are off the mark. Your class participation score will be the sum of these scores.

3.4 Leading discussion

On one day, you and a couple other students will be appointed the discussion leaders. You will lead discussion for about 30 minutes of class that day. I will randomly assign everyone to a day during the first week of class. Your group will post discussion questions for the assigned reading on Perusall at least 12 hours before we are scheduled to discuss that reading in class. On the day of class, you will use these questions as the basis for a discussion of the readings.

I will post some general guidelines on Moodle for running an effective discussion that you should aim to follow. I will also post a grading rubric for leading the discussion on Moodle.

3.5 Final grade

Grades will be assigned as follows.

Points	Grade
$\geq 90\%$	A
87%–89.9%	B+
80%–86.9%	B
77%–79.9%	C+
70%–76.9%	C
67%–69.9%	D+
60%–66.9%	D
$< 60\%$	F

4 Course policies

4.1 Late assignments

Late assignments (including the self-assigned participation scores) will receive a point penalty that doubles for each additional day they are late. Specifically:

- 1 day late: 1% deduction
- 2 days late: 2% deduction
- 3 days late: 4% deduction
- 4 days late: 8% deduction
- 5 days late: 16% deduction
- 6 days late: 32% deduction
- 7 days late: 64% deduction
- 8+ days late: No credit

An assignment counts as 1 day late as soon as the deadline for that assignment has passed. If you submit an assignment late, you do not need to notify me. Just submit the assignment on Moodle. It will be automatically timestamped and I will deduct the appropriate number of points when I grade it.

There will be no exceptions made to this late policy and no assignments will be accepted later than 7 days after their deadlines. You should plan to submit your assignments before the deadline. The purpose of this policy is that if something unexpected comes up, you can submit one or two days late with minimal penalty.

Note: The late policy does not apply to the online discussions on Perusall because the whole point of those deadlines is to prepare you for in-class discussion.

4.2 Anonymous grading

Do not include your name on anything (including file name) you submit on Moodle, unless I say otherwise. The reason for this is because I use an anonymous grading feature on Moodle that lets me grade your assignments without seeing your names. Your names are revealed after I've finished grading the assignment. I do this to keep my grading as impartial as possible. If you put your name on the assignment, it undermines the process for everyone.

4.3 Asking for help

I highly encourage you to contact me if you ever need help in this course. That's what I'm here for! But I also want to encourage you to be self-sufficient. So if you ever ask me a question that can be easily answered on this syllabus or the Moodle page (a due date, a page limit, a detail about the late policy), **I will deduct 1 point from your grade total.**

The corollary of this policy is that if you ever find anything on this syllabus or the Moodle page that looks like a genuine mistake (the wrong date, inconsistent information) and you ask me about

it, **I will give you 1 point of extra credit.** (Only the first person to tell me gets the extra credit.)

Don't be afraid to contact me. The point of this policy is to incentivize you to try to find answers yourselves first. If you look for an answer and honestly can't find it, I want to know that too. Just tell me you tried to find it on your own first and where you looked. You won't be penalized for that.

4.4 Academic integrity

Academic misconduct will be addressed according to the policies described in the [Rose-Hulman student handbook](#). Academic misconduct includes: (1) submitting work that is not your own (including AI-generated work); (2) copying ideas, words, or graphics from any source without appropriate citation; (3) misrepresenting your work or yourself (i.e., deliberately submitting the wrong assignment or lying to explain a late assignment); (4) collaborating with other students when this is not permitted; and (5) submitting the same work for credit in two courses without prior consent of both instructors. If you are unsure whether something qualifies as academic misconduct, please check with me before doing it.

5 Course schedule

The following schedule lists topics, readings, and due dates for the whole term. This schedule is subject to change. Schedule changes will be announced online. I will give you plenty of notice when changes are made.

Noba refers to an online textbook (links on Moodle).

* indicates an in-class quiz that day.

† indicates a student-led discussion.

Week	Date	Quiz	Topic	Reading	Due
1	3/10		Intro		
	3/11		Intro	Singal	
	3/13		Intro	Noba	Syllabus quiz
	3/14		Intro		
2	3/17		Social cognition	Noba	
	3/18		Social cognition	Miyamoto & Kitayama	
	3/20		Social cognition	Ross et al	
	3/21	*	Social cognition	Knobe†	
3	3/24		Prejudice	Noba	
	3/25		Prejudice	Kawakami et al	
	3/27		Prejudice		
	3/28	*	Prejudice	Waxman†	Participation 1
4	3/31		Groups	Tajfel	Assignment 1
	4/1		Groups	Noba	
	4/3		Groups		
	4/4	*	Groups	Dreber et al†	Project proposal

Week	Date	Quiz	Topic	Reading	Due
5	4/7		Social influence	Noba	
	4/8		Social influence	Asch	
	4/10		Social influence		
	4/11	*	Social influence	Philpot et al†	
6	4/21		Obedience		
	4/22		Obedience	Griggs	
	4/24		Obedience	Blum	
	4/25	*	Obedience	Zimbardo	Participation 2
7	4/28		Persuasion	Cialdini	
	4/29		Persuasion	Noba	
	5/1		Persuasion		
	5/2	*	Persuasion	Kalla & Broockman†	Assignment 2
8	5/5		Aggression	Noba	
	5/6		Aggression	Plante & Anderson	
	5/8		Aggression	The Studies Show	
	5/9	*	Aggression	Cornwall & Fraga†	
9	5/12		Relationships	Unexplainable†	Assignment 3
	5/13		Relationships	Joel et al	
	5/15		Relationships		
	5/16	*	Relationships	Boothby et al†	
10	5/19		Presentations		Final project
	5/20		Presentations		
	5/22		Presentations		
	5/23		Presentations		Participation 3