Psychology 703: Social Bases of Behavior

"There is nothing so practical as a good theory"

Kurt Lewin (1951, p. 169)

Fall, 2006
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Office: King 3060B
Hours: M: 3:00-2:45, T: 12-1, and by appointment

Overview: This course provides students with a survey of the topics covering the social bases of behavior. We will examine some of the historical and philosophical foundations of social psychology, as well as theories, models, and research on various social phenomena. This class will follow a seminar format. This means that you should read the assigned articles before class time and be prepared to discuss/critique them.

Approximate Outline of Topics: Approximate Dates
A. Introduction, Definitions, Themes, Historical foundations  8/28
B. Social Cognition: Attribution theory  9/11-18
D. Social Cognition: Biases  9/25-10/2
E. Self & Self Regulation  10/2
F. Attitudes and Attitude formation  10/10-16
Note: Monday’s regularly scheduled classes n scheduled for October 10
G. Attitude and Behavior  10/16-23
H. Attitudes Change  10/23-30
I. Close Relationships  10/30-11/6
J. Aggression  11/13
K. Groups as social referents; Social categorization theory  11/20-12/4

Grading: Your grade in this class will be based on four assignments. The first is annotated bibliography to be completed with another class member on any topic related to social psychology. This assignment is due on October 10th. The second and third assignments will be take home midterm and final examinations. The midterm will be due October 18th, while the final is due Dec 18th. The final assignment is a research proposal on any topic in social psychology. This paper will be due on Dec 4th. The examinations and paper will each be worth 30% of your final grade. The bibliography will be worth 10% of your grade. Additional details about these assignments will be provided in the first class.

Required Textbooks:

Honor Code: The provisions of the George Mason University honor code apply to all aspects of this course.

Add/Drop Deadlines: Add = September 12; Drop = September 29.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact
the Disability Resource Office (703-993-2474). All student accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Readings

Introduction, Definitions, Historical foundations

Fiske (2004): Chapter 1.


Social Cognition: Attribution theory


Social Cognition: Social schemas; Social information processing; Biases

Fiske (2004): Chapter 4.


Self Theory and Self Regulation


the September 11th terrorist attack: Resilience or social maladjustment? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 88*, 984-998

**Attitudes and Attitude Formation**

Fiske (2004): Chapter 1.


**Attitudes and Behavior**


**Attitude Change**


**Close Relationships**


**Aggression**


**Groups as social referents; Social categorization theory**


