I. Course Overview and Goals

The course will provide students with a foundation in theory and research at the interface of social and counseling psychology. Students will obtain a basic, fundamental grasp of social psychology theories, methodologies and perspectives and understand their relevance to counseling psychology practice and research. The course is organized around social psychological theories, concepts, and processes rather than specific psychological disorders because it is from such general theories, concepts, and processes that effective tools for assessment and intervention are most likely to be developed.

This course is designed to train you in several broad areas of psychology including:

- Social bases of behavior
- Cognitive bases of behavior
- Affective bases of behavior

From the course material and discussion you will have opportunity to learn several competencies including:

- Thinking theoretically about behavior
- Using theory to guide research and intervention
- Reasoning from theoretical models to develop testable hypotheses
- Understanding how theory-driven research stimulates and directs a systematic research program
- Understanding how theory-driven research can inform professional practice

II. Required Readings
Readings are assigned for each class session.

Required readings for each session are designated in the course outline (►). All students should read required readings before class and be prepared to discuss the material.

Book chapters required but unavailable in the library will be provided via the Howdy email system. Students should retrieve assigned journal articles with the e-journal engine available at the library website.

The following website IS NOT required but it may prove useful in obtaining additional and contemporary information about each topic we cover in class:

http://www.socialpsychology.org/

Supplemental Readings are assigned for each class session. Directions concerning supplemental readings are provided in this syllabus.

III. Course Requirements

1. Class attendance is expected. You and your peers will benefit from regular attendance and cooperation. According to APA policy, your behavior in graduate school requires ethical behavior as set forth in the APA standards. This includes your classroom behavior.

2. Keep up with assigned readings. Classroom discussion will depend on it. Your learning will be enriched by it. You are expected to read assigned articles prior to class and be prepared to discuss the material in class. On occasion, I will hand out additional figures, readings, etc., that will be informative. I also intend to post a list of terms and concepts for each session that will help you learn essential material. Notes that I present on the board will also be informative.

3. Personal computer use should be minimized, cell phones should be turned off. I understand that you want to take notes – and well you should – but computer use in this seminar usually results in gratuitous and inappropriate visits to email, text messaging, and even Facebook visits. Penalties will be exacted for this behavior if I find evidence of it (see below). Therefore, I strongly recommend that you turn you cell phone off and close your laptop, attend to class discussion and take notes by hand.

IV. Grading Policy

You will be graded on the following:

- Class participation (including class discussion, co-leading) 25%
- Written Summaries (a total of 12 essays) 60%
DEFINITIONS and ACTIVITIES

A. CLASS PARTICIPATION. This course is a doctoral seminar in which active participation is expected of everyone. In order to be an active participant, you need to read the assigned material, understand most of what you have read, and be prepared with comments and questions, including questions about aspects of the reading that you may not have understood. Understanding that some people are more comfortable than others speaking in group settings, I will do my best to make the class a safe place for asking questions and offering opinions. Although I concede at times I can be a bit challenging, be assured that I want to know what you are thinking about the assigned content and if you are integrating the material. I can be easily impressed if you have read the assigned material, have given it some thought, and you are game to present and discuss those thoughts. This is how a “pro-sem” should operate. Participation points will be deducted for inappropriate computer or telephone use (e.g., texting, internet searches unrelated to class discussion, checking email, on Facebook).

B. WEEKLY REACTIONS. Beginning with the class session on September 5th, you will complete a written reaction on a form I will provide in which you describe three basic concepts or theories you learned from that week’s assigned reading. You will then describe at least ONE implication of that information that may help you (1) understand your work with a client, (2) further develop your research ideas, and/or (3) gain a new perspective on your service activities (e.g., professional activities such as policy initiatives, consulting, organizational work, societal and community activities). You can focus on one or several domains in any given week.

These reactions should be emailed to me NO LATER than 4:00 p.m. of the day of class we are to cover the topic). I will print these out and bring them to class.

These reactions provide an opportunity for you to “think out loud” and demonstrate your understanding of the material and your ability to think critically about it. But the assignment should NOT be used to simply dismiss a topic (or theory, or proposition, or a line of work) as “irrelevant” or as “just common sense” or because you just “…don’t like it.” I am not interested in your affective reactions to the material per se: affective reactions are often expressed before any real cognitive processing or deliberate justification occurs. I want you to think and process and communicate and show up with thoughtful and informed observations.

These will be graded. If you are late (and I do not have it to discuss in class), I will deduct a point. If a written reaction is not turned in at all, I will deduct five points for that assignment.
C. DISCUSSION CO-LEADERS. Each student will either volunteer or be assigned to be a co-leader of one class session. As co-leader, the student will read the supplemental material for the assigned session, and develop at least three “take home” points from the reading. These points could be directly from the paper, or implications raised by the material that suggest controversy, creative connections to other issues, research potential, or clinical application of the material. The co-leader will bring an outline or handout for the class.

All students may raise any of their own observations for discussion, but the onus for keeping the discussion going falls on the discussion co-leader and the professor.

D. POP QUIZZES. Three pop quizzes will be administered. These will be brief. They will consist of questions relevant to the material that has been covered during the designated period of time. Expect one per month.

If you miss a pop quiz, I will assign you a topic for a brief term paper that must be turned in by the end of the semester. The paper must be in APA format.

V. Course Outline

August 29
A. Overview of the course and syllabus. History of the social-clinical interface, and social psychological perspectives, and areas of overlap with psychological practice. Defining major domains, major events, and major figures in social psychology. Using, conceptualizing and understanding theory, the literature base, and HARK. Bem’s context of justification versus context of discovery.


Before the next class read:


For your records (as I will refer to these in the class session)

  - Subsequent articles in this issue – October, 23(4), 1995 – address topics of counseling and attitude change, persuasion and development in supervision, close relationships, and social-cognitive processes in behavioral health, and three rebuttals/comments from colleagues.

  - Subsequent articles in this issue address issues in training, psychotherapy and emotion research, research concerning the self, self-efficacy, and three comments/critiques from colleagues.

September 5

Complete discussion from previous week, and entertain discussion about papers assigned for the previous week. Cognitive dissonance; behavior justification, consistency and congruence as motivational factors. Liking and attraction as influence.

1st Written Reaction due. Note: for this paper, you can react to any of the required readings listed for the first class and the second class.


Supplemental:


September 12

Introduction to social cognition: What makes it social? Attributional activity in adjustment, fundamental attribution error, Why me? And other self-blame processes. And a little bit on the two-factor of emotion, just for kicks.

2nd Written Reaction due.


Supplemental:

September 19

Understanding social influence, attitudes and persuasion in counseling; the Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion. “Implicit” attitude assessment. Contemporary applications of persuasion research in psychology and health promotion, generally.

3rd Written Reaction due.

September 26
Social learning and why self-efficacy is everywhere (especially health and career development). Reasoned action, planned behavior, and now the health action process approach.

4th Written Reaction due.


October 3
James Pennebaker: Health, writing, talking, self-disclosure, and the impact of a career. [http://homepage.psy.utexas.edu/homepage/Faculty/Pennebaker/Home2000/JWPhome.htm](http://homepage.psy.utexas.edu/homepage/Faculty/Pennebaker/Home2000/JWPhome.htm)

5th Written Reaction due.


October 10

6th Written Reaction due.


Supplemental:
October 17
Self-Regulation, energy expenditures, resources, depletions, and the work of Roy Baumeister (is it really like a muscle?)

7th Written Reaction due.
http://www.psy.fsu.edu/~baumeistertice/index.html


► APA handout on Willpower.

Supplemental:


October 24
Group dynamics in adjustment and therapy. Theories of group behavior: how do they pertain to process and psychoeducational groups in actual practice? Research?

8th Written Reaction due.


https://facultystaff.richmond.edu/~dforsyth/gd/

Supplemental:

October 31
Reality negotiation (from Barnum effects to excuse-making and hope) and the contributions of C. R. Snyder. Psychological resources, positive illusions, making meaning and personal narratives.

9th Written Reaction due.


Supplemental:

November 7
Understanding well-being, happiness, satisfaction with life and the work of Ed Diener. Hedonic treadmills and set-points.

**10th Written Reaction due.**

http://www.psych.uiuc.edu/~ediener/


**Supplemental:**


**November 14**

Pro-Social Behavior: Altruism, forgiveness, gratitude. And then there’s revenge. Worthington’s model of forgiveness. Contributions from Mike McCullough.

**11th Written Reaction due.**

http://www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/mmccullough/

http://www.forgiving.org


**Supplemental:**


**November 21**

Moral behavior, moral emotions, elevation, and a touch of social psychophysiology. From Kohlberg to Haidt. Implications for counseling, religious behavior and political psychology (and what is moral dumbfounding?).

**12th Written Reaction due.**


**Supplemental:**


Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit http://disability.tamu.edu.

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.” For additional information, please visit: http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor

Students with special needs: Any student who could require assistance in the event of a necessary evacuation of the building in which this class is taught are asked to notify the instructor so that individuals can be identified to assist him/her during an examination.