THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIECNES
Department of Psychology

COURSE OUTLINE (2020/2021, SEMESTER ONE)

1. Basic Course Information

Course Code	PSYC7307
Course Title	Social Psychology
Course Credits	6 credits
Lecture Time & Venue	Wednesday 3:30 – 6:20 pm CPD 2.42
Tutorial Time & Venue	TBA

2. Course Instructor / Course Co-ordinator

Name	Office	Phone	E-mail	Consultation Hour (if any)
Xiaoqing HU (Instructor)	6.62, JCT	39172291	xiaoqinghu@hku.hk	Thur 11- 12:00pm & by appointment
Terry TSE (Tutor)	6.19, JCT	39178231	yltsec@hku.hk	by appointment

3. Course Description

This course gives an overview of the field which studies the behaviour of individuals in social contexts. It covers topics in social thinking (e.g., social perception, social judgement, relationship between attitude and behaviour), social influence (e.g., cultural influence, conformity and obedience, persuasion, and group dynamics), and social relations (e.g., prejudice, aggression, interpersonal attraction, and altruistic behaviour). Current research issues in social psychology will form part of the discussion, and students will be guided to apply the knowledge in real-life situations.

4. Course Learning Outcomes

After taking this course, you will become knowledgeable of research methods, major theories and knowledge in social psychology. You will understand how people perceive themselves/others, and how the social environment influences people's behavior. You will be able to present up-to-date social psychological research and apply these theories/findings to understand real-life problems we encounter. You shall be able to apply social psychological theories/findings to make a difference in the real world, such as attitudes and behavioral change etc.

5. Course Contents and Topics

See #7 course schedule.

6. <u>Assessment Methods and Weighting</u>

Assessment methods	Weighting in final course grade (%)
Thought Paper	20
Presentation/Debate	15
Debate Reflection	5
Research Proposal	60
Total	**100**

Grades will be based on the points you earn. A curve <u>will not</u> be used in this course.

A+ = 80 – 100%   A = 75 – 79%   A- = 70 – 74%

B+ = 67 – 69%   B = 63 – 66%   B- = 60 – 62%

C+ = 57 – 59%   C = 53 – 56%   C- = 50 – 52%

D+ = 46 – 49%   D = 40 – 45%   F= 39% and below

<u>Thought paper:</u> You are required to submit a thought paper (1,000-1,500 words) linking social issues with social psychological research, and your personal reflections on how to use social psychological theories/research to further understand and explain these social issues. This essay will consist of three parts: 1) a description of the issue that interests you (either you are directly involved or you witnessed as a third-party, it can be from newspaper or a movie/documentary you watched); 2) relate this issue to social psychological research you have learnt from class, or from your own readings; 3) use relevant social psychological theories to help you understand and explain the social issues.

BONUS POINTS: You will receive bonus points if you can demonstrate how to leverage social psychological theories to intervene with the real life social issues.

Exemplar topics can be, but not limited to, how to reduce prejudice/stereotyping/intergroup biases; how to persuade others and to persuade oneself to change attitudes/behavior; how to form a new habit/how to better exert self-control (e.g., more excise); how to build up social norms for positive changes; how to promote prosocial behavior within community; how to stay vigilant and better detect fake news etc. You are strongly encouraged to discuss potential topics with the instructor.

<u>Presentation/Debate</u>: In groups of four-five, you will read, summarize and present two to three empirical research articles on each lecture topic. Research articles will be posted on the Moodle. You should work together to summarize the methods and research findings, and illustrate how these findings advance our understanding of social psychology on this particular topic. You should also link the lecture content to the research findings, and facilitate discussions among the class. Instructor will be involved in these discussions as well. **Critical analyses** of the research articles are highly encouraged, e.g., do the experimental designs and results really answer the research question and do they really support the conclusions; are there possible alternative explanations, how can you

improve the experimental design to further advance our knowledge, etc.

The Debate will be similar to Presentation, except that the two groups on each topic should hold opposite views. Each group needs to find and present supporting evidence of their views, and try to convince the whole class.

You will be given 60-90 minutes for each presentation/debate.

Following the Debate, please select one topic, and prepare a debate reflection paper (500-800 words) summarizing your own evaluation of the evidence and how you have changed your views on the topic.

Research proposal: You are required to submit a research proposal (2,500 – 3,000 words, excluding references) based on your reading of research articles. You need to demonstrate the following: 1) you are familiar with the background research; 2) you can analyze previous evidence with critical thinking; and 3) you are capable of designing solid experiments to provide new insights, and to advance our knowledge of the topic.

NOTE: You are welcome to choose any topic that you find interesting, not just the topic you choose for presentation. You are also welcome to discuss potential topics with the instructors before you make a decision. The proposal should include the following components: Title, Abstract (150 words), Introduction, Research Questions, Method & Hypotheses, References. Please consider using visualization tools to illustrate your method.

7. **Course Schedule**

Week	Date	Lecture Topics	Readings	Tutorial Topics
1.	Sep 2	Introduction to Social Psychology	Ch.1	
2.	Sep 9	Research Methods & Open Science	Ch.2	
3.	Sep 16	Social Perception & Self	Ch.3,4	
4.	Sep 23	Prejudice and Stereotyping	Ch.5,6	
5.	Sep 30	Attitudes and Persuasion	Ch.7,8	
6.	Oct 7	Presentation I	Ch. 5,6,7,8	
7.	Oct 21	In-Class Debate	Ch. 5,6,7,8	
8.	Oct 28	Social Norm, Conformity	Ch.9,10	
9.	Nov 4	Morality and Prosocial behaviour	Ch.14	
10.	Nov 11	Presentation II	Ch.3,4	
11.	Nov 18	Presentation III	Ch.9,10,14	
12.	Nov 25	Research Proposal Tutorials	NA	

Debate Reflection	Oct 30, 5:00 pm
Thought Paper	Nov 10, 5:00 pm
Research Proposal	Dec 11, 5:00 pm

8. **Required/Recommended Readings & Online Materials**

Eliot R. Smith, Diane, M. Mackie, Heather M. Claypool (2015). *Social Psychology* (4th edition). Psychology Press. Taylor and Francis Group

Research articles will be posted on Moodle. Please check up Moodle regularly for updates.

9. **Feedback Policy**

The instructor/tutor will provide timely feedback on questions and assignments. Student can expect to receive feedback within 2 or 3 weeks after submitting written assignments and taking each quiz/test/exam. Quiz/test/exam paper will not be returned to students; however, students can get individual feedback about each exam/assignment through meeting with course instructor/tutor. Weekly consultation hours are set up for individual consultation (see Office Hour). For other coursework assignments such as group presentation, students receive feedback immediately in-class or written comments via email within the same week of the presentation.

10. **Important Notes**

Academic honesty. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarism, interfering with grading) will receive a grade of F in this course and will be reported to the Department/Faculty Office/University Disciplinary Committee for further disciplinary action. There will be no exceptions. If you are not sure what constitutes the academic offence of plagiarism, checkout the webpage https://tl.hku.hk/plagiarism/. Department of Psychology has formulated departmental policies/guidelines on student misconduct. Visit the website at https://psychology.hku.hk/useful-information-to-current-students/ for more information.

Plagiarism. A hardcopy and a softcopy are required for all written assignments. The softcopy will be checked for plagiarism against a database of articles, books, webpages, and essays submitted by students at HKU and other universities. No credit will be given for an assignment that contains plagiarized materials. Further penalties will also be applied. These penalties include a zero mark for participation in course tutorials and a zero mark for the course. Plagiarism will also be reported to Department/Faculty Office/University Disciplinary Committee for consideration of possible disciplinary action.