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

COURSE OUTLINE (2026/2027, SEMESTER ONE)

1. Basic Course Information

Course Code	PSYC7307
Course Title	Social Psychology
Course Credits	6 credits
Lecture Time & Venue	Thursday 7:00 – 9:50 pm CPD LG.01
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	Thu 2:00- 3:00pm
Terry TSE (Tutor & Coordinator)	6.19, JCT	39178231	yltsec@hku.hk	Thu 4:00-5:00pm
Lucas CHENG (Tutor)	6.16, JCT	39177368	wcheng01@hku.hk	Mon 12:00-1:00pm
Beverly WONG (Tutor)	6.19, JCT	39178231	beverlyw@hku.hk	Thu 3:00-4:00pm

3. Course Description

This course gives an overview of the field which studies the behaviour of individuals in social contexts. It covers topics in research methods, self, social perception, attitude and persuasion, conformity and obedience, prejudice and stereotypes, altruistic behaviour, among others. This course will also cover recent trends in social psychology, such as misinformation, big-data and the influence of social media, and how to use artificial intelligence (AI) to understand social behaviour. Students will be guided to apply the theory and 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 and others, 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 (climate change, intergroup conflict, misinformation). 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. Assessment Methods and Weighting

Assessment methods	Weighting in final course grade (%)
Reflection Essay (2 * 10)	20
Thought Paper	20
Research Proposal	60
Total	**100**

Grades will be based on the points you earn. A curve **will not** 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

Reflection essay: In groups of four-five, you will read, summarize and present 2~3 empirical research articles related to each week's 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. When you read the research articles, always ask yourself: do the experimental designs and results really answer the research question; are there possible alternative explanations, how can you improve the experimental design to further advance our knowledge, etc. .

Thought Paper: You are required to submit a thought paper (1,500 – 2,000 words, single space) on one of the lecture topics, and link the topic with a real life social issue. The thought paper will consist of three parts:

1) **Identification**: Identify and the topic that interests you, and describe the real life social issue that linked with the topic (either you are directly involved or you witnessed as a third-party, it can also be from newspaper or a movie/documentary you watched);

2) **Explain and Understand**: How to use relevant social psychological theories and empirical research to explain and understand the social issues; what are the underlying psychological processes and motives;

3) **Intervention**: How to leverage social psychological research to intervene with the social issues.

Note that the topics shall be related the lecture (see outline below), such as how to intergroup biases (and how to reduce such biases); attitudes and persuasion (and how to persuade others on issues such as vaccination, eco-friendly behavior); morality and prosocial behavior (how to

promote prosocial behavior within the community); You are strongly encouraged to discuss potential topics with the instructor and tutor.

Research proposal: You are required to submit a research proposal (2,500 – 3,000 words, including title/author/abstract/introduction/method, excluding references) based on your reading of research articles. You need to demonstrate the following: 1) you are familiar with the background research (i.e., **Literature Review**); 2) you can analyze previous evidence with critical thinking, and propose a new research question, with reasonable hypotheses (i.e., **Research Question and Hypotheses**); and 3) you are capable of designing solid experiments to provide new insights on the topic (i.e., **Experimental Design**).

NOTE: You can choose any topic that you find interesting, not just the topic you choose for presentation. Please discuss potential topics with the instructor and the tutor before you make a decision. The proposal should include the following components in the APA format: **Title**, **Author**, **Abstract** (<150 words), **Introduction** (literature review and research questions, hypotheses), **Method** (sample size planning, research protocol, planned analyses on how to test your hypotheses), **References**. You can consider using visualization to illustrate your experimental design, theoretical framework, etc.

7. Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Dues
1.	Sep 03	Introduction	
2.	Sep 10	Research Methods	
3.	Sep 17	Social Perception	
4.	Sep 24	Self	
5.	Oct 08	Emotion + Tutorial on Thought Paper	
6.	Oct 22	Tutorial on Research Proposal	
7.	Oct 29	Prejudice & Stereotyping	
8.	Nov 05	*Prejudice Reduction Discussion*	**Nov 15th Thought Paper**
9.	Nov 12	Attitudes & Persuasion + *Discussions*	
10.	Nov 19	Social Norm, Conformity + *Discussions*	
11.	Nov 26	Morality and Prosocial Behaviour + *Discussions*	**Dec 11th Research Proposal**

Due Dates

Reflection Essay	**Next Sunday following the Discussion**
Thought Paper	**Nov 15th, 23:59 pm**
Research Proposal	**Dec 11th, 23:59 pm**

NOTE: A **late penalty** will be applied for late submissions. If late within 24 hours, there will be a 5% deduction; if late more than 24 hours, there will be a 10% deduction. For example, if the research proposal is submitted between Dec 17th 00:00 am and Dec 17th 23:59 pm, the penalty will be 60 * 5% = 3 points. If the research proposal is submitted later than Dec 18th 00:00 am, the penalty will be 6 points.

8. Required/Recommended Readings & Online Materials

D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, E. J. Finkel, & W. B. Mendes (Eds.), The handbook of social psychology (6th ed.).

https://openpublishing.princeton.edu/projects/the-handbook-of-social-psychology

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

9. Feedback Policy

The instructor/tutors will provide timely feedback on questions and assignments. Students can get feedback through f2f or zoom meetings or email with the instructor or the tutor. Weekly consultation hours are set up for individual consultation (see Office Hour).

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 http://www.psychology.hku.hk/?page_id=1814 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.

11. Use and Disclosure of Generative AI in Written Assignments

For all written assignments, submissions will be automatically checked through Turnitin's built-in AI detection tool. Students are required to maintain documentation demonstrating the development of their work. This includes both:

Work history, including drafts, showing the evolution of the work. Students may use any versioning method but may find Word versioning or Google docs helpful.

If any Generative AI tools are used, complete records of AI interactions must be retained. This includes all prompts, outputs, and relevant timestamps (i.e., full chat history).

If a submission is identified as potentially substantially AI-generated, students will be contacted and expected to produce the above documentation. Evaluation of potential AI-related academic misconduct will be conducted holistically by the course instructor/teaching team, taking into account Turnitin's results and the supporting materials provided. Failure to provide the requested information is grounds for failure, notation in student records, and/or alternative penalties, at the discretion of the instructors.

Late-drop Policy

Late drops will not be permitted under normal circumstances. Exceptions will be considered only in cases of verifiable medical conditions that prevent a student from continuing their studies in their entirety for the remainder of the semester (i.e., circumstances requiring withdrawal from all registered courses for the semester). Selective late drop of a single course will not be approved under any circumstance. Requests to late drop due to academic difficulty, dissatisfaction with grades, or changes in interest will not be approved.

Students are fully responsible for managing their course selections and should use the official add/drop period to assess whether their schedule and workload are appropriate. The add/drop period is the designated opportunity to determine which courses students can reasonably commit to for the term.

All late-drop requests must be supported by appropriate documentation. Appeals will be reviewed by the Department Teaching and Learning Committee (DTLC) on a case-by-case basis.