

Prepared by the Department of Social Sciences, Behavioral Sciences, and Human Services

Date of Departmental Approval: September 28, 2009

Date approved by Curriculum and Programs: January 21, 2010

Effective: Fall 2010

1. **Course Number:** PSY225  
**Course Title:** Social Psychology
  
2. **Description:** In an ever-changing global society, the individual is both influenced by the groups they encounter and conversely they influence those same groups. Social Psychology addresses human interaction and its consequences. Topics include conformity, aggression, motivation, group organization, social influences on perception, cognitive processes, and culture's impact on social behavior, addressing issues of tolerance within an increasingly diverse society. Emphasis is on the application of concepts.
  
3. **Student Learning Outcomes:**
  - A. **Knowledge Base of Psychology**

Students who successfully complete the course will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in social psychology.
  
  - B. **Research Methods in Psychology**

Students who successfully complete the course will be able to use critical thinking when evaluating research methods used in social psychology by articulating strengths and limitations of various research designs. Students will analyze important topics in social psychology and explore the specialized terminology of the social psychologist as researcher and social change agent.
  
  - C. **Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology**

Students who successfully complete the course will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to social psychology. The student will demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking effectively by making linkages and connections between diverse facts, theories, and observations.
  
  - D. **Application of Psychology**

Students who successfully complete the course will understand and apply concepts, theories, and research findings in social psychology to everyday life. Students will examine and articulate the effects of social beliefs and judgments on the individual and the group.
  
  - E. **Values in Psychology**

Students who successfully complete the course will be able to weigh evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinnings of social psychology as a discipline. The student will recognize and respect human diversity and understand that principles of social psychology may vary across populations and contexts. The student will recognize the necessity for ethical behavior in all aspects of the science and practice of social psychology.
  
  - F. **Methods of Assessment**

The methods of assessment used to gauge the knowledge base, research methods, critical thinking skills, application, and values of psychology are written assignments, tests, class discussion, and small group activity.
  
  - G. **Technology**

Students will use information and technology ethically and responsibly. They will quote, paraphrase, and cite correctly from a variety of media sources; define and avoid plagiarism; avoid distorting statistical results; and honor commercial and intellectual copyrights. They will demonstrate the following computer skills:

    - Use basic word processing, database, email, spreadsheet, and data analysis programs.
    - Search the World Wide Web for high quality information.
    - Use proper etiquette and security safeguards when communicating through email.

4. **Credits:** Three credits
5. **Satisfies General Education Requirement:** Behavioral and Social Sciences
6. **Prerequisite:** PSY101 or SOC106
7. **Semester(s) Offered:** Fall, Spring, Summer
8. **Suggested General Guidelines for Evaluation:** The methods of assessment used to measure these outcomes may be written assignments, tests, online and class discussion, small group activity and presentations.
9. **General Topical Outline (Optional):**
  - I. Introduction: What is Social Psychology? How does it differ from Psychology and Sociology and how do these two fields come together in Social Psychology? Review Scientific Method.
  - II. Attitudes and Behavior: Combining society and cognition; how is the self created within norms and mores?
  - III. Social Beliefs and Judgments: How can you evaluate the social world in relation to prejudice, group influence, and self justification?
  - IV. Mass Communication and Propaganda: Who persuades us into conformity? Do we have a choice?
  - V. Human Aggression: Theoretical discussions including Darwin, Social Learning Theory, and Frustration-Aggression Theory. Is there a correlation between media and violence? Is it possible to become desensitized? Is aggression a natural factor in human psychology and/or an inevitable by-product of group identification?
  - VI. Interpersonal Attraction and Close Relationships: What is the importance of affiliation? How should we understand affect and attraction?
  - VII. Conflict, Peacemaking, and Altruism: What are, and what informs, global responses to issues in the environment, human trafficking, and war (focusing on volunteerism, random acts of kindness, and heroism)?