

# Social Psychology

Social psychologists study the interaction between our own thoughts, emotions, and behaviors with those of other people. How do you think early childhood experiences affect these interactions?



## Welcome to Social Psychology!

Psychology 310 is a course focused on the theoretical and experimental investigations of social processes.

Social psychologists ask questions like: Why do we tend to conform when faced with social pressures from others? What are the cognitive processes underlying social behavior? Where does our "self" originate and what role do others play in its development? Are we adept at explaining and predicting people's behaviors and attitudes? Are there strategies for improving our interpersonal relationships and reducing our stereotypes and prejudices?

The purpose of our course is to help you develop the skills needed to think like a social psychologist. To do this, we will cover social psychology's history and its philosophical perspectives. We will cover many social psychologist's theories, methodologies, and experimental research. We will learn how people interpret social situations, how different cultures engage in social interaction, how we think during social engagement, and the role of emotions in our social lives. Finally, this course will help you think more critically about issues in psychology and assist you in implementing what you learn in this course to your own life.

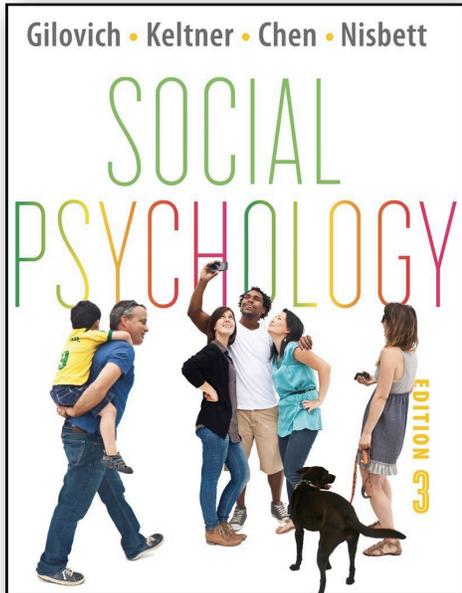
**Table of Contents:**

Course Materials	2
My Contact Information	2
Course Objectives	3
Course Schedule	4 - 5
Assignments & Grading	6 - 7
Miscellany	8

Spring  
 2014

PSYC 310, SECTION 001  
 TIME & DAY: 2:00 - 3:15 PM, TUESDAY & THURSDAY  
 LOCATION: HART HALL ROOM 311

# Course Materials



You can purchase our textbook at the BSU bookstore or online at the Norton website:

<http://books.wwnorton.com/books/978-0-393-91323-1/>

Our [Moodle](#) site contains critical thinking exercises, flashcards, and interactive study opportunities for each unit. These pedagogical aids help improve your retention of the material and assist you in thinking more deeply about each unit we cover.

Gilovich, T., Keltner, D., Chen, S., & Nisbett, R. E. (2013). *Social Psychology* (3rd ed.). New York: Worth.

# My Contact Information



INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Michael Root

OFFICE: Hart Hall, Room 333

OFFICE HOURS: M & W: 10:00 - 11:00, TH: 1:00 - 2:00, or by appointment

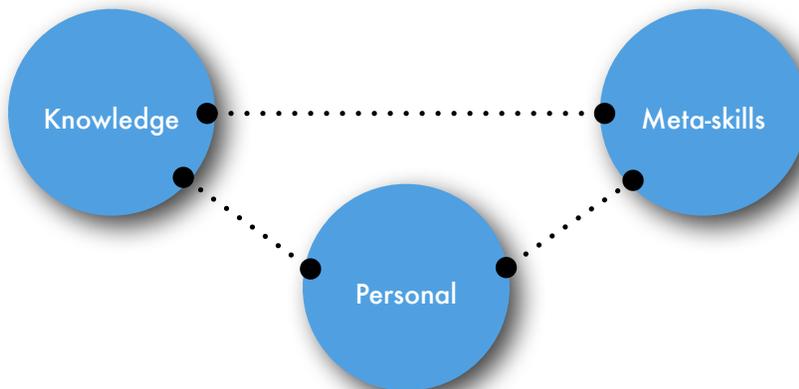
PHONE: XXX-XXX-1958

EMAIL: [michael.root@bridgew.edu](mailto:michael.root@bridgew.edu)

\*Email or visiting my office are the most effective ways of contacting me.

	Knowledge	Meta-skills	Personal
Course Objectives	<b>History</b> Ex: Origins and development, philosophies, key historical figures	<b>Critical Thinking</b> Ex: Abilities involved in making well-informed decisions	<b>Change</b> Ex: Leaving the course as a different person with an appreciation of the power of social situations.
	<b>Theories &amp; Terms</b> Ex: Social norms, prejudice, collectivism, theory-of-mind	<b>Meta-Cognition</b> Ex: Learning-how-to-learn, study skills, making thinking visible	<b>Fun</b> Ex: Find something that "speaks" to you in every topic that makes social psychology applicable to your life.
	<b>Research</b> Ex: Experimental methods, research on conformity	<b>Expression</b> Ex: Expressing your thoughts, opinions, and ideas like a social psychologist	

My course objectives are broken into 3 interrelated categories: knowledge, meta-skills, and personal objectives. My hope is that by the end of this course you will exhibit mastery of the 3 categories of course objectives:



### Note of Course Objectives

I take these course objectives very seriously and I hope that you will too. Not only does your grade depend on meeting these objectives, they also can contribute to your intellectual growth. I believe that it is my responsibility to instruct you with these objectives in mind. I believe it is your responsibility to focus your learning experiences with these objectives in mind. There will be a number of opportunities for me to assess your proficiency on mastering these objectives.



Families are social groups with complex interactive dynamics. Factors such as birth order, personality, and parenting styles play important roles in your future social interactions. What other factors do you think play an important role in your social interactions?

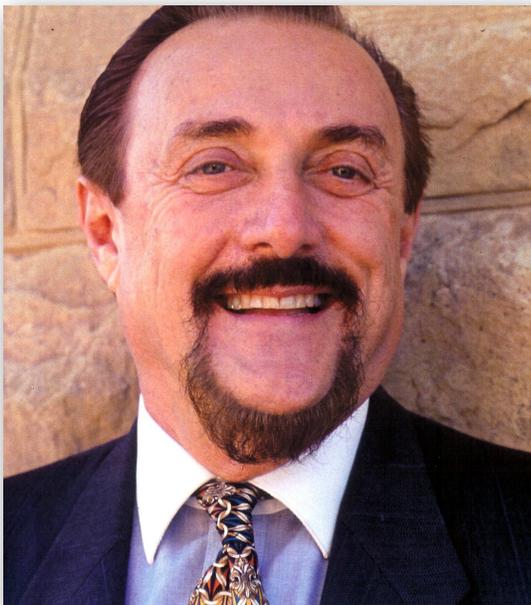
# Course Schedule

\* I reserve the right to alter our Course Schedule in case of unforeseen events.



Date	Topic	Assignment
TH Jan 23	Welcome & Syllabus	Read Syllabus, Ch. 1 & 2
T Jan 28	Foundations & Methods	Read Ch. 3
Th Jan 30	Foundations & Methods	
T Feb 4	The Social Self	DQ # 1
Th Feb 6	The Social Self	
T Feb 11	<b>Test 1</b>	Read Ch. 4, ESP # 1 posted, DQ # 2
Th Feb 13	Social Cognition	
T Feb 18	Social Cognition	Read Ch. 5, <b>ESP # 1 due</b>
Th Feb 20	Attribution	
T Feb 25	Attribution	Read Ch. 6, DQ # 3
Th Feb 27	Emotion	
T Mar 4	Emotion	DQ # 4
Th Mar 6	<b>Test 2</b>	
T Mar 11	<b>Spring Break. No Classes</b>	Read Ch. 7, ESP # 2 posted
Th Mar 13		
T Mar 18	Attitudes	DQ # 5
Th Mar 20	Attitudes	Read Ch. 9, <b>ESP # 2 due</b>

Date	Topic	Assignment
T Mar 25	Social Influence	DQ # 6
Th Mar 27	Social Influence	Read Ch. 10
T Apr 1	Relationships & Attraction	DQ # 7, ESP # 3 posted
Th Apr 3	Relationships & Attraction	
T Apr 8	<b>Test 3</b>	Read Ch. 11, <b>ESP # 3 due</b>
Th Apr 10	Stereotyping	
T Apr 15	Stereotyping	Read Ch. 12, DQ # 8
Th Apr 17	Groups	
T Apr 22	Groups	Read Ch. 13 & 14, DQ # 9
Th Apr 24	Aggression & Altruism	ESP # 4 posted
T Apr 29	Aggression & Altruism	DQ # 10
Th May 1	Aggression & Altruism	<b>ESP # 4 due</b>
T May 13	<b>Test 4 @ 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.</b>	



**Male college students needed for psychological study of prison life. \$15 per day for 1-2 weeks beginning Aug. 14. For further information & applications, come to Room 248, Jordan Hall, Stanford U.**

Phillip Zimbardo (left) is a well-known social psychologist who developed the Stanford prison experiment. The original 1971 newspaper recruitment ad is shown above. Notice that the study only includes male students. Would the inclusion of females change the results of the study?

# Assignments



## Rationale:

Each assignment matches several of our course objectives.

### 1. Tests

Tests measure your knowledge, ability to think critically, and assess your communication skills. Preparing for tests meets the meta-cognitive objective. Tracking your own performance meets the personal development objective.

### 2. Discussion Question Responses

Thoughtful responses meet the meta-cognitive, knowledge, and critical thinking objectives.

### 3. Experiencing Social Psychology

Each assignment will measure different skills pertaining to one or more of our course objectives. The objective most affected by these assignments is the personal development objective.

## Important Fact:

Research indicates that testing yourself often on the material will produce better recall at test time than almost any other strategy. This phenomenon is called the *testing effect*.



## Tests

There are **four** tests in our course. Each test contains multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. The tests consist of materials from our textbook readings, lectures, videos, and class activities/discussions. Our tests are not cumulative; however, your understanding of previously covered information is sometimes important for answering questions on current tests (e.g., knowing the fundamental attribution error on tests later in the semester). The purposes of the tests are to demonstrate your mastery of the most important content of the course and to make sure that you are understanding and reviewing the material. The Course Schedule indicates the dates of these tests. I only give make-up tests with **documented** excuses (See student attendance under "Miscellany"). 100 points / test

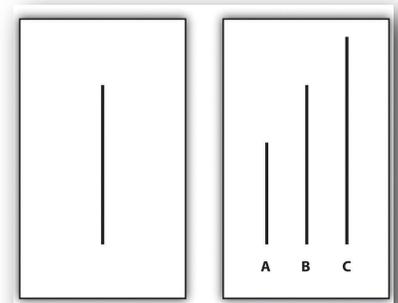
## Discussion Question Responses

Beginning in Week 3, I post a discussion question on Moodle. I require you to respond to the discussion questions with a well-crafted but succinct paragraph that demonstrates to me that you have thought seriously about the topic. Every discussion question response is due on Friday @ 11:00 p.m. of the week it is posted. Moodle will not register your discussion response if it is late. 5 points / response

## Experiencing Social Psychology (ESPs)

I post an ESP assignment for 4 topics. Dates are indicated on our Course Schedule. These assignments enable you to explore a particularly important topic (e.g., racism) more deeply and help develop abilities such as thinking like a social psychologist, meta-cognition, and personal understanding. I post the format and my expectations for each of these experiences on Moodle. For every day an ESP is late, I deduct 5 points. 20 points / ESP

The Solomon Asch testing materials (right). If everyone in a group thought that the line on the left matched line C on the right, would you agree with the group's assessment?



# Grading



Criteria	Number of Assignments	Max Points/ Assignment	Total Points
Tests	4	100	400
DQ Responses	10	5	50
ESPs	4	20	80
		<b>Total</b>	<b>530</b>

I compute your grade by taking your accumulated point total and dividing this total by the total points you can obtain in the course. I then convert that proportion into a letter grade based on the chart below.

A = 100 - 94	B+ = 89 - 87	C+ = 79 - 77	D+ = 69 - 67	
	B = 86 - 84	C = 76 - 74	D = 66 - 64	F = Below 60
A - = 93 - 90	B - = 83 - 80	C - = 73 - 70	D - = 63 - 60	

# Miscellany



## Important Issues

### Student Attendance

As mature individuals I expect that you will attend class regularly. As such, I have no attendance policy. It is your course and your responsibility to decide your level of participation in this educational endeavor. If you cannot come to class I do not need an



explanation. If, however, you have to miss class for an extended period (e.g., prolonged illness, family emergency, athletic events, etc), I require you to keep me apprised of the situation. I only accept **documented** medical, ROTC, and athletic event excuses for missed tests. I do not supply students with missed notes. You need to find a classmate that is willing to share this information with you.

### Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses in this class and at Bridgewater State University. Anyone caught cheating and/or plagiarizing in this class will automatically fail this course and will be referred to the Department Chair. I accept no excuses for cheating or plagiarism! If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, do not hesitate to ask. It is better to err on the side of caution considering the potential consequences.

### Classroom Conduct

Here are some simple ways of keeping the class enjoyable and running smoothly.

1. Come to class on time.
2. Turn your cell phones off when class begins.
3. Be courteous to your classmates and me when we are talking.
4. Do not surf the Internet, check your phone messages, or text message during class.

### Additional Comments

If you have any special needs or requirements for this course, please contact me about them within the first two weeks of the semester so we can make accommodations. Feel free to stop by my office or email me anytime to discuss your performance in the class. Please do not hesitate to discuss with me anything of concern to you (even if it does not pertain to this class).

"My life is spent in one long effort to escape the commonplaces of existence."

Sherlock Holmes

## Websites:

### Explore social psychology more fully:

Use these resources to delve more deeply into social psychology and its various topics.

#### [Social Psychology Network](#)

The mission of Social Psychology Network is to promote peace, social justice, and sustainable living through public education, research, and the advancement of psychology.



#### [APA Division 8](#)

The Society for Personality and Social Psychology advances the progress of theory, basic and applied research, and practice in the field of personality and social psychology.



#### [SESP](#)

The Society of Experimental Social Psychology is a scientific organization dedicated to the advancement of social psychology.

