

## **COURSE SYLLABUS FALL 2010**

Course: Social Psychology, PSYC 405  
Instructor: Joseph R. Merz, Ph.D.  
Office: Stutzman-Slonaker Hall Rm. 102C Office Phone 876-5296  
Office Hours: T, TH 3:30-5:30; W 10:30-12:30; or by appointment  
Home Phone: (304) 582-1019 (Between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.)

### **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

“Are our schools so ineffective and our fathers and mothers so unpersuasive that there is a nationwide subversion of youth by the glamorous appeal of the drop-out dopies? Are the standard brands of Christianity and Judaism so devoid of spiritual power that they seriously fear the competition of chemical mysticism and neo-Buddhism? Is the “American family” such a pretentious drag that it feels deeply threatened by the appearance of tribal communities where sex partnerships are fluid and children are shared in common? And is the tough-minded, hard fact-facing American male so on the edge of homosexuality that he feels physically sick and fighting mad at the resurgence of the seventeenth-century cavaliers with long hair and colorful dress?

Such questions need only to be asked.

Alan Watts, 1967

### **General Course Description**

Social psychology, of all the behavioral sciences, is perhaps most responsive to the Zeitgeist, or “spirit of the times.” Some of the issues that social psychology deals with are issues that our society deems most relevant, such as violence, relationships, sexuality, and over-all, the quality of our lives. Since the media, such as our newspapers and T.V. reports, tend to accentuate these issues, as well as others, it is left up to certain academic disciplines, most especially social psychology, to try to understand these particular phenomena. Because social psychology is a behavioral science, it also has a second goal, which is to develop and test theories that can help us in understanding all types of social behavior.

What this class will attempt to do is to integrate a number of social issues that, in combination, could perhaps be considered a part of Zeitgeist, with the most recent, relevant theories attempting to address these issues.

### **Textbook**

There is one textbook required for this class: Exploring Social Psychology, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, written by Robert A. Baron, Donn Byrne and Nyla R. Branscombe.

### **Objectives – Student Outcomes**

1. To understand what the field of Social Psychology encompasses and how the field has evolved. It is also important to recognize some of the most significant contributors to the field, as well as their specific contributions.

2. To understand research findings in this field and be able to apply them in real life situations.

These objectives will be evaluated directly by examination.

### **Academic Integrity**

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Shepherd University Academic Integrity Procedures found in the “Shepherd University Student Handbook.”

### **Class Structure**

The class periods will generally consist of three components: (1) lecture, (2) discussions, and (3) a period of time during which films and small group exercises will take place.

### **Attendance**

Attending class on a regular basis is very important. For each class missed beyond the equivalent of one week of class, two points will be deducted from your final semester grade. REMEMBER: ATTENDANCE REPRESENTS COMMITMENT!

### **Tardiness**

Students are expected to arrive to class on time. Arriving late for class twice over the course of the semester will be considered the maximum allowed. For every late arrival to class beyond this limit, you will be marked ABSENT for the class period.

### **PLEASE NOTE**

It is imperative that you bring your textbook to each class meeting!

### **Classroom Etiquette**

Please do not hold conversations with classmates whenever the professor or another student is speaking. Also refrain from writing and passing notes or participating in other distracting behavior. Your undivided attention in class is a must. An atmosphere of mutual respect is in order. The professor reserves the right to request that you leave if you engage in any form of disrespectful conduct.

### **Grading Method**

1. Your grade will be determined according to the quality of work that you have produced in four different areas: (1) the results of four examinations, (2) quiz results, (3) in-class participation, (4) reaction papers.

2. Each exam will consist of 30-40 multiple choice questions and one essay question. If you miss one exam, you must take an all essay question make-up exam. **PLEASE NOTE:** ALL make-up exams will be given during final exam week! NO exceptions!
3. There will be a number of short announced quizzes that will be given throughout the semester. The purpose of the quizzes will be to allow you to check your progress. Missed quizzes cannot be made up.
4. Your final grade will be based on the following:

(1) Four exams	70%
(2) In-class participation	10%
(3) Quiz results	10%
(4) Reaction papers	<u>10%</u>
	100%
5. In compiling your final grade, an absolute scale will be used:  
  
A = 90–100  
B = 80–89  
C = 70–79  
D = 60–69  
F = 0–59
6. **PLEASE NOTE:** The schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

**FALL 2010**

**Tentative Schedule – Social Psychology**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>
Aug. 16	Orientation	
Aug. 23	Understanding Social Behavior	Chapter 1
Aug. 30	Social Cognition	Chapter 2
Sept. 7	Social Perception	Chapter 3
Sept. 13	<b>EXAMINATION #1</b>	
Sept. 20	Attitudes & Attitude Change	Chapter 4
Sept. 27	Social Identity	Chapter 5
Oct. 4	Prejudice & Discrimination	Chapter 6
Oct. 11-12	Fall Break	
Oct. 13	<b>EXAMINATION #2</b>	
Oct. 18	Interpersonal Attraction	Chapter 7
Oct. 25	Social Influence	Chapter 9
Nov. 1	<b>EXAMINATION #3</b>	
Nov. 8	Prosocial Behavior	Chapter 10
Nov. 15	Aggression	Chapter 11
Nov. 21-28	Thanksgiving Break	
Nov. 29	Groups and Individuals	Chapter 12
Dec. 6	Groups and Individuals	Chapter 12
Dec. 9	<b>EXAMINATION #4</b>	