South Central College

PSYC 210 Social Psychology

Course Outcome Summary

Course Information

Description	Social Psychology introduces the broad spectrum of theories and applications that make up the field of social psychology. Social Psychology is the scientific study of human interactions and includes issues of aggression, attraction, self, benevolence, attitude development and change, prejudice, etc. (MNTC 5: History/Social & Behavioral Sciences & MNTC 8: Global Perspective) Prerequisite: PSYC100 or consent of instructor
Total Credits	4

Pre/Corequisites

PSYC100 or consent of instructor.

Institutional Core Competencies

Communication - Students will be able to demonstrate appropriate and effective interactions with others to achieve their personal, academic, and professional objectives.

Course Competencies

1. **Develop an understanding of the historical and theoretical foundations and comprise the field of social psychology and demonstrate and ability to explain how and why the field emerged.**

   Learning Objectives
   Explore the historical foundation of social psychology and how it emerged as its own field of study.
   Define social psychology and distinguish it from related fields that study human social behavior.
   Review the primary theoretical models that make up the field of social psychology.

2. **Identify the role of psychological research and principles and apply research methods relevant to the field of social psychology.**

   Learning Objectives
   Explore research designs and methods typically used in social psychology to develop new knowledge.
   Review key research studies and critically evaluate the quality and value of existing and emerging psychological research related to the field.
   Articulate the codes of ethics used in conducting psychological research.
   Apply research methods, psychological principles, and key research findings by preparing a formal research project that adheres to the formatting expectations of the American Psychological Association.

3. **Understand how we form impressions of people and how impressions can be biased.**

   Learning Objectives

Describe the kinds of information that are important in forming impressions of other people.
Discuss some processes that allow us to move very quickly from observations of behavior to inferences of enduring traits.
Explain how motivation and affect can influence person perception.
Describe the fundamental attribution error, the actor-observer effect, the false consensus effect, and the self-serving attribution bias, and explain why they occur.
Discuss how accurate people are in drawing inferences about the personality and the emotional states of others.
Explain the nonverbal cues we use in drawing inferences about others, and indicate which of these cues are most important in detecting when others are lying.

4.   **Understand social cognition and social inference and how these influence interactions.**

Learning Objectives
Define social cognition.
Give examples of how prior expectations, biases in the information selected, and goals, desires, and moods can distort social inferences.
Discuss why people are prone to errors and biases in social inference.
Define schemas, and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of schematic processing.
Define heuristics, and describe the representativeness, availability, simulation, and anchoring and adjustment heuristics.
Explain what factors determine which schemas are selected for processing information.
Explain how schemas can influence behavior in social interactions.

5.   **Understand the development and preservation of self-concept and self-esteem.**

Learning Objectives
Define the "self," and distinguish between the self-concept and self-esteem.
Explain where self-knowledge comes from.
Describe cultural differences in the self-concept.
Describe how beliefs about our current and hoped-for selves are represented in memory, and discuss the emotional consequences of self-discrepancies.
Explain the factors that affect self-regulation.
Discuss the primary motives that affect how people engage in self-regulation.
Describe social comparison theory, and indicate when people would engage in upward or in downward comparisons.
Give examples of effective and ineffective strategies of self-presentation.

6.   **Understand attitude development and attitude change processes.**

Learning Objectives
Define "attitude," and describe its components.
Discuss how basic learning processes, including association, reinforcement, and imitation, can determine a person's attitudes towards an object.
Define cognitive dissonance, and indicate the conditions under which dissonance after a decision is the greatest.
Describe how engaging in attitude-discrepant behaviors can lead to attitude change.
Explain the difference between systematic and heuristic processing, and indicate the conditions under which a person is likely to use each.
Discuss how the communicator, the communication, the target of communication, and aspects of the situation, such as forewarning and distraction can influence a person's response to a persuasive message.

7.   **Understand the development and nature of prejudice and social identity.**

Learning Objectives
Define and distinguish between stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.
Discuss how social learning through socialization and the media can create prejudice.
Describe consequences of prejudice for its victims, including the effects of stereotype threat and attributional ambiguity.
Explain the psychodynamic approach to prejudice.
Describe how intergroup competition theories explain prejudice.
Explain the cognitive bases of prejudice.
Describe social identity theory.
Show how prejudice has changed from "old-fashioned racism" to newer forms of prejudice such as symbolic racism, aversive racism, and implicit stereotypes.

Describe various approaches to reducing prejudice, including socialization, intergroup contact, and recategorization approaches, and indicate the conditions under which these are most likely to be effective.

8. Understand the dynamics of social influence, how we influence others and how we are influenced.

Learning Objectives

Define and contrast the concepts of conformity, compliance, and obedience.
Compare and contrast the classic conformity studies of Sherif and Asch.
Describe factors that make people more likely to conform to a group.
Explain the ways in which a minority of opinion can sometimes change the position of the majority of a group.
Describe and give examples of Raven's six bases of social power.
Describe compliance techniques, including the foot-in-the-door, door-in-the-face, low-ball, "that's-not-all," and the pique technique.
Explain how reactance can sometimes limit compliance.
Describe Milgram's obedience study, and indicate the factors that increased or reduced obedience using this paradigm.

9. Understand the dynamics of interpersonal attraction.

Learning Objectives

Describe the social needs satisfied by interpersonal relationships, and compare and contrast child and adult attachment.
Explain the effects of proximity, familiarity, similarity (of both attitudes and looks), and physical attractiveness on interpersonal attraction.
Compare and contrast the role of love in mate selection in individualistic and collectivist cultures.
Compare and contrast passionate and companionate love, and indicate how these relate to Sternberg's triangular theory of love.
Define "intimacy" and compare it to "love."
Explain some ways of thinking and acting that help to maintain committed relationships.

10. Understand the dynamics of behavior in group settings.

Learning Objectives

Distinguish between "social facilitation," "social inhibition," and "social loafing," and indicate under what conditions each is likely to occur.
Describe the basic principles of social impact theory.
Distinguish between "crowding" and "social density" and indicate the effects that crowding may have.
Describe the basic features of group structure.
Explain factors that make group decision-making different from individual decision-making, and explain safeguards groups can use to ensure effective decision-making.
Discuss the determinants of whether groups are more likely to be cooperative or competitive.
Define and give examples of "social dilemmas" and indicate some factors important in resolving them.
Describe the functions that leaders perform, and indicate what kinds of leaders are most effective in what different kinds of situations.

11. Understand the influence of gender in social dynamics and the development of gender identity.

Learning Objectives

Define "gender typing."
Describe the role of the media in spreading gender stereotypes.
Explain the conditions under which stereotypes are most likely to influence perceptions of others, and indicate some effects that stereotypes can have on evaluations.
Define "gender identity" and describe some of the milestones in its development.
Describe classic and modern conceptualizations of masculinity, femininity, and androgyny, and indicate consequences of these personal beliefs about the self for physical and mental health.
Describe four theoretical perspectives on the causes of sex differences.
Describe "meta-analysis" and explain what using this technique has uncovered about gender differences in behavior.
Describe how gender roles have changed over time and what differences still exist in our society.

12. Understand benevolence and apathy, and influences on helping behavior.

Learning Objectives

Distinguish between "altruism" and "pro-social behavior."
Explain how the evolutionary perspective, the sociocultural perspective, and the learning perspective explain helping behavior.
Describe the steps in Latane and Darley's decision-making model of helping, and indicate what can prevent helping from occurring at each step.
Describe how attribution theory explains who we are more willing to help.
Describe how mood, empathy, personal distress, personality characteristics, and gender influence helping.
Define the "bystander effect" and explain why it occurs.
Describe how environmental conditions such as noise, community size, temperature, and time pressures can affect helping.
Describe the motives involved in volunteering.
Describe the benefits and the costs of care-taking as a form of helping.
Explain why being helped can engender both positive and negative feelings.

13.   Understand the development and outcomes of human aggression.

Learning Objectives

Define "aggression" and distinguish between subtypes of aggression and between aggression and anger.
Discuss factors that create feelings of anger.
Describe the learning perspective on aggression.
Discuss the effect of social norms, fear of punishment or retaliation, learned inhibition of aggression, displacement, and catharsis on aggressive behavior.
Summarize the results of laboratory studies, correlational studies, and field experiments on the effects of media violence on aggression.
Describe the prevalence and determinants of various forms of intimate violence such as spousal abuse, child abuse, rape, and sexual harassment, and discuss sex differences in perceptions of these crimes.

14.   Discuss how social psychology can help us understand apathy in democracy, voting behavior in democracy, and misperceptions about international conflict.

Learning Objectives

Describe current divisions in voting behavior between different racial groups, men vs. women, and fundamentalist Christians vs. more secular voters.
Describe the effect that political advertising and news stories have on votes. Indicate obstacles to the media affecting political opinion and the conditions under which the media has the greatest influence on political opinion.
Describe the effects of the media, including agenda setting, framing, and priming.
Identify common misperceptions that are generated by international conflict and explain why these occur.
Explain biases that can occur among elite decision makers dealing with international relations.

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