

Sociology 2730
Social Interaction
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Spring Semester, 2008



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I. Course Description

This course is about social psychology, traditionally an area of both sociology and psychology. Social psychology seeks to understand the behavior and cognitive processes that occur when people are in groups, where the thoughts, feelings, and actions of each person affect, and are affected by, the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others. The term “social interaction” refers to this implied interdependence and mutual influence. We will consider the principles of social psychology and apply these to selected sociological phenomena.

Some Important Information:

Textbook	.....	<i>Social Psychology (6th ed.)</i> , by DeLamater & Myers
Class Meets	.....	M-W-F, 11:15a - 12:05p
Classroom	.....	Room 307 Baldwin Hall
Instructor's Office	.....	Room 119-D Baldwin Hall
Office Hours	.....	M-W, 2:30p - 3:20p, after class, or by appointment

II. Objectives

As an academic discipline, social psychology's most fundamental objective is to understand the links between the individual and society. That includes the study of the relations of individuals to one another, to groups, to collectivities, and to social institutions. It also includes the study of intra-individual (e.g., mental) processes insofar as these influence or are influenced by culture, subcultures, or external social structures. In keeping with this, my objective in this course is to help *you* to better understand the link between the individual and society, and the various aspects of this link just described. I hope to challenge you to think more critically about the processes that partially shape our interactions with others and thus our lives.

III. Class Format

I plan to lecture on class days. We probably will have 30 to 40 students in this class, once the drop/add period is over, which places limits on our class format. Discussion sometimes is useful, particularly if it helps to show the relevance of important sociological ideas; however, our class size puts some constraints on discussion, it being almost impossible for 30 or more persons to participate meaningfully during a 50 minute class period.

Considering the subject matter of social psychology and our objective of applying concepts and principles to today's world, it is practically inevitable that we will touch on subjects that some UGA students will find controversial. While this course is not directly about religion, politics, or other personally sensitive topics, it does touch upon why people believe what they believe. *If you elect to stay in this course, you must have a certain amount of tolerance for asking such questions.* Your grade will not be affected in any way by your personal views on any potentially sensitive topic, but a university is a "marketplace of ideas" and students at a good university such as UGA need to be able to discuss potentially contentious questions, treating those with whom they may disagree courteously and tolerantly. That is the only way a class such as this one can work properly.

IV. Exams, Grading, Attendance, and Extra Credit

There will be two regular tests (February 06 and March 19) and a final exam (Friday, May 02, 12 noon). The two regular tests and the final exam all will be of the same length, will cover roughly the same amount of material, and will count the same toward your final grade; however, the final exam will take place during our scheduled final exam period. I do *not* give early exams, nor do I give late exams unless there is a very good reason. In any corporation, law office, or other workplace, people are expected to abide by a schedule. In dealing with the administrative and scheduling aspects of a course, I use the “workplace model,” which gives all of us a reasonable basis for planning ahead and does not burden the Sociology Department staff with a lot of special requests and the extra work those require.

Summary of Important Dates:

- Test 1 — February 06
- Test 2 — March 19
- Final Exam — May 02 (12:00 noon)

Attendance also may figure into your grade. Attendance each class day is expected and you may earn a bonus of up to 2% for perfect or nearly perfect attendance. *Being in attendance means arriving on time (or very close to it) and staying in class the entire period.* Zero to three days missed (out of 39 class days when attendance will be taken) will give you a 2% bonus; four to six days missed reduces this to 1%; and more than six days missed (i.e., > 15% absenteeism) eliminates any bonus. Please note that a bonus is *not* an entitlement. Many students will miss a day or two for religious holidays, illness, or unexpected family emergencies. These are *not* excused absences calling for exceptions to my policy; the leeway in the policy is analogous to that of most employment settings, and it takes account of “necessary absences.” Again, the classical workplace model is that a person gets paid their usual wage or salary if they are present (or within the leeway permitted); they forgo their usual wage or salary if they are absent (or exceed that leeway).

Except for the possible attendance bonus just described, *there is no extra credit in this course.* In a course at this level, every student should be asked to do the same work and should be graded by the same standards.

The Board of Regents and UGA University Council adopted a plus/minus grading system, the Fall Semester 2006 being the first time (during a regular academic year) that this system was employed. The particular variant of this system that they adopted includes *no* A+ and *no* gradations of D’s and F’s. The meanings of the 10 approved grades for purposes of calculating GPA’s have been specified by the Board of Regents. How percentage scores should translate into the 10 possible grades was left up to the professor of each course. My intention is to use the following translations, but I reserve the right to fine-tune them if our experience this semester

makes that seem desirable.

Grade	Meaning for GPA	Percentage Score
A	4.0	Score \geq 93•
A–	3.7	$90 \leq$ Score $<$ 93•
B+	3.3	$86\bullet \leq$ Score $<$ 90
B	3.0	$83\bullet \leq$ Score $<$ 86•
B–	2.7	$80 \leq$ Score $<$ 83•
C+	2.3	$76\bullet \leq$ Score $<$ 80
C	2.0	$73\bullet \leq$ Score $<$ 76•
C–	1.7	$70 \leq$ Score $<$ 73•
D	1.0	$60 \leq$ Score $<$ 70
F	0.0	Score $<$ 60

V. Class Meetings and Assignments

With limited exceptions, our class will meet every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday throughout the Spring Semester. Our exact schedule of class days is described below. (If you are reading this on the Internet, regular class days are colored gray, test days are colored red, and non-meeting days are colored light blue.) If special circumstances arise and the UGA Administration cancels and/or reschedules meeting days, we will of course abide by such directives. Still, the schedule below is at least 99% definite; you should note departures from the M-W-F routine and put them on your calendar.

Sociology 2730 **Class Days • Spring Semester 2008**

<u>Week</u>	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
01	Jan 07	Jan 08	Jan 09	Jan 10	Jan 11
02	Jan 14	Jan 15	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18
03	Jan 21	Jan 22	Jan 23	Jan 24	Jan 25

04	Jan 28	Jan 29	Jan 30	Jan 31	Feb 01
05	Feb 04	Feb 05	< Feb 06 >	Feb 07	Feb 08
06	Feb 11	Feb 12	Feb 13	Feb 14	Feb 15
07	Feb 18	Feb 19	Feb 20	Feb 21	Feb 22
08	Feb 25	Feb 26	Feb 27	Feb 28	Feb 29
09	Mar 03	Mar 04	Mar 05	Mar 06	Mar 07
10	Mar 10	Mar 11	Mar 12	Mar 13	Mar 14
11	Mar 17	Mar 18	< Mar 19 >	Mar 20	Mar 21
12	Mar 24	Mar 25	Mar 26	Mar 27	Mar 28
13	Mar 31	Apr 01	Apr 02	Apr 03	Apr 04
14	Apr 07	Apr 08	Apr 09	Apr 10	Apr 11
15	Apr 14	Apr 15	Apr 16	Apr 17	Apr 18
16	Apr 21	Apr 22	Apr 23	Apr 24	Apr 25
Finals	Apr 28	Apr 29	< Apr 30 >	May 01	< May 02 >
(cont.)	May 05	May 06			

Note.— Our final exam is at 12:00 noon on Friday, May 02.

I tentatively plan for us to cover the following topics this semester; however, this list is an initial plan that may be altered, depending on the uncertainties of the semester. It is important to refer to the WebCT Assignments Page regularly to see exactly what material we will be covering and, when the times come, what material you are expected to have studied for each test.

- Theoretical Perspectives
- Research Methods
- Socialization
- Self and Identity
- Deviant Behavior and Social Reaction
- Social Perception and Cognition
- Attitude Acquisition and Change
- Social Influence and Persuasion
- Self Presentation and Impression Management
- Aggression and Violence
- Interpersonal Attraction and Relationships

There will be specific reading assignments from the DeLamater and Myers textbook for each topic we cover. These assignments will be given on the WebCT Assignments Page, which also will review some of the points presented in my related lectures.

VI. WebCT Component

The University of Georgia uses a very simple system in which each member of the university

community (faculty, staff, and students) has a single **user name** and a single **password** for e-mail, WebCT, and certain other purposes. If you do not regularly use your account, you must begin using it to effectively participate in this course. (My SPAM filter screens out e-mail coming from Yahoo.com and other “high risk” sources, so if you contact me from a non-UGA account, you must *not* assume that I will receive your message.) I expect you to log into the Sociology 2730 course materials regularly throughout the semester to make sure that you are aware of the assignments, announcements, and other items relevant to our class.

VII. Academic Honesty

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. In this course, cheating would include using unauthorized notes and/or electronic devices on tests, and/or causing attendance records to be false. Please read *A Culture of Honesty: Policies and Procedures on Academic Honesty*. If you do not already have this booklet, you should download it from the Vice President for Instruction’s web site and read Sections 5, 6, and 7. Violations will result in failing this course.

VIII. Sociology Human Rights Statement

All students should know that the Department of Sociology has a Human Rights Committee for the resolution of student grievances. *Any student registered for a sociology class at the University of Georgia who feels that he or she has not been treated in a fair or professional manner by an instructor is advised to follow these steps:*

- A. The student should discuss her or his concern with the instructor of the course. Only in extenuating circumstances is this not the appropriate first step.
- B. If discussion with the instructor does not resolve the grievance, the student then should discuss her or his concern with the Head of the Department of Sociology.
- C. If discussion with the Department Head not resolve the grievance to the student’s satisfaction, he or she then may request activation of the Human Rights Committee. This is done by sending a request in writing to: Chair, Human Rights Committee, Department of Sociology, University of Georgia, Campus.

When requested to do so, the Human Rights Committee has the responsibility to investigate all charges in accordance with procedures on file in the Department of Sociology Main Office, copies of which are available to students. The committee will make recommendations in writing to the Department Head, with copies going to the student and instructor involved. The Department Head will review the recommendations and make a decision in writing, with copies distributed to the student and instructor. Any further appeal must be made to the Dean of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, and should be accompanied by copies of all previous materials.

Grievances involving a grade, whether during the semester or after the semester is over, are subject to policies of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences and the University of Georgia. These are available on UGA web pages and from the appropriate offices in New College and Old College (campus buildings just north of the Main Library).

Revised: January 03, 2008