

Psychology 340: Self and Identity
Bard College, Fall 2009
Wednesdays 1:30-3:50; Olin 304

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Office Hours Tuesday 2.00-3.00; Wednesday 9.00-10.00, or by appointment

Overview

"Who am I?" This deceptively simple question underlies classic and current research about the self - dubbed by William James as psychology's "most puzzling puzzle." Topics to be covered include self-esteem, self-concept, self-schemas, malleability of individual and social identities, self-illusions, the role that culture and social group memberships play in defining the self, and the centrality of the self in processes such as memory, impression formation, and attitude formation. In addition, we will consider how children develop the concept of self as separate from other people. We will approach these issues from varying psychological perspectives, with a focus on social psychological research, but will also draw on primary sources in social and cognitive neuroscience, and developmental psychology. This course is appropriate for Upper College students in Psychology or related disciplines. **Prerequisites:** Psychology 103, 203, and 204 or their equivalents.

In addition to generating interest in and knowledge about the material, this course aims to help you to 1. become critical consumers of research in all areas of psychology; 2. increase your effectiveness in oral and written communications; and 3. improve your ability to create and defend an argument using empirical data. To achieve these goals, the course requires both substantive written work and extensive oral contributions (class discussions, presentations, organizing and leading group discussions).

A PYSCINFO search for "self" or "identi*" (a wildcard designed to get identity, identities, identification, etc.) in Summer 2009 yielded 538,122 hits. This result tells us a few things. First, our work this semester delves into issues that have interested, perplexed, and even frustrated psychologists (and our colleagues in related fields) since the field's earliest days. Second, we have our work cut out for us. As tempted as I was, I have not assigned half a million papers to read this semester. But, in order to cover even a fraction of the field we'll have a heavy reading load comprised of review chapters, empirical articles, and supplemental readings, particularly early in the semester. Even so, there are still many more topics that we could cover. To maximize learning while leaving a few hours for sleeping and eating, we'll rely on our classmates to become experts in certain topics and share their knowledge in brief and engaging presentations. Finally, we'll by necessity be judicious about the topics covered. Some issues that you find interesting and important might be touched on only briefly or not at all. I hope that you'll explore them in your final papers and independent work.

PREREQUISITES

As an upper-level conference course in Social Psychology, this course is open to moderated Psychology students. Other students should talk to me about enrollment. PSYC 203 and 204 (Statistics and Research Methods in Psychology) or the equivalent are strongly encouraged - this suggestion is intended to ensure that the final project can be undertaken without too much angst. If you have any questions about the prerequisites, please talk to me.

POLICIES

Weekly expectations. This class is a seminar, and provides a forum where you can express your thoughts and analyses on the material. The only way this can happen effectively is if you complete the reading thoroughly.

Participation & attendance. Attendance is mandatory. This class is founded on discussion among students, and you can't contribute if you're not here! Consequently, absences will hurt your grade.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is unacceptable. In its most easily identifiable form, plagiarism represents copying someone else's words. This kind of offense is rare. More common are other, similarly damaging ways to plagiarize. Use of someone else's ideas or words without citing them constitutes plagiarism, and is unacceptable. When in doubt, check with me. No one ever got in trouble for citing too often. Unless explicitly stated, you must work independently on every assignment.

Late assignments. Late written assignments will immediately lose 10% of their point value, and an additional 5% every 24 hours beyond the original deadline. Your written assignments will be posted to Moodle. For assignments due the day of class, they must be posted before the start of class time. There is a 15 minute 'grace period' on the deadline for weekly questions. Questions posted after 6pm on Tuesday will receive no credit.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Leary, M. R. & Tangney, J. P. (Eds.). (2005). *Handbook of Self and Identity*. New York, NY: Guilford.
(At the bookstore – if you buy it elsewhere be sure to get the 2005 paperback version.)

Additional readings will be available on reserveweb. You should also sign up for the class on Moodle - go to <http://moodle.bard.edu>. The password to sign up is memyselfandi – all lowercase.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

GRADING WILL BE BASED ON A 500-POINT SCALE, AS OUTLINED BELOW

Weekly contributions and Preparation (205 points total)

Class Participation. Because this is a seminar, participation from everyone is crucial. The best participation is not necessarily the most talking. Class participation consists both of thoughtful speaking and careful listening - as a member of our group, you should also respond with thought to your classmates' comments. If you tend to be uncomfortable speaking up in classes, please talk to me early in the semester to discuss ways to help you succeed. **125 points**

Weekly Questions Each week, (except for the week you present), you will post a discussion question on the course website by **noon on Tuesday**. These questions will provide a jumping-off point for class discussions, and give you an opportunity to engage with the readings prior to attending class. More details on this requirement are below. Questions will be graded on a $\sqrt{+}$ / $\sqrt{/}$ / $\sqrt{-}$ scale. **(10 questions posted; 8 points each) 80 points**

Leading a section of Class. In pairs (or threes, depending on numbers), you will have 45 minutes of a class session to present supplemental material to the class (indicated as ****readings on the syllabus) and to lead class discussion on it. You will indicate your preferences for weeks early in the course. Further information on this assignment is available at the end of the syllabus. **50 points**

Final Paper (165 points, broken down as follows – see end of syllabus for more details)

Initial proposal. **25 points**

First draft. **25 points**

Comments on peer draft. **40 points**

Final paper. **75 points**

Self Story (50 points, broken down as follows – see end of syllabus for more details)

Self Story. **25 points.**

Process paper. **25 points.**

“Social Identity” presentation. 30 points – more details provided in class

Grading. The total number of points earned determines your grade, as follows. The scale may change, but only in a direction that would help your grade. Pluses and minuses will be assigned at the top and bottom of each range.

A-range	450 points and higher
B-range	400-449 points
C-range	350-399 points
D-range	325-349 points
F	Fewer than 325 points

Summary of due dates

Date	Assignment
Each week beginning 9/9 until 11/11 (except the week you lead discussion and the week on social identities)	Questions posted to Moodle
October 16, 5pm (<u>Note:</u> Not a class meeting date)	Final paper proposal due to Moodle
November 4	Social identity presentation
November 18, 10am (<u>Note:</u> this deadline is critical)	Self Story materials posted to Moodle if you'll be using multimedia
November 18, 10pm	"Process paper" due on self story
November 25	Peer draft due to Kristin and peers
December 2	Comments on peer draft to Kristin and peer readers
December 18, 5pm (<u>Note:</u> Not a class meeting day)	Final paper posted to Moodle

READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS SCHEDULE

N. B. READINGS ARE LISTED IN A SUGGESTED ORDER

READINGS INCLUDED IN THE HANDBOOK OF SELF AND IDENTITY ARE INDICATED WITH **HAND**

ALL OTHER READINGS ARE AVAILABLE ON MOODLE

****INDICATES SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS REQUIRED ONLY OF THE DISCUSSION LEADERS

September 2: Introduction and Course Overview

No readings or assignments

September 9: Historical and Contemporary Issues

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION

James, W. (1981). The consciousness of self. In *The principles of psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 279-379). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1890)

Leary, M. R. & Tangey, J. P. *The self as organizing construct in the behavioral and social sciences*. **HAND 3-14.**

Mischel, W. & Morf, C. C. *Self as a psycho-social dynamic processing system: A meta-perspective on a century of self in psychology*. **HAND 15-43. Read for central theories and concepts but do not worry about the details.**

Devos, T. & Banaji, M. R. *Implicit self and identity*. **HAND 153-156; 169-END ONLY.**

Kelley, W. M., Macrae, C. N., Wyland, C. L., Caglar, S., Inati, S., & Heatherton, T. F. (2002). Finding the self? An event-related fMRI study. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 15, 785-794.

September 16: Identifying the Self

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION

Mitchell, R. W. *Subjectivity and self-recognition in animals*, **HAND 567-593. Read for main ideas and theories.**

Carver, C. *Self-awareness*. **HAND, 179-196. Read for main ideas and theories.**

Carey, B. (2009, August 9). After injury, fighting to regain a sense of self. *New York Times*.

Turk, D. J., Heatherton, T. F., Kelley, W. M., Funnell, M. G., Gazzaniga, M. S., & MacRae, N. M. (2002). Mike or me? Self-recognition in a split-brain patient. *Nature Neuroscience*, 5, 841-842.

Sui, J. & Han, S. (2007). Self-construal priming modulates neural substrates of self-awareness. *Psychological Science*, 18, 861-866.

Keenan, J. P., Nelson, A., O'Connor, M., & Pascual-Leone, A. (2001). Self-recognition and the right hemisphere. *Nature*, 409, 305.

September 23: Self-knowledge

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION

Showers, C. J. & Ziegler-Hill, V. *Organizations of self-knowledge: Features, functions, and flexibility*. **HAND 47-67, FOCUS ON PP. 50-END.**

Kihlstrom, J. Beer, J. S. & Klein, S. B. *Self and identity as memory*. **HAND PP. 68- 75 ONLY.**

Klein, S.B., Loftus, J., & Kihlstrom, J.F. (1996). Self-knowledge of an amnesic patient: Toward a neuropsychology of personality and social psychology. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 125, 250-260.

Wilson, T. D. (2009). Know thyself. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4, 384-389.

Vazire, S., & Mehl, M.R. (2008). Knowing me, knowing you: The accuracy and unique predictive validity of self and other ratings of daily behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 1202-1216.

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION

- Tice, D. M. & Wallace, H. M. *The reflected self: Creating yourself as (you think) others see you*. **HAND PP. 91-97 ONLY.**
- Kernis, M. H. & Goldman, B. M. *Stability and variability in self-concept and self-esteem*. **HAND PP. 106-113 ONLY.**
- Wilson, A. & Ross, M. (2001). From chump to champ: People's appraisals of their earlier and present selves. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 572-584.
- Kashima, Y., Kashima, E., Farsides, T., Kim, U., Strack, F., Wert, L., & Yuki, M. (2004). Culture and context-specific self: The amount and meaning of context-sensitivity of phenomenal self differ across cultures. *Self and Identity*, 3, 125-141.
- Epley, N., & Whitchurch, E. (2008). Mirror, mirror on the wall: Enhancement in self-recognition. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 1159-1170.

October 7: Self-esteem

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION

- Leary, M. R. & MacDonald G. *Individual differences in self-esteem: A review and theoretical integration*. **HAND PP. 401-418.**
- Kernis, M. H. & Goldman, B. M. *Stability and variability in self-concept and self-esteem*. **HAND PP. 113-END ONLY.**
- Srivastava, S., & Beer, J. S. (2005). How self-evaluations relate to being liked by others: Integrating sociometer and attachment perspectives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89, 966-977.
- Baumeister, R. F., Campbell, J. F., Krueger, J. I. & Vohs, K. V. (2003). Does high self-esteem cause better performance, interpersonal success, happiness, or healthier lifestyles? *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 4, 1-44. **HAND PP. 1-8 (UP TO "Method of Searching the Literature"); SCHOOL PERFORMANCE (PP. 10-14); AGGRESSION, VIOLENCE & ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR (PP. 21 -25); HAPPINESS, COPING & DEPRESSION (PP. 25-28); GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS (36-END)**
- Donnellan, B., Trzesniewski, K., Robins, R., Moffitt, T., & Caspi, A. (2005). Low self-esteem is related to aggression, antisocial behavior, and delinquency. *Psychological Science*, 16, 328-335.
- ****Kitayama, S., & Uchida, Y. (2003). Explicit self-criticism and implicit self-regard: Evaluating self and friend in two cultures. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 39, 476-482.
- ****Yamaguchi, S., Greenwald, A. G., Banaji, M. R., Murakami, F., Chen, D., Shiomura, K., Kobayashi, C., Cai, H., & Krendl, A. (2007). Apparent universality of positive implicit self-esteem. *Psychological Science*, 18, 498-500.
- ****Nelson, L.D., & Simmons, J.P. (2007). Moniker maladies: When names sabotage success. *Psychological Science*, 18,1106-1112

October 14: Self-illusions and distortions

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION; PAPER PROPOSAL DUE ON 10/16 BY 5PM

- Westen, D. & Heim, A. J. *Disturbances of self and identity in personality disorders*. **HAND PP. 643-664.**
- Taylor, S.E., Lerner, J.S., Sherman, D.K., Sage, R.M., & McDowell, N.K. (2003). Are self-enhancing cognitions associated with healthy or unhealthy biological profiles? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85, 605-615.
- Colvin, C.R., Block, J., & Funder, D.C. (1995). Overly-positive self- evaluations and personality: Negative implications for mental health. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68, 1152-1162.
- Robins, R. W., & Beer, J. S. (2001). Positive illusions about the self: Short-term benefits and long-term costs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 340-352.
- ****Duval, T.S., & Silvia, P.J. (2002). Self-awareness, probability of improvement, and the self-serving bias. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 49-61.

****Kruger & Dunning (1999). Unskilled and unaware of it: How difficulties in recognizing one's own incompetence lead to inflated self-assessments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77, 1121-1134.

****Pronin, E., Lin, D. Y., & Ross, L. (2002). The bias blind spot: Perceptions of bias in self versus others. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 369-381.

October 21: Self as Anchor for the World

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION

Dunning, D. *The relation of self to social perception*. **HAND PP. 421-441.**

Gilovich, T., Medvec, V. H., & Savitsky, K. (2000). The spotlight effect in social judgment: An egocentric bias in estimates of the salience of one's own actions and appearance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 211-222.

It's Mine. (2008, June 21). It's mine, I tell you. *The Economist*, 387, 95-96.

Epley, N., Morewedge, C., & Keysar, B. (2004). Perspective taking in children and adults: Equivalent egocentrism but differential correction. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 40, 760-768.

****Cohen, G. L., Sherman, D. K., Bastardi, A., Hsu, L., McGoey, M., & Ross, L. (2007). Bridging the partisan divide: Self-affirmation reduces ideological closed-mindedness and inflexibility in negotiation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 93, 415-430.

****Heine, S. J. & Lehman, D. R. (1997). Culture, dissonance, and self-affirmation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23, 389-400.

October 28: The Social Self

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION

Aron, A. *Self and close relationships*. **HAND PP. 442-461. Skim for main ideas and theories.**

Decety, J., & Sommerville, J.A. (2003). Shared representations between self and other: A social cognitive neuroscience view. *Trends in Cognitive Science*, 17, 527-532.

Baldwin, M. W., Carrell, S. E., & Lopez, D. F. (1990). Priming relationship-schemas: My advisor and the Pope are watching me from the back of my mind. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 26, 435-454.

Zhu, Y., Zhang, L., Fan, J., & Han, S. (2006). Neural basis of cultural influence on self-representation. *Neuroimage*, 34, 1310-1316.

****De La Ronde, C., & Swann, W. B., Jr. (1998). Partner verification: Restoring shattered images of our intimates. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 374-382.

****Swann, W.B., Jr., Gómez, A., Seyle, C., Morales, F. & Huici, C. (2009). Identity fusion: The interplay of personal and social identities in extreme group behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 995-1011.

****Davis, M. H., Conklin, L., Smith, A., & Luce, C. (1996). Effect of perspective taking on the cognitive representation of persons: A merging of self and other. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70, 713-726.

November 4: Group Identities

ASSIGNMENT DUE: SOCIAL IDENTITY PRESENTATION

Brewer, M. B. *Optimal distinctiveness, social identity, and the self*. **HAND PP. 480-491.**

Cialdini, R. B., Borden, R. J., Thorne, A., Walker, M. R., Freeman, S., & Slone, L. R. (1976). Basking in reflected glory: Three (football) field studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34, 366-375.

Jordan, C. H., Spencer, S. J., & Zanna, M. P. (2005). Types of high self-esteem and prejudice: How Implicit self-esteem relates to ethnic discrimination among high explicit self-esteem individuals. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 31, 693-702.

Gardner, W. L., Gabriel, S., & Hochschild, L. (2002). When you and I are "we," you are not threatening: The role of self-expansion in social comparison. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 239-251.

November 11: Multiple Selves

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEEKLY QUESTION

- Roccas, S., & Brewer, M.B. (2002). Social identity complexity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 6, 88-106.
- Eibach, R.P., Libby, L.K., Gilovich, T.D. (2003). When change in the self is mistaken for change in the world. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 84, 917-931.
- Nguyen, A. D. & Benet-Martinez, V. B. (2007). Biculturalism unpacked: Components, measurement, individual differences, and outcomes. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 1, 101-114.
- ZhongZhong, C., Phillips, K. W., Leonardelli, G. J., & Galinsky, A. D. (2008). Negational categorization and intergroup behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 793-806.
- **** Shih, M., Pittinsky, T. L., & Ambady, N. (1999). Stereotype susceptibility: Identity salience and shifts in quantitative performance. *Psychological Science*, 10, 80-83.
- **** Gresky, D. M., Ten Eyck, L. L., Lord, C. G. & McIntyre, R. B. (2005). Effects of salient multiple identities on women's performance under mathematics stereotype threat. *Sex Roles*, 53, 703-716.
- **** Pronin, E., Steele, C. M., & Ross, L. (2004). Identity bifurcation in response to stereotype threat: Women and mathematics. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 40, 152-168.

NOVEMBER 18: NO CLASS – ADVISING DAY

ASSIGNMENT DUE: SELF STORY, “PROCESS” PAPER

November 25: SELF STORIES

ASSIGNMENT DUE: PAPER DRAFT BY 5PM

Class will meet during week of 11/18 (date and time TBA)

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

December 2: WRITING WORKSHOP

ASSIGNMENT DUE: COMPLETED PEER EDITING QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOUR WRITING PARTNERS AND KRISTIN. MORE DETAILS IN CLASS.

Most of you will have read this article in Research Methods. Re-read it and bring a copy to class.

Bem, D. J. (2003). Writing the empirical journal article. In J.M. Darley, M. P. Zanna, & H. L. Roediger III (Eds), *The Compleat Academic*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

December 9: FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS

ASSIGNMENT DUE: PRESENTATION OF FINAL PROPOSAL

December 16: COMPLETION DAY

ASSIGNMENT DUE: FINAL PAPER DUE ON 12/18 BY 5PM

Individual meetings as needed.

GUIDELINES: WEEKLY QUESTIONS

Beginning the second week of class, you will post questions to Moodle. You must read and consider your classmates' questions before class. Questions are intended to help you organize your thoughts, provoke class discussion, and give you a sense of how your classmates approach the material. Think of your questions like Goldilocks and the three bears – they shouldn't be too small ("The sample size wasn't big enough in Study 1") or too big ("What is the self, really?"). **For the first two weeks of posting, indicate the type(s) of question you are asking (see below).**

Here are some questions that Psychologists ask. They may be a starting point for generating questions:

- Are the hypotheses reasonable? Are they logical, given the literature reviewed? **HYP**
- Do the methods of the study allow the author(s) to test the hypotheses outlined? **METH**
- Are the statistical analyses appropriate? **STAT**
- Do the data support the inferences drawn in the article? **INFER**
- Are there alternative explanations for the findings? **ALT**
- Does anything you know (from other classes, other readings in this class, or being human) contradict or limit the theory or data in the article? **CONTR**
- Does the reading suggest any directions for future research or new hypotheses? **FUTURE**

While these questions should be well thought-out and follow the basic rules of English grammar, they are not a formal writing assignment, and do not need to be in APA format. This is your chance to share the questions or thoughts you had while completing the reading and to direct class discussion toward the areas that most interest the class. Occasionally, you will spend the first fifteen minutes of class writing a response to one of the questions posed by you or your classmates. Your responses to these will count toward your total "question" grade.

GUIDELINES: LEADING CLASS DISCUSSION

In groups of twos or threes, you will have 45 minutes to present supplemental material classmates and lead class discussion one week. You should spend about 10 minutes (and no more than 15) presenting the new articles– the majority of your time should be spent facilitating discussion among the class.

Suggestions for leading discussion:

- Prepare! Leading discussion takes effort and energy. You should have a well-developed plan for how you would like your session to go. It is better to overprepare rather than underprepare.
- Be judicious in deciding which details of the supplemental articles to present.
- Connect the supplemental readings to the main readings (for that particular week and across weeks)..
- Be creative! You can assign a SMALL (< 10 minutes) assignment for your classmates to complete ahead of time. Handouts, visual aids, and demos are encouraged.
- This is a collaborative assignment, and there should be evidence that all members contributed in substantial ways to generating the materials and leading the discussion. Domination of the presentation and discussion by one team member will impair both team members' grades.
- You must meet with me prior to your assigned week – at this meeting you should be prepared with potential activities or directions for discussion. Bring a tentative outline so that we can discuss which areas might be fruitful and potential directions for conversation. I can also help you brainstorm activities to include during class.

	Class		
Meet with Kristin by...	date	Topic	Presenters
30-Sep	7-Oct	Self-esteem	
7-Oct	14-Oct	Self-illusions & distortions	
14-Oct	21-Oct	Self as anchor for the world	
21-Oct	28-Oct	The social self	
4-Nov	11-Nov	Multiple identities	

GUIDELINES: “SELF STORY”

In this assignment, you will create a product that takes two or three of the themes or topics in the course and applies them to your own life. The final product should be something that can be shared with the class in 10-12 minutes. You may choose, for example, to create a digital movie, to develop a website that you walk through in class, or to create a slide show. It should be stand-alone, transparent, and explicit in exploring intellectual content. Remember that the final product is more than a showcase for telling us about yourself – it is an important venue for exploring the academic research. You should have some baseline proficiency in whatever medium you use, but you will not be graded for snazziness – do not stay up until all hours getting the perfect transition in iMovie or writing Flash code for a website. Whatever medium you choose, your final product should show intellectual engagement with the material. The guidelines for this assignment are intentionally imprecise to encourage creativity and risk-taking. Please feel free to talk to me about potential ways to approach the task.

Some questions you might explore (these are just suggestions – do not feel bound by them!) include:

- Are there studies or theories that can explain something previously puzzling to you?
- Does something about yourself do a particularly good job of illustrating an idea or theory?
- Are there ideas in the class that are contradicted by careful and systematic consideration of your own life or experience?
- Do some experiences you have had suggest moderating conditions for the theories we’ve read, or new avenues for research?

In addition to the class presentation, you will complete a process paper (4-5 pages, double-spaced) that describes the development of your project. This paper should focus on the intellectual rather than the technical aspect of your project. It should address:

- How did you choose your focus for the project?
- Why did you decide on the particular medium used? What advantages and disadvantages came with that choice?
- What obstacles did you encounter in your project? (Reminder: you can briefly discuss technical challenges, but a discussion of these should not be the bulk of the paper.) How did you deal with them?
- If you had more time to work on the project, what would you do?
- What did you discover about the material as you worked on the project?
- What did you discover about yourself as you worked on the project?

GUIDELINES: FINAL PAPER

In your final paper you will propose an experiment that tests a hypothesis related to self and identity. Your experiment *must* be a true experiment – at least one variable must be manipulated. The study should *not* be a correlational design (i.e., testing whether one variable is associated with another variable). Your project can cover any topic related to the self – it may be a focused look at something specific we’ve looked at in, or it may explore a topic not covered in the syllabus. In either case, you will be expected to complete additional research beyond the readings on the syllabus for your project.

Initial proposal. In this 2 page (double-spaced) proposal, you should present your study to the reader in a condensed way. You should have a minimum of five citations at this point, at least three of which are empirical articles not included in our syllabus. Your proposal should address the following questions:

- What is your research question?
- Why is this an important area of research?
- How will you test your hypothesis?
- What previous literature led you to your questions?
- What are your predicted results?

Written paper. This paper will be written like an empirical journal article, although with a “Predicted Results” section rather than an actual Results Section. In the Introduction, provide a clear and logical justification. It should review the literature relevant to your study, while leading up to your particular research question. Before you move onto the Method section, you should have clearly stated your study’s aims and hypotheses. The Method section should be detailed enough that a reader would actually be able to conduct your study. Include all materials (in Appendices if needed) that you would use in your study. The Results section should describe the analytical techniques and predicted results for your study (you may find graphs or tables useful). In the Conclusion, restate your aims, and “findings.” How does your study answer your question, and what inferences can be drawn from this research?

Additional guidelines

- Papers should be between 10 and 12 double-spaced pages of text, plus a Title Page, Abstract, References, and Appendices. Page numbers should be included in the top right-hand corner
- Papers should follow APA style
- All papers should be carefully proofread for spelling and grammar before being turned in
- Papers should reflect substantial outside research
- You must work independently on this paper

Oral presentation. Finally, at the end of the semester you will share your research proposals with your classmates. In these 15-20 minutes presentations, you will describe your research question, and the study you’ve designed to test it. The presentation should be well-organized and engaging, and can use Powerpoint, interactive activities or other aids (but these are not required). More details will be provided in class.

Grading Criteria

Clear statement of question	Your question should be easily identifiable to the reader. Moreover, it should remain the focal point of your argument. At the end of the paper, if someone asked a casual reader “What was the author’s point?” he or she should be able to answer.
“Thesis-like” quality of question.	The central question should: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be the basis for your argument and proposed study• Be compelling• Provide evidence of originality of thought, and integration of the material beyond what we’ve discussed in class or covered in the readings
Evidence that there is empirical support for thesis	Your argument should be based on empirical evidence that comes from studies that are clearly described. The evidence to support your assertions should be clear. (If you make assumptions, be explicit that they are assumptions and that your argument rests on their validity.) You should have at least eight empirical sources that are NOT from our class readings.
Logic of argument	Your argument should be clear and logical. An excellent paper will avoid sweeping generalizations, will be objective in considering evidence, and will carefully address counterarguments to the thesis. Ideas should progress linearly.
Study design	Your proposed study should be a good test of your hypothesis. It should be well-thought-out, and free of any major confounds or artifacts.
Overall writing style	Prose should be straightforward, clear, and easy to follow. Your paper should be well-organized and written for a professional audience. The paper should be carefully proofread before turning it in!
APA style.	The paper should follow APA format. In particular, in-text citations and your reference list should be accurate.