Psychology 229: Social Cognition, Spring 2008
Monday, Wednesday 3.00-4.20 in RKC 102
Instructor: Kristin Lane
Office Hours: Monday, 4.30-6.00; Tuesday 2.00-3.00
104 Preston lane@bard.edu Office Phone: 7224

Course Overview
How do we think about people? In this course, we will explore how people reason about and understand both other people and themselves. Topics to be covered include memory about people, impression formation, attitudes and stereotypes, development of the social self, the development of social thought, and automatic social behavior. Throughout the course, we will consider whether thinking about people is an extension of more general modes of thought that are simply applied to people, or whether thinking and reasoning about people comprise a unique set of psychological processes. Readings will include classic and current readings in social cognition, including original empirical papers and work from the emergent field of social cognitive neuroscience. Prerequisite: Students must have completed PSY 103 (Introduction to Psychology), or receive permission of the instructor. PSY 203 or 204 are recommended but not required.

In addition to generating interest in and knowledge about the material, the broader aims of this course are to help you to 1. become a critical consumer of psychological research; 2. increase your effectiveness in oral and written communications; 3. improve your ability to defend an argument using empirical data; and 4. prepare for 300-level coursework and independent research.

Materials (Available at the Bookstore)

Additional readings will be available on ReserveWeb. I suggest you buy a three-ring binder to keep these readings organized.

Policies

Attendance. Attendance will be noted and excessive absences will have a negative influence on your grade. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class as they come in, look for a seat, and make their way to it. Your first late arrival will be ignored – we all have a bad day. After that, consistent patterns of lateness will be addressed. Please be on time.

Plagiarism. Quizzes, exams and other written assignments are to be completed independently.

Cell Phones and Laptops. Please turn off all cell phones before class. Furious typing is loud and can be distracting. No laptop computers will be allowed.

Late Assignments will immediately lose 15% of their grade, and another 10% for every additional day late.

Pass/ Fail. You must notify me within three days of the return of the first exam if you’d like to take the class pass/ fail.

ASSIGNMENTS

If you need accommodation for the exams or quizzes, please speak with me after the first class.

Midterm Exams. There will be three non-cumulative in-class examinations in this course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions, and will be closed-book. Make-up exams will be 1 hour and 20 minute oral exams covering the material, and only offered with a written excuse from the Dean of Students. 45 points each (135 points total).

Quizzes. There will be at least 10 unannounced quizzes throughout the semester. Your best six scores will count toward your grade. Each quiz will cover material directly from the reading for the day, and will begin promptly at the start of class. There will be no make-up quizzes. 9 points each (54 points total).
Class Participation. We will be a small class, and participation from everyone is crucial. The most participation need not be the best participation. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings and topics. 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. The nature of this course lends itself to discussions; I hope that you will feel free to disagree with one another (and with me!) while treating all ideas and people with respect. 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. Occasionally I will ask you to complete a small (less than 15 minute) activity outside of class in preparation for class, and consistent completion of these will count toward your participation grade as well. 40 points

Article Presentation. There is much more material in social cognition than we could possibly read in one semester. Each of you will present an additional article to your classmates. The goal of this assignment is to increase our collective knowledge while keeping the reading list manageable. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for you to practice clearly communicating research results. Each presentation should be between 10 and 12 minutes. You may (and are encouraged) to use any handouts or activities that will aid communication, and to be creative. 20 points.

Response paper to Professor Mitchell’s Colloquium. We are lucky to have Professor Jason Mitchell delivering a colloquium this semester on February 19 at 4.30 pm. You should attend Professor Mitchell’s talk and write a response paper to it (additional guidelines will be covered in class). If you cannot attend Professor Mitchell’s talk due to a class conflict, you will complete a similar alternate assignment. You must let me know of the conflict by February 5. 20 points.

Final paper (131 points total).
The final paper is an experimental proposal based on a topic of your choice. The graded components are summarized below.

Initial proposal (16 points) In this 2-page (double-spaced) proposal, you should present your paper topic to the reader in a condensed way.

Draft (20 points) This will be a preliminary draft of at least 6 pages of your final paper. It will be read by me and by your peers.

Comments on peer draft (20 points) An important part of the writing process is editing, and important parts of being a psychologist are collaboration and reviewing articles. In this assignment, you will provide (and receive) feedback from your classmates on the final paper.

Final paper (60 points) This will be your final 10-12 page paper.

Oral presentation (20 points) Finally, at the end of the semester you will share your research proposals with your classmates.

Grading
Grading is on a 400-point scale. The total number of points earned determines your grade, as follows. I reserve the right to change the grading scale, but any changes will only help your grade.

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<td>360</td>
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<td>Lower than 248</td>
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**SUMMARY OF DUE DATES**

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<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>Monday, February 25</td>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>Monday, March 24</td>
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<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>Monday, April 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend Professor Mitchell’s Presentation</td>
<td>Tuesday, February 19</td>
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<td>Hand in Response to Professor Mitchell’s Presentation</td>
<td>Friday, February 22 (by 5pm to WebCT)</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Long Paper</td>
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<td>Initial Proposal</td>
<td>Friday, March 28 (by 5pm to WebCT)</td>
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<td>Draft to Kristin and Peers</td>
<td>Friday, May 9 by email to your peer group</td>
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<td><em>Note: Your peers may request that you distribute the paper as early as May 7 in order to provide feedback.</em></td>
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<td>Peer Feedback</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 29 by 11:59 pm distributed to Kristin and your peers.</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>Monday, May 19</td>
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**READING LIST**

Readings from Moskowitz indicated as "SC"

Articles marked with ** are for presentations that you will sign up for and are optional reading for all but the presenter.

**Introduction and Overview**

*Wednesday, January 30*


**Key Questions, History and Methods**

*Monday, February 4*

SC Chapter 1

*Wednesday, February 6*

SC pp. 153-158, 173-191, 193-196


**Thinking About Others**

*Monday, February 11 (GUEST: Professor Sarah Lopez-Duran)*

SC pp. 339-343


*Wednesday, February 13*


**Monday, February 18**
SC pp. 233-252; 267-280


**Wednesday, February 20**
SC pp. 294-305; 70-79; 125-132


**EXAM 1 – MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25**

**Categorization and Automaticity**

**Wednesday, February 27**
SC 110-125


**Monday, March 3**


**Wednesday, March 5**
SC 66-70; 84-97


**Monday, March 10**
388-396


Preferences for Things, Preferences for People

Wednesday, March 12


Monday, March 17
SC: 335-339; 438-442; 455-478

Wednesday, March 19 (Implicit Prejudice and Stereotyping)
SC: 442-454; 492-512


EXAM 2 – MONDAY, MARCH 24

Mental Shortcuts: Heuristics and Biases

Wednesday, March 26
SC: 141-151; 430-435


SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS ON Monday, March 31 and Wednesday, April 2

Monday, April 7
SC: 312-317;321-324


Affect and Motivation in Social Cognition

Wednesday, April 9
SC: 343-348


***Devine and Amodio article

Monday, April 14


### The Self

**Wednesday, April 16**


**Monday, April 21**


**TBA ALEXANDRA

### Development of Social Cognition

**Wednesday, April 23**


**EXAM 3 – Monday, APRIL 28**

### Student Work

**Wednesday, April 30: Peer Group Writing Workshop**

**MODERATION WEEK: NO CLASS ON Monday, May 5 and Wednesday, May 7**

**Monday, May 12: Student Presentations**

**Wednesday, May 14: Student Presentations**

**Monday, May 19: Student Presentations**
Guidelines – Final Paper

In your final paper you will propose an experiment that is derived from the material we cover in Social Cognition. 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 in social cognition – it may be a focused look at something specific we’ve looked at in class (i.e., attribution), 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. Your proposal should address the following questions:
- What is your research question?
- Why is this an important area of research?
- What previous literature led you to your questions?
- How will you test your hypothesis?
- What are your predicted results?

In this proposal, you should cite at least five sources, at least two of which must be empirical studies not included on the syllabus.

Written paper. This paper will be written just like an empirical journal article, although the “Results” section will consist of “Predicted Results” rather than actual results. The Introduction will provide a clear and logical background: it should review the relevant literature, while leading up to your particular research question. Before you move onto the Method section, you should have clearly stated your study’s aims. 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 how you would analyze the data, and what the predicted results would be. 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
- References should follow APA style
- All papers should be carefully proofread for spelling and grammar before being turned in
- You must work independently on this paper
- The paper will be graded on the following criteria:

<table>
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<th>Clear statement of question</th>
<th>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.</th>
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| “Thesis-like” quality of question. | The central question should:
  - 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.) |
| 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. |

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 available in class.