Theories in Social Psychology

Fall 2021 Term

**Instructor:** Dr. Erica Speakman

**Email:** hiltze@mcmaster.ca

**Lecture:** Wednesdays 12:30pm-2:20pm

**Tutorial:** Wednesdays 2:30-3:20pm

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 10am-11am

**TAS:** Nicole Rego and Rebekah Redwood  
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# Course Description

In this class, we will explore both classic and contemporary social psychological theories. Over the course of the term, we will review and critically evaluate the following general theoretical areas: Symbolic Interactionism, the Cognitive Perspective, Social Exchange Theories, Personality and Social Structure, and the Justice Framework. For each section, students will become familiar with the history, the development, and the core ideas of each perspective, as well as become familiar with how these theories have been applied to substantive areas.

# Course Objectives

By the end of the course students will:

* Possess knowledge and critical understanding of the key theoretical approaches, current advances, and key concepts in social psychology
* Understand and appreciate the strengths and limitations of each theoretical approach
* Be able to apply concepts and ideas learned in this course outside of the classroom
* Have enhanced their critical thinking, writing, and organizational skills through course assignments
* Have enhanced their communication skills through on-line class discussions.

# Required Materials and Texts

* Burke, Peter J. (2018). *Contemporary Theories in Social Psychology 2nd Edition* Stanford University Press: CA
* Additional Readings can be found on Avenue to Learn

# Class Format

The format for this course will be synchronous. We will meet each week during our scheduled lecture time via Zoom. For students who do not already have access to Zoom, you can gain access through McMaster University at no extra cost. Here is the link: https://uts.mcmaster.ca/services/computers-printers-and-software/zoom/ For those of you who are unable to attend the live lectures, the sessions will be recorded and posted to Avenue to Learn for a period of **48 hours**, after which time the content will be removed. While attendance is not mandatory, it is certainly encouraged.

# Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Quizzes - 10%,
2. Mid-Term Exam – 30%,
3. Final Assignment – 30%,
4. Final Exam – 30%

# Course Evaluation – Details

***Quizzes (2 – 5% Each) Due September 29 and November 17***

Students will be required to take TWO quizzes throughout the term that will consist of multiple choice and true or false questions.

***Mid-Term Exam (30%) Due October 27***

The exam will take place on October 27 via Avenue to Learn. You will have TWO HOURS to complete the exam, which will consist of multiple choice/true or false, and short answer questions

***Final Assignment (30%) Due November 24 by 11:59pm***

For this assignment, you are asked to critically evaluate a social psychological theory of your choice. A more detailed breakdown of the assignment will be provided on Avenue.

***Final Exam (30%) TBD***

The exam will be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar and will consist of multiple choice/true or false, and short answer questions.

# Weekly Course Schedule

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | TOPIC | READINGS | DUE |
| Week 1 (Sept. 6 – Sept. 10) | Introduction to the Course | **No Readings** |  |
| Week 2 (Sept. 13 – Sept. 17) | What is Social Psychology?  What is Theory? | “American social psychology: Examining the contours of the 1970s crisis” (2012) |  |
| Week 3 (Sept. 20 – Sept. 24) | Symbolic Interactionism PT 1 | Text: Chapter 1  “The Chicago School” in *Handbook of Symbolic Interactionism* |  |
| Week 4 (Sept. 27 – Oct. 1) | Symbolic Interactionism PT 2 | “Performing Counter-Terrorism: Police Newsmaking and the Dramaturgy of Security” (2020) | **Quiz 1 Due Sept. 29** |
| Week 5 (Oct. 4 – Oct. 8) | Cognitive Perspective PT 1 | “Attribution Theories: How People Make Sense of Behaviour” (2011)  “Cognitive Dissonance: Where We’ve Been and Where We’re Going” (2019) |  |
| Week 6 (Oct. 11 – Oc. 15) | **Reading Week** | **No Readings!** |  |
| Week 7 (Oct. 18 – Oct. 22) | Cognitive Perspective PT 2/Review | “The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion” (1986) |  |
| Week 8 (Oct. 25 – Oct. 29) | **MIDTERM EXAM** | **No Readings!** | **Midterm Exam Due October 27** |
| Week 9 (Nov. 1 – Nov. 5) | Social Exchange Theories PT 1 | Text: Chapter 2  Text: Chapter 9 |  |
| Week 10 (Nov. 8 – Nov. 12) | Social Exchange Theories PT 2 | “Why Seemingly Trivial Events Sometimes Evoke Emotional Reactions” (2015) |  |
| Week 11 (Nov. 15 – Nov. 19) | Personality and Social Structure | Text: Chapter 8 | **Quiz 2 Due November 17** |
| Week 12 (Nov. 22 – Nov. 26) | Justice Framework PT 1 | Text: Chapter 3  “On Discourse and Dirty Nappies” (2004) | **Final Assignment Due November 24 by 11:59pm** |
| Week 13 (Nov. 29 – Dec. 3) | Justice Framework PT 2 | “Influence of Judges’ Behaviours on Perceived Procedural Justice” (2014) |  |
| Week 14 (Dec 6 – Dec. 10) | Wrap Up and Review | **No Readings** |  |

# Course Policies

## Submission of Assignments

Please submit assignments to the appropriate assignment folder on Avenue to Learn. Faxed or e-mailed assignments will not be accepted. Your assignments should be double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman.

## Late Assignments

The due dates for assignments are fixed and non-negotiable. There will be a deduction of 5% per day for all late assignments, unless you submit a McMaster Student Absence Form (http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf).The MSAF is a self- reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences for medical or other reasons that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work worth less than 25% of your overall. In these cases, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence. If you are absent for more than 3 days, or exceed one request per term, you MUST visit your Associate Dean’s Office. You may be required to submit supporting documentation.

**No Assignments Will Be Accepted 2 Weeks Past the Due Date**

## Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

## Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

## Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](about:blank).

# University Policies

## Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academiccredentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academiccredit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](about:blank)**.**

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

* Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* Improper collaboration in group work.
* Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

## Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](about:blank) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](about:blank) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [*Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities*](about:blank)policy.

## Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a [RISO](about:blank) accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](about:blank) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

## Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

## Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

## Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

## Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

| **MARK** | **GRADE** |
| --- | --- |
| 90-100 | A+ |
| 85-90 | A |
| 80-84 | A- |
| 77-79 | B+ |
| 73-76 | B |
| 70-72 | B- |
| 67-69 | C+ |
| 63-66 | C |
| 60-62 | C- |
| 57-59 | D+ |
| 53-56 | D |
| 50-52 | D- |
| 0-49 | F |