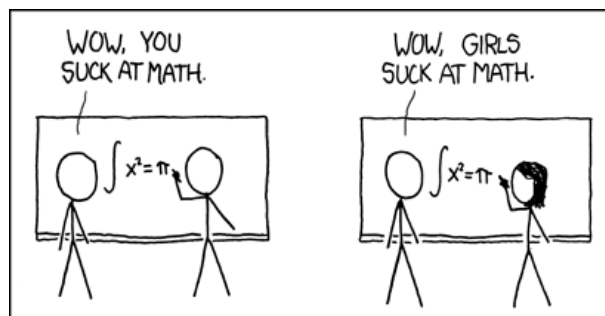


Psychology 3330a:
Social Cognition
Fall 2015



<http://xkcd.com/385/>

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This course deals with how people make sense of the behaviour of others and themselves, and emphasizes the cognitive underpinnings of such efforts. Some popular areas of study within social cognition are: attitudes, person perception, stereotyping, causal attribution, decision making, and the interaction of people with technology. The objective of this course is to familiarize you with some of the theory and research techniques in the area of social cognition and to give you an opportunity to carry out detailed study in an area of your choosing.

Textbook

The textbook for this course will be:

Wilson, T. D. (2002). *Strangers to ourselves*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press. There will also be additional readings available on Moodle (particularly for the second half of the course).

Course Requirements

There are two main components to your mark in this course: Two exams and one term paper.

Exams

There will be an in-class midterm exam, worth 20%, on October 22nd and a (somewhat¹) cumulative final exam, worth 30%, to be scheduled by the registrar in the final exam period (it is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday December 16th at 2pm). The exams will contain short answer/short essay questions and will test your knowledge of material covered in class and in the assigned readings.

Term paper

The term paper is your opportunity to do in-depth research in a particular area of social cognition. The term paper will take the form of a research proposal. Using APA format, you are to review the literature on a topic and propose a unique experiment that, if carried out, would add to the body of scientific knowledge about the topic you have chosen. Your topic should be one that has had research reported in the last 5 years in either the journal *Social Cognition* or in the “Attitudes and Social Cognition” section of the journal *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (that is, it must be a problem that is considered by social psychologists to be current and interesting). The marks for the term paper will be broken down in the following way:

¹It will be cumulative in the sense that the second half of the course builds on ideas from the first half. not in the sense of trivia questions from the first lecture on the final exam

Term paper topic (10%) You are to hand in one to two paragraphs describing the topic of your term paper and several references (in proper APA format) to relevant articles in the professional literature (including at least one article as specified above). The object of this exercise is to ensure that you have chosen an appropriate topic and that you have started work on the paper. You may not receive any marks for subsequent aspects of the term paper until I have viewed and approved your topic. Keep in mind that the whole process will be much easier and lot less stressful if you can keep ahead of the game.

Term paper introduction (15%) This is to be a full draft of the introduction of your research proposal including citations and references (in APA format). It should outline the existing literature on your chosen topic, what people have already found, what question remains unanswered and the specific question you will tackle with your experiment. Remember you are telling a story, only include information that moves your story along and not just a list of “so-and-so found this, so-and-so found that...”. You may use a maximum of 5 pages², double-spaced so concision³ is of the essence. Good proposals in the past have typically included at least 8-10 references.

Term paper (25%) This is the final version of the paper including the literature review and the proposed experiment. Both aspects of the paper are important—do not neglect the experimental component. Once again, you must be concise as you have a maximum of 10 pages excluding the title page, abstract, and references. More detail on the paper will be available in class.

All assignments are due in class on the date specified and must be word-processed. The term paper (and references for all papers) must be in APA format. Papers that depart significantly from APA format, papers with significant errors in style, grammar, punctuation, or spelling, and papers that exceed the page limit will receive a failing grade. Late papers and missed exams will not be accepted without a satisfactory medical excuse.

The work you submit for your assignments and exams *must be your own*. It is an academic offence to submit someone else’s work as your own. Please see [part 4](#), section 4 Student Discipline Policy - Academic Offences, (p. 73 of the 2015-16 academic calendar) for details.

Questions and Discussion

Preferably, all questions and discussion about the course material should occur during class time, including questions and discussion about the exams, so that all students benefit from the discussion. Each lecture will begin with an explicit call for questions, although students are encouraged to ask questions at any time during the class. In addition, students are encouraged to post questions

²not including the title page and references

³note that although “concision” and “conciseness” are both noun forms of “concise”, “concision” has two fewer letters, which is the point, right?

Table 1: Percentages will be converted to minimum letter-grades using this scale. Note that marks will not be rounded (i.e., 69.9% is less than 70% and is thus a C+). Minimum letter-grade here refers to the lowest letter-grade that will be assigned on the basis of your objective performance; however, higher letter-grades may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade
90-100	A+	67-70	C+
85-90	A	63-67	C
80-85	A-	60-63	C-
77-80	B+	55-60	D+
73-77	B	50-55	D
70-73	B-	<50	F

and commentary to the class email list: psyc3330a@uleth.ca, both to provoke discussion, and to receive clarification (if needed) from the instructor and the TA for the course; doing so will most often result in a prompt and considered response. Grades and supplementary materials will be made available via Moodle <https://moodle.uleth.ca>, so be sure to familiarize yourself with the system.

Class Times

Classes are scheduled from September 10, 2015 to Dec 10, 2015, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:40 pm - 2:55 pm in UH C610.

Consultation Outside of Class

No formal office hours are scheduled. Rather, I may be contacted in my office, UH D864. Please feel free to drop in with any questions, comments, or opinions you may have. I would prefer that in the first instance you use e-mail to communicate with me (allens@uleth.ca) and your fellow classmates (psyc3330a@uleth.ca).

Web Sites and email

Course Information

All students have a U of L email account. Your Moodle username is equivalent to your email username (the part of your email address that comes before “@uleth.ca”) and your Moodle password is your email password. You will need to access Moodle (<https://moodle.uleth.ca>) in order to obtain course information,

Table 2: Important dates.

Date	Assignment
Oct 8	Term Paper Topic due
Oct 22	Midterm
Nov 5	Term Paper Introduction due
Dec 1	Term Paper due
Dec 16	Final Exam

grades, and supplementary material. If you require assistance with anything related to using computers at the U of L, please contact the Student Help Desk.

Email Accounts

My primary method of communicating with you for general notices will be via email and in-class announcements. Please be sure you check your U of L email account on a regular basis, or have that account forwarded to your usual email provider. Please do regular housekeeping so that you do not miss important notices that relate to this class due to a full mailbox.

Welcome to the course. I hope you will have a fruitful and enjoyable semester -S.A.

