**Social Psychology**

**Spring, 2013**

**What:** Psychology 5 (online)

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Office Hours: MW 11-1; T 12:30-1:30

**Why:** Course description: This class will offer an introduction and survey of the science of Social Psychology. Successful completion of class requirements should enable students to recognize and understand the influence that the actual, implied or imagined presence of others has on our behavior and cognitive processes.

Emphasis is placed upon objective observation and scientific investigation in the study of social interaction. Course objectives are:

A) to help students learn basic theoretical foundations, empirical findings, research methods, and applications of social psychology;

B) to increase insight into students' own behavior and that of others;

C) to develop an appreciation of the scientific method and a critical attitude toward social psychological research.

**Text:** Baumeister, R.F. & Bushman, B. J. (2009). *Social Psychology & Human Nature (*2nd Ed.). New York: Thomson/Wadsworth.

**Access Code for BlackBoard:** In order to access and use the BlackBoard classroom, you will need to purchase an access code. You can either purchase that at the Reedley Bookstore or online through the publisher at www.ichapters.com. More on this in the announcements page in the classroom (which you can access now).

**What, again:**

Course Requirements: There will be three midterms and a final. All exams will be worth 100 points, and will be a combination of multiple choice and essay questions. Additionally, 200 points will be available by participating in message board discussions and online quizzes. **All students must take the exams and the final in a physical classroom on the Reedley campus at a time to be assigned. If for any reason you are unable to attend four classroom meetings during the semester, you MUST drop the course.**

Exams:

Because of the nature of an online course, no make-up exams will be allowed. **The lowest of your midterm exam scores will be dropped in the evaluation of your final grade.** However, **all students must take the final exam in order to pass the course and the final exam score will not be dropped.**

Class Etiquette:

**IMPORTANT WARNING!!!:** Online learning is not for everyone. You need to be a very self-directed and personally responsible student to be successful in online courses. Online you do not see your instructor twice a week, reminding you of what’s due next class, or discussing other projects. Therefore, you need to seriously consider your motivation and skills before you embark on this course.

Computer problems, electrical shortages, and other malfunctions do occur and it is your

responsibility to complete the work by the deadline *regardless of* any of these problems. Please do not write to me to ask for extensions because your computer crashed or you were unable to ‘get online’ to complete the work. You are given several days to complete an assignment, therefore, if your technology fails on the last day the assignment is due, you will not be excused from the deadline.

*To clarify: Under no circumstance will late work be accepted at any time in the term!*

I recommend you always complete your work before the deadline to prevent any type of

problem of this sort. It is recommended for students to have a LAN/DSL hookup for this

class because wireless connections can fail at any given time. Wireless users are

responsible for any individual problems that occur related to class deadlines.

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**NOTE-** There should not be, under any circumstances, any disrespect or personal attacks

on any of the discussion posts. In addition, refrain from discussing any controversial issues that are political or related to religion, race, sex etc., that are not directly related to the subject matter. We do want in-depth reflection on your posts, but they need to be respectful and the topic needs to be clearly related to what the class is doing. Also, if anyone feels offended by another classmate, please stop and think before responding because it is easy to misinterpret written material.

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*Feedback from Instructor*: Given the size of the class, you are not likely to get your work returned to you with feedback. Instead, *I will comment on your performance within the gradebook in the comments box*. You must read my comments to understand why you lost points if you did, or what in particular you did well if you earned full points. Also, other comments relevant to your work will be posted there, which may include further discussion of the material, questions to you, or information that I may think you need or would find useful.

**The “P” Word**

Please note that plagiarism is a violation of Reedley College policy. Anyone deemed to have submitted a plagiarized posting will automatically receive a failing grade. Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to, failing to provide complete citations and references for all work that draws on the ideas, words, or work of others, failing to identify the contributors to work done in collaboration, submitting duplicate work to be evaluated in different classes without the knowledge and consent of the instructors involved, or failing to observe computer security systems and software copyrights. Please be advised that random checks for plagiarism will be conducted using the Turnitin.com program. Again, all assignments, discussion posts, and quizzes are to be completed on an individual basis; collaboration with other classmates is **not allowed** unless instructed otherwise.

Discussion Board (10 points each week)

You are expected to post two times (total) to the discussion board each week. One of these postings will be your answer to your assigned discussion question (see below). If you fail to answer the assigned questions, a zero will be given for those postings. Under no circumstances will make-ups be granted after the week is over (posting before the end of the week but after due date will lose points). ***A posting is considered sufficient if it reflects the reading assignments, cites and references sources appropriately, and shows evidence of critical analysis of the topic reviewed****.*

In addition to this answer to a posted question, you will respond to a classmate who posted *on a* ***different***question. The same expectations used to grade your post will be used to grade your response to a classmate. Remember, you must post at least 2 times each week!

**Based on the first two letters of your last name, your assigned weekly question is:**

**Aa-Gr: question 1 GS-Ma: question 2 Mb-Qu: question 3**

**Qw-St: question 4 Su-Zy: question 5**

To earn the maximum number of points, postings need to be thoughtful and clearly refer to the week's readings. In addition to citing the textbook pages, students may cite additional primary journal sources, or in rare cases internet sites, to support positions. *Postings must demonstrate that you have read and reflected upon the assigned readings and understand the class material.*

I will regularly read your posts and responses. However, I will likely only respond to posts when I see clear misinterpretations of the material, or students who are not

following the course etiquette. Otherwise, you should expect to find feedback from

me regarding your work in the gradebook comments section for each week. It is

imperative that you read these as they will let you know what you are doing right

and where you need to improve or change your performance. Most of my communication with you will occur in an individualized fashion through this medium.

Note: Only 130 points will be available from the message board postings. During the course of the semester, other quizzes or essay will be required and assigned at random. 70 points will be possible from these exercises for a total of 200 points from both postings and quizzes.

**Grades**: Final grades will be decided by the following scale. There will be a total of 500 points possible from the three 100-point midterms, the 100-point final, and 200 points available from the other activities (remember, your lowest test score will be dropped):

500-465 A (93%) 384-365 C (73%)

464-450 A- (90%) 364-350 C- (70%)

449-435 B+ (87%) 349-335 D+ (67%)

434-415 B (83%) 334-315 D (63%)

414-400 B- (80%) 314-300 D- (60%)

399-385 C+ (77%) Below 300 Don’t go here!

**When, again:**

**For the following weeks postings will be due according to this schedule:**

**Discussion Board Answer (by Wednesday 10:00 p.m.)**

**Discussion Board Response (by Saturday 10:00 p.m.)**

**When, one more time:**

**Topic Readings**

Week 1 (1/7) No assignment due

Week 2 (1/14) Introduction Chapter 1

Week 3 (1/21) Culture and Nature Chapter 2

Week 4 (1/28) The Self Chapter 3

Week 5 (2/4) Behavior Control Chapter 4

Week 6 (2/11) **Exam 1- (2/12- Chaps. 1-4)**

(On exam day, please bring a Scantron 886-E and a #2 pencil. The Scantron form can be purchased in the bookstore.  You will need a total of 4 Scantrons for this course.)

Week 7 (2/18) Social Cognition Chapter 5

Week 8 (2/25) Emotion Chapter 6

Week 9 (3/4) Attitudes Chapter 7

Week 10 (3/11) **Exam 2- (3/12- Chaps. 5-7)**

Week 11 (3/18) Prosocial behavior Chapter 9

Week 12 (3/25) Have a great Spring Break!

Week 13 (4/1) Aggression Chapter 10

Week 14 (4/8) Attraction/ Close Relationships Chapters 11-12

Week 15 (4/15) **Exam 3- (4/16- Chaps. 9-12)**

Week 16 (4/22) Prejudice Chapter 13

Week 17 (4/29) Social Influence Chapter 8

Week 18 (5/6) Groups Chapter 14

Week 19 (5/13) **Final Exam- To Be Assigned**

***This syllabus is subject to change and/or revision during the academic term.***

**Have a GREAT SEMESTER-If you have any questions, just ask!**

**Sample question and answer:**

*Does it really help to smile and act happy even though we might feel unhappy?*

The James-Lange theory of emotion states that our bodily reactions to external stimuli cause emotions. That is, we see a bear, we run, and then we experience that form of arousal as fear. We feel ourselves getting "hot under the collar" and then recognize that particular form of arousal as anger. Some researchers suggest that the face is the primary center of emotion, because it provides the muscular "information" that determines it. The relationship between emotion and facial muscle movements is stable enough across individuals and cultures that electrodes attached to the face to detect muscle movements allow researchers to directly assess the valence (positive or negative) and the intensity of emotion (Tassinary & Cacioppo, 1992). In a classic study by Ekman (1983), experimenters gave subjects specific directions to contract their facial muscles in certain ways, i.e., to raise their eyebrows and pull them together, then raise their upper eyelids, and finally stretch their lips horizontally. The result was an expression of fear, though the subjects had not been instructed to show any particular emotion. Then, their autonomic responses (heart rate, temperature, etc.) were measured, and showed the type of increase that would be expected if the subjects were actually experiencing the emotion of fear. Subsequent research demonstrated distinct EEG activity that was associated with the "posed" facial expressions, and with emotions that were "real." (Ekman, 1992)  
So it appears that sometimes we are happy because we smile, not the other way around. As matter of fact, true and "fake" smiles appear to be physiologically different and rely on different muscles, which is why it is often so easy for us to see the difference in the smiles of others. The James-Lange theory is only part of the story of emotion (Schacter-Singer, Cannon-Bard offer other explanations and elaborations), but in answering the question of why we feel better when we smile, William James said "What we do determines how we feel."

*Note- I don't expect you guys to be writing like this in the early stages of the semester. What I do want you to note is that it is a reasoned, well-thought answer that cites sources appropriately and does not offer any opinions (statements unsupported by facts or references.) By the END of the semester, I hope that EVERYONE is writing like this!*