

American University of Beirut
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences

SBHS 211, Introduction to Social Psychology

1. Course Learning Outcomes:

The aims of the course include introducing students to the field of social psychology, its key concepts and methodologies. Furthermore, students will be developing their presentation, team work, essay writing and research skills.

Consequently, by the end of this course you should:

- 1- Have acquired a basic but rigorous grounding in the areas of social psychological knowledge listed in the course summary.
- 2- Have developed your skills in forming coherent and logical arguments, being open to and able to evaluate competing viewpoints and theoretical positions, demonstrating independence of thought and, in particular, respecting and being able to evaluate empirical evidence.
- 3- Have experience in searching the literature, including the use of relevant resources, online data sources such as PsychLit, library catalogue and the World Wide Web.
- 4- Have developed some skills in writing effective academic essays, revising drafts and proof reading.
- 5- Have some familiarity with social psychological research through your participation in on-going field work.
- 6- Have experience of preparing and delivering presentations, including the use of an Over Head Projector (OHP), and/or PowerPoint presentations.

2. Resources Available to Students:

The core text used throughout the course is:

Title: Social Psychology, 5th Edition (2002)
Authors: Brehm, S. S., Kassin, S. M., & Fein, S.
Publisher: Houghton Mifflin

During the course, we will be covering the first 11 chapters of the Brehm et al. text, which will cover 90% of the teaching weeks available. Because the text is based on mostly US research, extra time will be devoted to examine cross-cultural findings.

The course will not rely solely on the text above. You will be provided with updated suggested reading lists on an almost weekly basis. Some key articles will be made available at the library's reserve desk. Furthermore, hand-outs detailing the outline and structure of every lecture will be provided at the beginning of every week. Using the core text alone may help you pass the course, but it is the added material (e.g. academic articles, online databases, library research etc.) that will allow you to excel in this course.

3. Grading Criteria

Your final grade in this course will be the result of your grades on the midterm exam, final exam, course essay, presentation, and research participation. The distribution follows the table presented below:

Exam	Type	percentage
Midterm	80% multiple choice, 20% open ended questions	25%
Final Exam	80% multiple choice, 20% open ended questions	25%
Essay	2000 words	30%
Presentation	Individual presentation	10%
Research credit	Participating in research	5%
Class participation	Attendance and class participation	5%

Review sessions prior to the midterm and final exams will help you prepare the coming tests and will present you with sample questions to guide your preparations. Detailed guidelines about essay writing and the criteria used to mark your essay are attached to this syllabus. The criteria are so detailed that marking your essays is almost subjectivity proof: by reading them carefully, you will be able to predict the grade you will be getting.

4. Schedule

Week	Topic	Activities	Assignments
0	General introduction		
1	C1-2: introduction to social psychology and research	Readings and discussions	presentations
2	C3: the social self (self-concept, self-esteem, self-presentation...)	Readings and discussion	presentations
3	C4: perceiving person (attributions, confirmation biases...)	Readings and discussion	presentations
4	C5: Perceiving groups (stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination)	Readings and discussion	Presentations; Deadline for essay draft submission
5	C6: Attitudes (persuasion by communication ...)	Readings and discussion	presentations
6	C7: conformity (conformity, compliance and obedience)	Readings and discussion	Presentations Midterm
7	C8: Group Processes (social facilitation, group polarization, conflict resolution)	Readings and discussion	presentations

8	C9: Attraction and Close Relationships (Love, physical attraction)	Readings and discussion	Presentations
9	C10: Helping others (altruism, situational influences...)	Readings and discussion	Presentations; Deadline for final essay submission
10	C11: Aggression (origins, situational influences, media, intimate...)	Readings and discussion	Presentations
11	C12: Cross-cultural Social Psychology	Readings and discussion	presentations
12	Review sessions	General discussion	Final

5. Course Policy:

Please be aware that AUB regulations related to academic dishonesty are quite clear (see AUB webpage for details). Cheating at exams, plagiarism, presenting work you did not do, violating rules of proper academic conduct and other related matters will be dealt with strictly according to AUB recommendations. Academic dishonesty may produce an automatic and irreversible zero.

Furthermore, missing an exam or failing to present on the assigned date will lead to a rescheduling or make-up exam **only** if the student provides an adequate AUH medical note, or excuse letters that are acceptable by the AUB administration.

Emails are a core element in our communication: Suggested reading lists, lecture abstracts, seminar outlines and other relevant material will be regularly emailed to you. Consequently, regular access to your email accounts and familiarity with the internet are crucial elements if you are to keep up with the developments in this course.

Presentations:

You are required to give a 15 min seminar presentation for this course. There will be one session every week devoted to 3 such presentations. Guidelines for giving presentations and the criteria on which they are assessed will be forwarded to you in an email shortly. Presentations will be arranged at the introductory sessions.

Essay requirements and assessment criteria:

Every student is expected to hand in a 2000 word essay on one of the themes/questions covered during this course. Essays can be submitted twice, once for informal feedback to help you improve its quality, and once as a final submission which will be marked without possible modifications. I advise you to take advantage of this offer. Essays should be submitted in **both** electronic and hardcopy formats. Below are some guidelines for submitting written work:

- 1- Although you are not required to present essays in strict APA format, some essential criteria are required:
 - a- Manuscripts should be 1.5 or double spaced. Selected font should be legible (e.g. times new roman, size 12).
 - b- Manuscripts should observe the APA referencing format
 - c- Submitted manuscripts should include:
 - i) a cover page (stating name, id number, course number, topic and word length)
 - ii) an abstract of about 125 words
 - iii) a reference list
 - iv) possibly appendices