

Psychology 871.01: Social Cognition

Spring Quarter 2009

Monday 12:00 - 2:48

Lazenby Hall 120

Instructor

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Course Overview

This course is intended to provide an introduction to research in social cognition. Social cognition is the study of the cognitive underpinnings of social behavior and the ways in which we think about our social world.

This class will be conducted in a lecture/discussion format. Typically there will be two lectures during each class session, separated by a short break, with adequate time for questions and discussion.

Course Textbooks

Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (2008). *Social Cognition: From Brains to Culture*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hamilton, D. (2005). *Social Cognition: Key Readings*. New York: Psychology Press.

Course Requirements

Readings are assigned for each week, and are to be read by the Monday class with which they are associated. Each week's readings consist of chapter(s) from the Fiske & Taylor text and influential journal articles reprinted in Hamilton's reader.

Grades will be based on:

1. **midterm** exam covering Weeks 2-5 of the syllabus and weighted 40% of the course grade. The midterm will be administered during class on May 4.
2. **final** exam covering Weeks 7-9 of the syllabus and weighted 30%. The final will be administered during finals week. According to the Registrar's final exam schedule, the exam is scheduled for Thursday, June 11, 11:30 - 1:18.

3. **paper** weighted 30% that will be due on **June 5**. The paper should take the form of a research proposal related to any topic covered in the course. It should include a brief literature review and a summary of the proposed research – work that should have the potential to offer a novel contribution to the field. You may propose work related to your own area of research if you'd like, although it must be relevant to the course material and you may not propose a study that you are already doing in your lab. The paper should be written in APA format and should be no more than 2500 words in length (excluding only reference list). The word count, as indicated by any standard word processor, should be listed on the title page. The 2500-word limit will be strictly enforced.

Academic Misconduct

All students at the Ohio State University are bound by the Code of Student Conduct (see <http://oaa.ohio-state.edu/coam/code.html>). Suspected violations of the code in this class will be dealt with according to the procedures detailed in that code. Specifically, any alleged cases of misconduct will be referred to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

Students with disabilities

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request. In addition, if you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact the instructor immediately. Students with special needs should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 292-3307 for certification if they have not already done so. Upon such certification, the ODS and the instructor will make every effort to accommodate special needs. However, to ensure that evaluation of student performance in the course is conducted in a manner that is fair to all students, special accommodations will not be granted in the absence of ODS certification.

Tentative schedule (subject to change)

March 30: Course introduction

April 6: Social perception and impression formation – Historical Overview

From Heider/Bruner/Asch to modern social cognition; Some basic concepts;
The constructive nature of perception; Priming and category accessibility

Fiske & Taylor: Chapter 1; pp. 25-31, 51-66

Hamilton: Introductory Overview; Readings 1, 6, 9, 22

April 13: Mental representation and memory

Person memory; On-line versus memory-based processing; Memory as re-
constructions of the past

Fiske & Taylor: Chapter 4

Hamilton: Preview Part 6; Readings 2, 7, 23, 24, 25, 33, 34

April 20: Reasoning, judgment, and automatic processing

Judgments under uncertainty; Probability estimation; Heuristics; Nonconscious
processing; Automatically-driven attention, categorization, and behavior

Fiske & Taylor: Chapters 7 & 8; pp. 31-41, 361-370

Hamilton: Preview Part 3; Readings 10, 11
Preview Part 4; Readings 13, 14, 15, 16

April 27: Dispositional Inferences

Attribution processes; Biases and errors; Spontaneous trait inferences

Fiske & Taylor: Chapter 6; pp. 41-49, 66-74

Hamilton: Preview Part 5; Readings 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

May 4: MIDTERM

May 11: Stereotypes

Stereotype activation; The consequences of stereotypes for information processing;
Their functional value; Stereotype development

Fiske & Taylor: Chapters 11 & 12

Hamilton: Preview Part 2; Readings 3, 8
Preview Part 7; Readings 26, 28, 29

May 18: Expectancies and social interaction

Hypothesis testing; Self-serving reasoning; The impact of expectancies on social
interaction; Expectancy maintenance and confirmation

Fiske & Taylor: pp. 390-395

Hamilton: Preview Part 8; Readings 12, 27, 30, 31, 32, 37

May 25: No class – Memorial Day

June 1: The affect ↔ cognition interface

Effects of cognition on affect and of affect on cognition; Misattribution and emotion;
Affective consequences of counterfactual thinking; Emotion-congruent processing;
Feelings as information; Affect and creativity

Fiske & Taylor: Chapters 13 & 14

Hamilton: Preview Part 9; Readings 35, 36, 38

June 5: Papers due by 5:00PM

June 11: Final Exam @ 11:30AM