Psychology 7871: Social Cognition
Autumn 2018
Tuesday & Thursday 12:45PM - 2:05PM
Psychology Building 219

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 individuals think about our social world.

This class will meet for two 80-minute sessions a week. Approximately two-thirds of the sessions will be devoted to a lecture, although adequate time will be allotted for questions and commentary. These lectures will provide an overview of the historical developments with respect to a given issue within the social cognition literature. The other class sessions will be devoted to a discussion of a set of recent articles related to the general issues covered in the preceding meeting(s).

Course Textbook

This book of readings is a collection of classic journal articles from the social psychological literature on social cognition. It also includes valuable ancillary material introducing each major topic area.

Additional readings, including those pertaining to the discussion sessions, are available on the course’s Carmen website.

The following are excellent texts that can provide useful background information, if you desire additional information about any given topic.


Course Requirements

Readings are assigned for each class meeting, and are to be read prior to the class with which they are associated. Readings consist of journal articles reprinted in Hamilton's reader or provided on Carmen.

Grades will be based on:

1. Midterm exam covering the first half of the syllabus and weighted 35% of the course grade. The midterm will be administered during class on **October 9**.
2. Final exam covering the second half of the syllabus and weighted 35%. The final will be administered during finals week. According to the Registrar’s final exam schedule, the exam is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 11, 2:00-3:45**.
3. Class participation weighted 30%. This includes contributions to the discussions in general, as well as the discussion that each student will be leading. Each of the discussion articles will be assigned to a student, who will assume the responsibility of: (a) preparing a single-page handout summarizing the reading for distribution to the class, (b) presenting a brief overview of the article, (c) offering observations about the research, and (d) generating issues or questions for class discussion.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct [http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf](http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf).

Sexual misconduct/relationship violence

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at [http://titleix.osu.edu](http://titleix.osu.edu) or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu.
Disability Services

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.
Tentative schedule (subject to change)

**August 21: Course introduction**

**August 23: Social perception and impression formation – Historical overview**
From Heider/Bruner/Asch to modern social cognition; Some basic concepts; The constructive nature of perception

Hamilton: Introductory Overview; Readings 1, 6, 22

Bruner, J. S. (1957). On perceptual readiness. *Psychological Review, 64*, 123-152. [Note: Reading 6 from the Hamilton volume is an abridged version of this article. I recommend reading the original article in its entirety.]

**August 28: The rise of social cognition**
Priming and category accessibility

Hamilton: Readings 4, 9

**August 30: Person memory**
Recall of expectancy-congruent versus incongruent information; Information processing goals

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

**September 4: Discussion session**


Bushman, B. J. (in press). Guns automatically prime aggressive thoughts, regardless of whether a "good guy" or "bad guy" holds the gun. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*.


**September 6: Memory as reconstructions of the past**
Expectancy-guided retrieval; False memories

Hamilton: Readings 33, 34
September 11: Discussion session


September 13: Probability estimation
Judgments under uncertainty; Heuristics

Hamilton: Preview Part 3; Readings 10, 11

September 18 & 20: Automaticity
Nonconscious processing; Automatically-driven attention, categorization, and behavior

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

September 25: Discussion session


September 27: Dispositional Inferences
Attribution processes; Biases and errors; Spontaneous trait inferences; Self-inferences

Hamilton: Preview Part 5; Readings 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
October 2: Discussion session


October 4: No Class – SESP

October 9: MIDTERM

October 11: No Class – Autumn Break

October 16: Review of Midterm

October 18: Stereotype development

Hamilton: Preview Part 7; Reading 26

October 23: Discussion session


October 25: Stereotypes – Activation and Functionality

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

Hamilton: Preview Part 2; Readings 3, 8, 28, 29
October 30: **Stereotyping from the perspective of the target**  
Attributional ambiguity; Stereotype threat

November 1: **Discussion session**


November 6: **Hypothesis testing**  
Confirmatory testing; Diagnosticity; Self-serving reasoning

Hamilton: Preview Part 8; Readings 30, 31, 32

November 8: **Expectancies and social interaction**  
The impact of expectancies on social interaction; Expectancy maintenance and confirmation

Hamilton: Readings 12, 27, 37

November 13: **Discussion session**


November 15: The affect ↔ cognition interface
  Effects of cognition on affect; Misattribution and emotion; Affective consequences of counterfactual thinking

Hamilton: Preview Part 9; Reading 36

November 20: The affect ↔ cognition interface
  Effects of affect on cognition; Emotion-congruent processing; Feelings as information; Affect and creativity

Hamilton: Readings 35, 38

November 22: No Class – Thanksgiving

November 27: Discussion session


November 29: Implicit Bias
  Implicit measures: How do they work? Claims versus data; What is implicit bias?

December 4: Wrap Up

December 11: Final Exam, 2:00-3:45