

Psychology 2800
Introduction to Social Psychology
Fall 2022
TTh 1:00 – 2:15

Professor: Tom Gilovich (tdg1)

Office hours: Fri 2:00-3:30 & by appt

Teaching Assistants:

Wicia Fang (wmf46)

Uris G70

Office hours: Mon 12:30-2:00

Yi Lu (yl3358)

Office hours: Tues 4:00-5:30

Andres Montealegre (am2849) Uris G78a

Office hours: Wed 3:00-4:30

Ivy Gilbert, WIM (ig233) G70 Uris Hall

Office hours: Thurs 2:30-4:00

More information about the teaching staff can be found in the Teaching Staff folder in the modules section of the course Canvas site.

Caution: It is probably best to think of what follows as the default structure of the course. The pandemic is still with us and unforeseeable developments with Covid may necessitate some changes and we'll all have to be flexible to deal with them.

Tests: There will be two preliminary examinations (dates on the syllabus) and a final examination. (You are expected to take all exams as scheduled; **no make-ups except for true medical emergencies.**) Both prelim exams will consist of a combination of multiple choice and short essay questions; the format of the final exam will be determined once we know when during the final exam period it will be. The prelims will each comprise 25% of your grade, the final exam 40%, and your short research paper (see below) 10% of your grade. The two prelims be administered in-class on the dates listed below (unless Covid says otherwise). Stay tuned.

Readings: The attached syllabus indicates which readings correspond to the lectures.

1) Gilovich, Keltner, Chen, & Nisbett. *Social psychology* (5th ed).

A discounted e-version can be purchased directly on Canvas; a hard copy can be purchased at the campus store or online (but is way more expensive so I recommend the e-version).

2) Supplementary readings are available either directly on Canvas or via links on Canvas. Full citations for these articles are listed at the end of the syllabus.

Short Research Paper: You must write a 4-to-6 page research paper, worth 10% of your grade, based on a recent article of your choosing from a list of 12 articles published in the past year in *Psychological Science*. Extensive details, including the 12 articles from which you can choose, are provided in the Writing Assignment folder of the Modules section of the course website. The paper is due (and submitted on Canvas) on October 20: **Absolutely no extensions** (but you are welcome to turn in your paper early as a hedge against emergent problems right before the deadline—see the textbook on the “planning fallacy,” which will also be discussed in the lecture on overconfidence).

Extra Credit: Up to five extra credit points will be awarded to students who elect to participate as subjects in social psychological research. Participation can only help your grade; non-participation will not hurt it. The class curve will be established before extra credit points are factored in. Then, on the basis of participation in research, some students' grades will improve.

Learning goals for Psychology 2800

1. Develop a familiarity with the major and enduring theories in social psychology.
2. Understand the contextual specificity (and the relatively modest degree of cross-situational consistency) of human behavior
3. Understand how claims about human behavior can be put to empirical test and some of the most important elements of sound research design
4. Understand some of the ways that people are most easily “fooled” by personal experience and end up drawing invalid conclusions about others and about empirical regularities in the outside world.

The Cornell Code of Academic Integrity states (and you are expected to meet in full): "Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. . . . A Cornell student's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged, and the student's academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, Cornell students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers."

Syllabus

- 8/23 Social facilitation
Reading: Text, pp. 3-7; Ch. 12
 D. Mook (“In defense of external invalidity...”)
- 8/25 Limitations of Intuitive Psychology: The psychology of questionable belief
Reading: Ch 2
- 8/30 Limitations of Intuitive Psychology: Overconfidence
Reading: Text, pp. 113-117
- 9/1 Evolution: basic principles & findings—1
Reading: Text, pp. 18-22; Ch. 10
- 9/6 Evolution: basic principles & findings—2
Reading: none!
- 9/8 Evolution: Morality and moral behavior
Reading: Ch. 14
- 9/13 Evolution: Emotions and expressive behavior
Reading: Text, pp. 173-189
- 9/15 Evolution: Emotions and misattribution
Reading: Text, pp. 189-194
 Piff & Keltner (“Why do we experience awe?”)
- 9/20 Evolution: Death
Reading: Text, pp. 233-235
 Gilbert (“Buried by bad decisions”)
- 9/22 **Preliminary examination #1, in class**
- 9/27 Culture: The self
Reading: Text, pp. 24-30; 63-70
- 9/29 Culture: The self in the East and West
Reading: Text, pp. 71-95

- 10/4 Culture: Norms
Reading: Text, pp. 292-296
 Konnikova (“How norms change”)
 Wu (“What really saved the republic from Trump?”)
- 10/6 Situationism: Basic findings
Reading: Text, pp. 7-11; 296-308
- 10/11 **Fall break — Indigenous Peoples’ Day — No class**
- 10/13 Situationism: Nudging effective action
Reading: Mullainathan (“You’ve become rich.”)
- 10/18 Situationism: Conformity & compliance
Reading: Text, pp. 269-292
 Santos et al. (“Hey buddy, can you spare seventeen cents?”)
- 10/20 Construal: Core ideas and findings **[research paper due!]**
Reading: Text, pp. 11-17; 99-113; 118-123
- 10/25 Construal: The “3 C’s” of judgment and decision making
Reading: Text, Ch. 5
 Gilbert (“He who cast the first stone...”)
- 10/27 Construal: Intuition and reason—1
Reading: Text, pp. 123-135
- 11/1 Construal: Intuition and reason—2
Reading: Gilovich & Ross (“The objectivity illusion”)
- 11/3 **Preliminary examination #2, in class**
- 11/8 Construal: Egocentrism and mindreading
Reading: Greenberg & Davidowitz (“You’re not as good at kissing as you think...”)
- 11/10 Cognitive dissonance
Reading: Text, pp. 205-226

- 11/15 Self-perception theory and embodiment
Reading: Text, pp. 226-233
- 11/17 Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination
Reading: Text, Ch. 11
- 11/22 Social Psychology in film and television
Reading: Text, Ch. 8
- 11/24 **Thanksgiving — No class**
- 11/29 Happiness-1
Reading: Text, pp. 195-201
Dunn, Aknin, & Norton (“Spending money on others...”)
Gilbert (“Does fatherhood make you happy?”)
- 12/1 Happiness-2
Reading:
Gilbert (“What you don’t know makes you nervous”)
Kolbert (“The psychology of inequality”)
- 5/9 Course wrap-up: Social psychological ideas to live by
Reading: Brooks (“The moral bucket list”)
Lombrozo (“3 Things Everyone Should Know Before...”)

Final Examination: TBA

Reference List

- Brooks, D. (2015). The moral bucket list. *New York Times*, April 11.
- Dunn, E.W., Aknin, L.B., & Norton, M.I. (2008). Spending money on others promotes happiness. *Science*, 319, 1687-1688.
- Gilbert, D. (June 11, 2006). Does fatherhood make you happy? *Time*.
- Gilbert, D. (2011). Buried by bad decisions. *Nature*
- Gilbert, D. (July 24, 2006). He who cast the first stone probably didn’t. *New York Times*.
- Gilbert, D. (May 20, 2009). What you don’t know makes you nervous. *New York Times*.

Gilovich, T., & Ross, L. (2015). The objectivity illusion. Chapter 5 in *The Wisest One in the Room*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Greenberg, S., & Stephens-Davidowitz, S. (2019). You are not as good at kissing as you think. But you are better at dancing. *The New York Times*, April 6.

Kolbert, E. (2018). The psychology of inequality. *The New Yorker*, Jan. 8.

Konnikova, M. (2017). How norms change. *The New Yorker*, Oct. 11.

Lombrozo, T. (2014). “3 things everyone should know before growing up.” *National Public Radio, Cosmos & Culture*, June 30.

Mook, D.G. (1983). In defense of external invalidity. *American Psychologist*, 38(4), 379-387.

Mullainathan, S. (2018). You’ve become rich. That doesn’t mean you’re great at everything. *The New York Times*, Oct. 26.

Piff, P., & Keltner, D. (2015). Why do we experience awe? *The New York Times*, May 22.

Santos, M.D., Leve, C., & Pratkanis, A.R. (1994). Hey buddy, can you spare seventeen cents?: Mindful persuasion and pique technique. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 24, 755-764.

Wu, T. (2020). What really saved the republic from Trump. *The New York Times*, Dec. 10.