

## SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Colorado State University, Academic Partner

**Voyage:** Spring 2018  
**Discipline:** Psychology  
**Course Number and Title:** PSY 315 Social Psychology  
**Division:** Upper  
**Faculty Name:** Scott Plous  
**Semester Credit Hours:** 3

**Prerequisites:** One (1) general psychology course

**Meeting Times** Section 2: 15:30-16:50 Kaisersaal Starboard  
**& Location:** Section 1: 17:00-18:20 Kaisersaal Starboard

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Every person is unique, yet we all face similar questions when it comes to human behavior. What makes for a happy life? How do friendships and romantic attraction work? What are the best ways to address violence, prejudice, climate change, and other social problems? In a course designed especially for Semester at Sea, we'll explore these and other questions through a cross-cultural introduction to classic and contemporary social psychology: the scientific study of how people think about, influence, and relate to one another. For example, we'll cover topics such as decision making, persuasion, group behavior, personal attraction, and life satisfaction. Throughout the semester, our focus will be on surprising, entertaining, and intriguing research findings that are easy to apply in daily life. As part of this focus, several assignments will encourage you to experiment with your life, observe the results, and analyze what took place. The course will also consider the role of culture in shaping human behavior and will include opportunities to integrate your cultural experiences off the ship with topics discussed in class.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The goal of this course is to offer a cross-cultural introduction to classic and contemporary research in social psychology. Students who complete the course satisfactorily will:

1. Learn how psychological research is conducted and interpreted
2. Become familiar with a wide range of social psychological topics and investigations
3. Understand the role of culture, gender, and social categories in shaping behavior
4. Be able to apply social psychology principles, theories, and research findings to:
  - a. improve individual and group decision making
  - b. reduce interpersonal and intergroup conflict
  - c. enhance human health and well-being

- d. address social, societal, and global challenges
- e. cultivate empathy in oneself and others

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

AUTHORS: David G. Myers and Jean M. Twenge  
TITLE: *Social Psychology*  
PUBLISHER: McGraw-Hill  
ISBN #: 0077861973  
DATE/EDITION: 2016 / 12th

NOTES: I strongly recommend buying the textbook in SmartBook format—an interactive e-book that usually improves grades, is better for the environment, and is easier on your wallet—but if you'd rather not, you can buy a loose-leaf paper version (McGraw-Hill doesn't offer a bound option). I will also supplement the textbook with occasional readings posted online.

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Ensenada, Mexico — January 5

### A1—January 7: Introduction

- Textbook Chapter 1—Introducing Social Psychology

### A2—January 9: The Social Construction of Reality

- Textbook Chapter 2—The Self in a Social World

### A3—January 11: Interpreting Behavior ("Interpersonal Perception Task")

- Milgram, S. (2010). Cyranoids. In T. Blass (Ed.), *The individual in a social world: Essays and experiments* (3rd ed., pp. 402-409). London: Pinter & Martin.
- Rosenhan, D. L. (1973, January 19). On being sane in insane places. *Science*, 179, 250-258 (edited and abridged).
- Dunning, D., Johnson, K., Ehrlinger, J., & Kruger, J. (2003). Why people fail to recognize their own incompetence. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(3), 83-87.

Honolulu, Hawaii — January 12

### A4—January 14: Attributional Biases

- Textbook Chapter 3—Social Beliefs and Judgments

## January 16—International Date Line crossing (Lost Day)

### A5—January 17: The Relationship Between Attitudes and Behavior

- Due: Random Assignment Assignment
- Textbook Chapter 4—Behavior and Attitudes (pp. 118-134)
- Optional: Larrick, R. P., & Soll, J. B. (2008). The MPG illusion. *Science*, 320, 1593-1594.

### Study Day (No Class)—January 19

### A6—January 20: Cognitive Dissonance and Self-Perception

- Textbook Chapter 4—Behavior and Attitudes (pp. 134-148)
- [Tips on Taking Multiple-Choice Tests](#) (to help prepare for the upcoming exam)

### A7—January 22: Deindividuation and Dehumanization ("Quiet Rage" Video)

- Textbook Chapter 5—Genes, Culture, and Gender
- Optional: Baird, V. (2003). Transgender identities: Like stars in the sky. In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 414-420). New York: McGraw-Hill.

### Kobe, Japan — January 24–28

### A8—January 29: First Exam

### Shanghai, China — January 31–February 1

### In-Transit — February 2-3

### Hong Kong, SAR — February 4–5

### A9—February 6: Obedience to Authority ("Obedience" Video)

- Watch *Fog of War* video (19-minutes) by this class session
- Burger, J. M. (2009). Replicating Milgram: Would people still obey today? *American Psychologist*, 64, 1-11.

### Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam — February 8–13

**A10—February 14: Conformity in the East and West ("Candid Camera" Video)**

- Textbook Chapter 6—Conformity and Obedience

**Study Day (No Class)—February 16**

**A11—February 17: Persuasion: An Overview of Tactics**

➤ **Due: Paper on Building Cultural Bridges**

- Textbook Chapter 7—Persuasion

**Yangon, Myanmar — February 19–23**

**A12—February 24: Compliance Techniques**

➤ **Due: Vietnam Field Class Paper (Section 1)**

- Cialdini, R. B. (2003, August). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(4), 105-109.
- Optional: Cialdini, R. B., & Schroeder, D. A. (1976). Increasing compliance by legitimizing paltry contributions: When even a penny helps. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34, 599-604.

**A13—February 26: Negotiation and Group Dynamics ("Abilene Paradox" Video)**

**Cochin, India — February 28–March 5**

**A14—March 6: Individual Versus Group Performance (Class Experiment)**

- Textbook Chapter 8—Group Influence

**Study Day (No Class)—March 7**

**A15—March 9: Intergroup Relations**

- Textbook Chapter 9—Prejudice
- Optional: Equal Justice Initiative. (2010). [\*Illegal racial discrimination in jury selection: A continuing legacy\*](#). Montgomery, AL: Author.

**Port Louis, Mauritius — March 11**

**A16—March 12: The Faces of Prejudice ("A Class Divided" and "Blue Eyed" Videos)**

- Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (2003). An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality. In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 225-231). New York: McGraw-Hill.

**A17—March 14: Before Cape Town: A Discussion of Apartheid and Other Forms of Discrimination (20/20 Video on Prejudice)**

- Textbook Chapter 15—Social Psychology in Court
- Optional: Plous, S. (2003). [Is there such a thing as prejudice toward animals?](#) In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 509-528). New York: McGraw-Hill.

**A18—March 16: Violence and Aggression ("Bobo Doll" and "Does TV Kill?" Videos)**

- Textbook Chapter 10—Aggression

**Cape Town, South Africa — March 18–23**

**A19—March 24: Second Exam**

**A20—March 26: Attraction and Intimacy**

- Textbook Chapter 11—Attraction and Intimacy
- Optional: American Psychological Association. (2011). [Resolution on marriage equality for same-sex couples](#). Washington, DC: Author.

**A21—March 28: Bystander Intervention ("Brother's Keeper" Video)**

- **Due: Paper on the Diet and Lifestyle Choices Interview**
- Textbook Chapter 12—Helping

**Takoradi, Ghana — March 30–31**

**Tema, Ghana — April 1–3**

**A22—April 4: International Peace and Conflict Resolution**

- Textbook Chapter 13—Conflict and Peacemaking

**A23—April 6: Tips on Leading a Happy Life: A Global Perspective**

- **Due: South Africa Field Class Paper (Section 2)**

- Textbook Chapter 14—Social Psychology in the Clinic
- Assigned video (available via Loop): [How to Buy Happiness](#)
- Optional: Taylor, P., Funk, C., & Craighill, P. (2006, February 13). [Are we happy yet?](#) Washington, DC: Pew Research Center.

### Study Day (No Class)—April 8

### A24—April 9: Is Empathy a Magic Bullet?

- Textbook Chapter 16—Social Psychology and the Sustainable Future

### Casablanca, Morocco — April 11–14

### A25—April 15: Third Exam

### Arrive Hamburg, Germany — April 19

## FIELD WORK

Semester at Sea field experiences allow for an unparalleled opportunity to compare, contrast, and synthesize the different cultures and countries encountered over the course of the voyage. In addition to a one-day field class, students will complete independent field assignments that span multiple countries.

**Field Class attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field class.** Field Classes constitute at least 20% of the contact hours for each course, and are developed and led by the instructor.

### Field Class & Assignment

This course includes an 8-hour field class on the psychology of peace, reconciliation, and forgiveness. The field class for students in Section 1 will take place in Vietnam, and the field class for students in Section 2 will take place in South Africa. Both classes include a 3-5 page paper assignment worth 100 points (20% of your final course grade).



**Warning: The Social Psychology field classes include graphic coverage of events and topics that you may find disturbing. Please consider this fact when deciding whether to enroll in the course, and if you have any questions or concerns, contact me as early in the semester as possible.**

## **FIELD CLASS – Section 1**

### *Location and dates:*

*The field class for Section 1 will take place in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, on Thursday, February 8, and the paper based on this field class will be due on February 24.*

### *Description:*

The Vietnam War—known as the "American War" in Vietnam—took the lives of 58,000 Americans and millions of Vietnamese people. How are peace, reconciliation, and forgiveness possible after so much killing, and what can we learn from the Vietnam War today? To explore these questions, we'll begin with a behind-the-scenes tour of the War Remnants Museum (one of the most frequently visited museums in Vietnam) and view the Vietnam War from the perspective of people critical of the United States and its allies. In the words of LonelyPlanet.com, "There are few museums in the world that drive home so well the point that war is horribly brutal and that many of its victims are civilians." After learning about the Vietnam War, we will then meet with representatives of the Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin, including people who have experienced the effects of chemicals sprayed by U.S. planes during the war. Throughout the field class we'll examine the psychological dimensions of forgiveness and reconciliation, not only in an extreme case such as the Vietnam War, but in day-to-day conflicts that all of us experience.

## **FIELD CLASS – Section 2**

### *Location and dates:*

*The field class for Section 2 will take place in Cape Town, South Africa, on Friday, March 23, and the paper based on this field class will be due on April 6.*

### *Description:*

Apartheid was a South African system of legalized racial discrimination that ended in 1994, when Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first Black president. The following year, President Mandela made history by creating a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to help the country come to terms with its past and promote healing. As the end of apartheid approaches its 25th anniversary, this field class will begin with a visit to Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned from 1964 to 1982. The excursion will be made by ferry boat and will include a prison tour and an opportunity to speak with a former political prisoner. The field class will then continue with a visit to the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, which was founded in 2000 as successor to the Commission. At the Institute, we'll meet with a representative to discuss the psychological aspects of promoting social justice and reconciliation in post-apartheid South Africa. During our visit, we'll also explore techniques for practicing forgiveness and reconciliation in daily life.

## **FIELD ASSIGNMENTS**

### (1) Field Class Paper

After your field class, you'll have two weeks to write a 3-5 page paper in which you use social psychology to answer these questions: What have I learned about myself as a result of this

field class? What have I learned about other people and other cultures? What are the psychological benefits of forgiveness? Is there anything that can't be forgiven? What the most effective ways to help myself and others forgive acts that seem unforgivable? Papers will be graded on depth of insight, originality, reasoning, factual accuracy, application of course material, and stylistic factors such as clarity, organization, grammar, punctuation, and freedom from errors (so please be sure to proofread all work before submitting it). *Note:* You must attend the field class to receive credit for the associated paper.

## (2) Building Cultural Bridges (short paper)

How can social psychology be used to build cultural bridges and leave the people you meet in port cities with positive feelings toward Americans (or toward your nationality if not American)? This assignment, which ends with a 1-2 page paper due at the beginning of the 11th class session, challenges you to (a) apply research findings when visiting East Asian port cities, and (b) write about the results. Relevant findings include research on impression formation, social perception, confirmation bias, causal attribution, cognitive dissonance, attitude change, gender, and culture, to name just a few. In your paper, please describe what you did to foster intercultural understanding and goodwill, how you felt when carrying out the assignment, how others responded, how you used social psychology, and what you learned from the assignment. The bridges you build can be through brief interactions (e.g., with store clerks), extended dialogue with people you meet, or deeds that you perform, and they should include a comparison of experiences in at least two port cities.

When completing papers for the two field assignments, please:

- Be original rather than playing it safe and saying what's obvious
- Use specific examples rather than being abstract and general
- Cite research findings when applicable, either from class or other sources
- Consider the role of culture and draw on multiple port experiences
- Check your work carefully for spelling and grammatical errors
- Use 12-point font, 1" inch margins, and do not exceed the page limit
- Print your paper at least one day before the deadline (there are no extensions)

What you'll be graded on includes:

- How factually correct your paper is
- How well you applied social psychology
- How creative, insightful, or original the work is
- How logical and well-reasoned your conclusions are
- How clear and well organized the writing is
- How well you incorporated the role of culture

*Tip:* Because the assigned papers are brief, please skip lengthy introductions or restatements of material from the course lectures or readings. Instead, dive in to your own content after a sentence or two of opening context, and don't let your paper stray from its main points.



## WEB ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to the field assignments, there will be two web-based assignments: (1) the Random Assignment Assignment, and (2) the Diet & Lifestyle Choices Interview. I will provide a detailed description of the web assignments in class.

## METHODS OF EVALUATION

To avoid the stress of grades based solely on a midterm and final examination, the course will include three examinations and five assignments (the third exam will take place on the Final Exam day but will not be longer or count more than the exam before it). All exams will cover material from class as well as the readings, and all will contain a mixture of multiple choice and true-false items. Before you turn in a completed exam, please check that no items have been accidentally skipped. In the event that a full page of items is skipped, 50% credit will be given for true-false items and 25% for multiple choice items (the average value that would be received by chance responding), and the resulting exam score will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole point. If an exam is scored incorrectly or you feel that your answer to an exam item marked wrong should actually be considered correct, you have 24 hours to bring the problem to my attention, after which the exam score will be considered final.

Because students often take a while to develop a study strategy for the exams, the first exam will count less than the later two exams. Specifically, the first exam will count for 60 course points (1 point for each of 60 items on the test), and the later two exams will each count for 120 points (2 points per test item). Final letter grades will be determined by adding together points from four different sources: (1) the three exams (worth a total of 300 points), (2) three assignments (worth a total of 50 points), (3) the field class (worth 100 points), and (4) class participation (worth 50 points). The following table contains a breakdown of all course points.

Course Component	Class Session	Points
The Random Assignment Assignment	5	10
Examination 1	8	60
Field Assignment: Building Cultural Bridges	11	20
Examination 2	19	120
Web Assignment: Diet & Lifestyle Choices Interview	21	20
Examination 3	25	120
Class Participation	All	50
Field Class		100
<b><i>Total points possible</i></b>		<b><i>500</i></b>

**Note:** Make-up exams or extensions will not be given, except in the event of an emergency or serious illness, which must be documented before the exam. Also, mobile phones and computers must be turned off during exams; anyone found using a mobile device or computer during an examination will automatically receive a score of zero for that exam.

## GRADING SCALE

Once the course ends, your point total will be converted to a final letter grade using cutoffs (rather than rounding numbers up or down). The following Grading Scale is utilized for student evaluation. Pass/Fail is not an option for Semester at Sea coursework. Note that C-, D+ and D- grades are also not assigned on Semester at Sea in accordance with the grading system at Colorado State University (the SAS partner institution).

Pluses and minuses are awarded as follows on a 100% scale:

<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Satisfactory/Poor</u>	<u>Failing</u>
97-100%: A+	87-89%: B+	77-79%: C+	Less than 60%:
93-96%: A	83-86%: B	70-76%: C	
90-92%: A-	80-82%: B-	60-69%: D	

## ATTENDANCE/ENGAGEMENT IN THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Attendance in all Semester at Sea classes, including the Field Class, is mandatory. Students must inform their instructors prior to any unanticipated absence and take the initiative to make up missed work in a timely fashion. Instructors must make reasonable efforts to enable students to make up work which must be accomplished under the instructor's supervision (e.g., examinations, laboratories). In the event of a conflict in regard to this policy, individuals may appeal using established CSU procedures.

## CLASS PARTICIPATION

The value of this course depends in part on what you bring to it—each member of the class is personally responsible for the quality of our time together, and I welcome your contributions. To participate fully, please: (1) arrive punctually to all sessions and course events, (2) complete all required readings on time, (3) contribute to the group without dominating the discussion, and (4) help create a climate in which others can comfortably share their opinions. At the end of the course, I'll ask you to submit a self-appraisal of your class participation, and I'll assign a score of up to 50 points based on my own assessment of how well you participated.

## LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

Semester at Sea provides academic accommodations for students with diagnosed learning disabilities, in accordance with ADA guidelines. Students who will need accommodations in a class, should contact ISE to discuss their individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation.

A letter from the student's home institution verifying the accommodations received there (dated within the last three years) is required before any accommodation is provided on the ship. Students must submit this verification of accommodations to [academic@isevoyages.org](mailto:academic@isevoyages.org) as soon as possible, but no later than two months prior to the voyage.

## COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance**—Because our class sessions will cover material that goes beyond the readings, class attendance is absolutely essential. Repeated late arrivals to class, or talking while the instructor or other students are speaking, may result in lengthy prison sentences. Please be punctual and refrain from talking in class when others are speaking.

**Assignments**—All assignments you submit must be original (not reprinted, excerpted, or adapted from existing work such as papers for other classes, books, articles, web pages). Similarly, all text, tables, figures, and images reproduced from other sources must include clear reference citations, and all quoted passages must use quotation marks to indicate that they are quotations. If you're not sure about how to properly cite a source, please ask me rather than running the risk of an honor code violation. Also, please note that late assignments will not be accepted except in the event of a serious illness or emergency; please backup your work and print a copy of your assignments at least one day before they're due.

**Laptops**—Laptops are permitted, but studies suggest that they tend to lower student performance (from surfing the web in class, answering email, and other multitasking) and that they distract nearby students, so please don't bring one to class unless you truly need it. In fact, research on multitasking has even found that texting during class is associated with lower grades, which suggests that the smartest mode for "smart" phones may be *off*.

**Mobile Phones and Other Devices**—Before each class session begins, please turn off all mobile phones, recording devices, video games, portable hair dryers, chainsaws, jet engines, and nuclear reactors.

**Recordings**—Audio or video recording of lectures or class sessions without permission is expressly forbidden.

## STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The foundation of a university is truth and knowledge, each of which relies in a fundamental manner upon academic integrity and is diminished significantly by academic misconduct. Academic integrity is conceptualized as doing and taking credit for one's own work. A pervasive attitude promoting academic integrity enhances the sense of community and adds value to the educational process. All within the University are affected by the cooperative commitment to academic integrity. All Semester at Sea courses adhere to this Academic Integrity Policy and Student Conduct Code.

For each assignment and exam of this course, students must sign a written declaration of the following honor pledge: "I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."

## RESERVE BOOKS AND DOCUMENTARY FILMS

### Books

AUTHORS: David G. Myers and Jean M. Twenge

TITLE: *Social Psychology*

PUBLISHER: McGraw-Hill

ISBN #: 0077861973

DATE/EDITION: 2016 / 12th

AUTHOR: Stanley Milgram

TITLE: *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View*

PUBLISHER: Harper Perennial Modern Classics

ISBN #: 006176521X

DATE/EDITION: 2009 / Reprint edition

AUTHOR: Philip G. Zimbardo

TITLE: *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil*

PUBLISHER: Random House

ISBN #: 0812974441

DATE/EDITION: 2007

### Documentary Films

*A Class Divided* (1986/2003)

*Fog of War* (2003)

*Mandela: Son of Africa, Father of a Nation* (1996)

*Obedience* (1965)

*Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Experiment* (1988/2004)

*The Abilene Paradox* (2002; 2nd edition)

*This Emotional Life* (2010)

*Winter Soldier: First Marine Division* (1971/2006)

## ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

American Psychological Association. (2011). *Resolution on marriage equality for same-sex couples*. Washington, DC: Author.

Baird, V. (2003). Transgender identities: Like stars in the sky. In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 414-420). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Burger, J. M. (2009). Replicating Milgram: Would people still obey today? *American Psychologist*, *64*, 1-11.

Cialdini, R. B. (2003, August). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *12*(4), 105-109.

Cialdini, R. B., & Schroeder, D. A. (1976). Increasing compliance by legitimizing paltry contributions: When even a penny helps. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *34*, 599-604.

Dunning, D., Johnson, K., Ehrlinger, J., & Kruger, J. (2003). Why people fail to recognize their own incompetence. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *12*(3), 83-87.

Equal Justice Initiative. (2010). *Illegal racial discrimination in jury selection: A continuing legacy*. Montgomery, AL: Author.

Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (2003). An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality. In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 225-231). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Larrick, R. P., & Soll, J. B. (2008). The MPG illusion. *Science*, *320*, 1593-1594.

Milgram, S. (2010). Cyranoids. In T. Blass (Ed.), *The individual in a social world: Essays and experiments* (3rd ed., pp. 402-409). London: Pinter & Martin.

Plous, S. (2003). Is there such a thing as prejudice toward animals? In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 509-528). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Rosenhan, D. L. (1994). On being sane in insane places. In S. L. Ellyson and A. G. Halberstadt (Eds.), *Explorations in social psychology: Readings and research* (pp. 37-46). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Taylor, P., Funk, C., & Craighill, P. (2006, February 13). *Are we happy yet?* Washington, DC: Pew Research Center.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIRED RESOURCES

None.