



Department of Psychology
Psychology 441 (Lec 01)—Social Psychology: Theory and Research
Winter 2009

Instructor:	Dr. S. D. Boon	Lecture Location:	A253
Phone:	403-220-5564	Lecture Days/Time:	TR 12:30-13:45
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Office:	A231B	TA office	A263
Office Hours:	TBA	TA e-mail	bzboinsk@ucalgary.ca
		TA phone	403-220-7130
		TA office hours	TBA
		Lab B01 Day/Time	W 09:00
		Lab B02 Day/Time	F 16:00
		Lab location	A248

Course Description and Goals

A review of current theory and research in the area of social psychology. Research projects will introduce methodologies used in this area. Prerequisites: Psychology 312 and 345. Note: Sociology 341 does not substitute for Psychology 345 as a prerequisite.

This course examines theory and research in social cognition concerned with error and bias in human judgment and decision-making. For the first two-thirds or so of the course we will consider intuitive strategies for processing information and compare them with normative principles for rational judgment. The final weeks of the course will focus on possible ways to reduce the occurrence of inferential errors, as well as a consideration of several critiques offered in objection to the viewpoint that social inference is fundamentally error-prone.

Required Text

Gilovich, T. (1991). *How We Know What Isn't So: The Fallibility of Human Reason in Everyday Life*. The Free Press..

Plous, S. (1993). *The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making*. McGraw-Hill.

Supplemental readings required for the lectures and lab will be placed on reserve at MacKimmie Library. Where possible, I will post references on Blackboard for those readings that may be obtained online.

Evaluation

Course Component	Weighting	Due Date
Midterm exam	33.3%	In class, March 10, 2009
Final exam	33.3%	Take home final exam. Questions posted April 16, 2009. Exams due no later than 4:30 pm April 23, 2009.
Laboratory	33.3%	Six assignments due throughout term. See Lab Schedule below for descriptions and individual weightings.

Exams

The midterm (to be held in class March 10) and final exam (take home) will be **short answer/essay** in format. The final exam will be **cumulative**. Final examination questions will be posted on blackboard no later than April 16. Answers will be due in the Psych office (A275) no later than 4:30 pm on April 23, 2009. All sources must be appropriately cited and you must do your own work. Answers must be typewritten and submitted in hardcopy format. Electronic submission of any kind will not be permitted. Late exams will not be accepted.

Lab Component:

Students must achieve a passing grade on both the class and lab components to pass this course. Lab assignments must be handed in at the beginning of the lab on which the due date falls (see the Lab Schedule below). Under exceptional circumstances (e.g., illness), other arrangements may be made at the discretion of the Teaching Assistant. Late lab assignments will not be accepted, except under exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Teaching Assistant and with the approval of the Instructor.

Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (i.e., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90%; 89.4% will be rounded down to 89%, etc.).

Lecture Schedule

Date	Topics	Required Reading
T Jan 13 R Jan 15	Lectures begin. Introduction and overview of course	Gilovich ch. 1, 8-10
Part I	Intuitive Strategies of Inference	
T Jan 20 R Jan 22	The role of context in judgment and decision-making	Plous ch. 1-6
F Jan 23	Last day for registration and change of registration. No fee refunds after today.	
T Jan 27 R Jan 29	Judgmental heuristics and knowledge structures	Plous ch. 10-11
T Feb 3 R Feb 5	Assigning weights to the data: the vividness criterion	
Part II	Inferential Tasks: Normative Principles and Lay Practice	
T Feb 10 R Feb 12	Characterizing the datum, sample, and population	
T Feb 17 R Feb 19	Reading Week – No classes Feb 15-22	
T Feb 24 R Feb 26	Assessment of covariation	Gilovich ch. 2-3 Plous ch. 14-15
T Mar 3 R Mar 5	Causal analysis	Plous ch. 16
T Mar 10	Midterm exam in class Mar. 10	

R Mar 12	Causal analysis cont'd Mar. 12	
T Mar 17 R Mar 19	Decision-making and prediction	Plous ch. 7-9, 12-13, 19, 21 supplemental reading: Dawes
T Mar 24 R Mar 26	Theory maintenance and theory change	Gilovich ch. 4-5 Plous ch. 20
T Mar 31 R Apr 2	Theory maintenance and theory change cont'd	
Part III	Inferential Error: Improving Social Inference and Critiques of the Errors/Biases Viewpoint	
T Apr 7 R Apr 9	Improving Social Inference: Strategies and Barriers to Change	Gilovich ch. 11 Plous Afterword
T Apr 14 R Apr 16	Critiques of the error/biases viewpoint and a rebuttal; final exam questions posted on blackboard April 16	supplemental reading: Funder
R Apr 16	Last day to allocate research participation credits.	
F Apr 17	Lectures end. Last day to withdraw.	
R Apr 23	Final exam answers due in A275 no later than 4:30 pm April 23	
Apr 20-30	Final exams (scheduled by the Registrar)	

Lab Schedule

Week of lecture	Lab Topic and Assignment	Reading(s)
T Jan 13	No labs this week	
Part 1	Planning/designing your experiment	
Lab 1 T Jan 20	1. Introduction 2. Assignment to groups 3. Review of experimental design & methodology 4. Reader Survey Assignment 1: Research idea. Due: Lab 3	Bring Text to lab; Ellyson et. al., 1995 pp. 5-13; Aronson, et. al., 1990, ch. 1; Pines et. al., 1993, ch. 1
Lab 2 T Jan 27	1. Review of ethical guidelines for human subjects research and research proposal instructions. 2. "How to Create a Poster" presentation Assignment 2: Creating a poster. Due: Lab 4 Assignment 3: Ethics application. Due: Lab 4	Ethics guidelines posted on U of C website (see blackboard for link).
Lab 3 T Feb 3	Discussion of Hawkins & Hastie (1990) Assignment 1 Due	Hawkins & Hastie, 1990
Lab 4 T Feb 10	Poster Session and Discussion Assignments 2 & 3 Due	
T Feb 17 R Feb 19	Reading Week – No labs	
Part II	Conducting Your Experiment	
Lab 5 T Feb 24	1. Discussion of Ethics Applications 2. Questions/discussion re: Individual projects	

Lab 6 T Mar 3 R Mar 5	Discussion of Nisbett & Wilson (1977) and Gavanski & Hoffman (1987)	Nisbett & Wilson, 1977; Gavanski & Hoffman, 1987
Lab 7 T Mar 10	Discussion of Kahneman & Tversky (1993) Assignment 4: Inferential Errors. Due: Lab 8	Kahneman & Tversky, 1993
Lab 8 T Mar 17	Discuss real-life examples of errors. Assignment 4 Due	<i>Assignment 3 due</i>
Lab 9 T Mar 24	Discussion of Rosenhan (1973)	Rosenhan, 1973
Part III	Analyzing and Presenting Your Data	
Lab 10 T Mar 31	1. Review APA style and writing empirical reports. 2. Discuss Wilson & Brekke (1994) Assignment 5: Presentation of Study. Due Labs 11 & 12 Assignment 6: Prepare Report. Due Lab 12	Wilson & Brekke, 1994
Lab 11 T Apr 7	Mini-conference (part 1) Assignment 5 Due (1/2 of the groups)	
Lab 12 T Apr 14	Mini-conference (part 2) Assignment 5 Due (remaining groups) Assignment 6 Due (all groups)	

Distribution of Marks for Lab

Participation in Discussions throughout term	/15
Assignment 1: Research idea. Due: Lab 3	/5
Assignment 2: Creating a poster. Due: Lab 4	/20
Assignment 3: Ethics application. Due: Lab 4	/10
Assignment 4: Inferential Errors. Due: Lab 8	/10
Assignment 5: Presentation of Study. Due Lab 11	/20
Assignment 6: Prepare Report. Due Lab 12	/20
TOTAL	/100

Your Total out of 100 * 33.3% = your final lab mark

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for

appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

Course Credits for Research Participation

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation. The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **April 16, 2009**.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 220-3911 suypaca@ucalgary.ca

Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 220-3913 socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course and still receive a fee refund is **January 23, 2009**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **April 17, 2009**.