**PSYC 035 Syllabus – Spring Semester 2013**

SCIENCE 104, Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:15 - 2:30 p.m.

**Instructor**: Brett Pelham, 315 Papazian email: bpelham1@swarthmore.edu

##### Office Hours: Because I live in Maryland, my office hours are by appointment only. However, I am almost always available late on Monday afternoons beginning at 4 p.m. and right after class on Tuesdays. You may also call or text me *at any time* with course questions. I will return texts much more quickly than emails. When you do text me, please include your name so I know with whom I’m texting.

##### Where to Text Me: (716) 572 - 3519

**Textbook**: Eliot R. Smith & Diane M. Mackie *Social Psychology* (3rd ed.)

**Course Web Page: We will use Swarthmore’s Moodle for our course web page.**

**Course Topic**: This is a course in social psychology - the scientific study of how people think and feel about, relate to, and influence one another – in other words the psychology of how people are influenced by people.

**Grading**: I do not curve grades. This means that, in principle, everyone in the course could earn an A. I grade on an absolute basis because it encourages cooperative rather than competitive learning. Your grade in the course will be based primarily on (1) your score on three midterm exams, (2) your score on a partly cumulative final, and (3) your score on an application quiz (based on class activities and the course soundtrack). The **highest two of your first three midterm exams** will each make up 20% of your course grade (2 x 25%, for a total of 50%). Your lowest midterm will make up 10% of your grade. **The partly cumulative final** will make up 30% of your course grade, and the **final quiz** will make up the final 20% of your grade. In addition to the 100 points available for regular course work, you can earn as many as two bonus points by taking part in special activities to be described below.

**Exams**: In addition to a final quiz, there will be four traditional exams in this course: three midterms of about 30-40 multiple choice questions and a 60-item, partly cumulative final (which will consist of about 30-40 questions on the material in the last quarter of the class plus about 20-30 cumulative questions). To assist you in studying for the exams, I will provide you with **study guides** that clearly identify at least 80% of the concepts, theories, and definitions you need to know from both the class lectures and the text. You’ll be able to find these study guides on the **course Web page**. To maximize your learning, you should use the study guides to organize and integrate your knowledge when you study (e.g., by writing out definitions in your own words, by looking for connections between text versus lecture material, and by discussing your views of course material with a study partner). The study guides should help you organize your studying to make it as efficient as possible. That is, they should maximize the chances that you learn what I think is important, and they should reduce the likelihood that you spend time learning things that are not central to the course. This means that if something is on the study guide, I expect you to know it **extremely well**. For example, **I expect you to apply theories and concepts from the study guide to novel social situations that are not described in the text or lecture**. Despite the fact that I provide you with study guides, I realize that it takes some students a while to adjust to my testing style, and I realize that your life consists of more than social psychology. Thus, to prevent a single low midterm score from dramatically pulling down your average in the course, I weight your lowest midterm less heavily than your two highest midterms.

**Make-up Exams**: Because I live in Maryland, and because I am also teaching at Georgetown University this term, I will have to schedule make-up exams on Mondays after 4 p.m. or Tuesdays after our regular class period.

**Surprise Activities**: To reward class attendance, I will provide you with opportunities to earn participation points in this course by allowing you to take part in about 4 different social psychological hands-on activities, class demonstrations, or pilot studies (conducted during lectures). If you miss any of the surprise activities, there is no way to make them up. However, you should get notes about the activities from a classmate because you will be responsible for knowing about the activities – which will always serve as teaching tools.

**The Sound Track and Final Quiz**: It is my philosophy that you can learn about social psychology not only by attending lectures and reading textbooks but also by paying attention to what some laypeople have to say about human social behavior. For example, many writers and musicians have expressed ideas that have been confirmed by social psychological research. With this in mind, I have compiled a course soundtrack, that is, a collection of popular songs that provide insights into human social behavior. I will usually play one song form our soundtrack to begin every lecture, but I will also put a couple of CDs on reserve at the library so that you can listen to the songs when you wish. I will also post some thought questions about the songs on our course web page. On the last regular week of classes, we will have a roughly 40-item quiz that includes about 30 questions about the songs on the soundtrack and about 10 questions from the class hands on activities. As noted above, your score on this final quiz will make up 20% of your grade in the course.

**Extremely Important Study Tips**: ***Tip 1***: The course study guides include some key items that are printed **in bold.** Items that are typed in bold on the study guide are particularly important for two reasons. First, these items are especially likely to be included on the regular exams (about half of the questions on a given exam will be based on these items). Second, these items and these items alone will used to create the **cumulative part** of the final exam (which will be about 20 of 50 questions). Thus, when studying for the first three midterms, you can be assured that you know about half of what will be on the exam by focusing on these key terms. If, for some bizarre reason, you merely wanted to pass this course, you could just learn these key terms perfectly and learn very little else. Conversely, if you want an excellent grade, this is the place to earn the easiest half of your points on a given exam. ***Tip 2***: Recall that the final quiz will be based on the course soundtrack and the hands-on activities. This quiz will be easier than the regular exams, but will be weighted about as heavily as a regular exam (20% of your course grade). One reason the soundtrack quiz is easier than the regular exams is that I will post the stems of many of the questions that will be on this quiz on the course web page – well in advance of the final quiz date. Of course you are free to study for these questions with others, to make preparing for this part of the course a social activity. Anyone who puts in some work on the final quiz should be virtually guaranteed to get a good grade on it. ***Tip 3***: Do not confuse the fact that I give you study guides and extra credit activities – or the fact that I try to make lectures entertaining – for the idea that this is an easy course. I want this course to be enjoyable and challenging without being overwhelming, and one way in which I try to do so is to limit what I expect you to know but expect you to know it at a very high level.

**Additional Information on Grading**. Your grade in this course will be based on (1) two midterms, (2) a final, (3) the soundtrack quiz, and (4) opportunities for 3-4 bonus points based on attendance at lecture. After all of these points are added up, your final letter grade in this course will be computed using the following scale:

77.0 - 79.99 = C +

95.0 plus = A 73.0 - 76.99 = C

90.0 - 94.99 = A - 70.0 - 72.99 = C -

87.0 - 89.99 = B + 67.0 - 69.99 = D +

83.0 - 86.99 = B 60.0 - 66.99 = D

80.0 - 82.99 = B - (below 60.02 = F)

With the exception that the scale is tougher than usual for a grade of solid A, the scale is a standard grading scale. Notice that this scale is very precise. For example, a grade of 89.99 is a B+ rather than an A-. To eliminate any ambiguity about grading, I make my grading scale as clear as possible, and I do not round grades up or down. Finally, I do not change grades once they have been assigned (except to correct clerical errors).

**Students with Disabilities**. If you have a disability please do not hesitate to let me know so that I may work with you to make appropriate accommodations.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Date Lecture Topic Readings**

Tu 01-22-13 What it was, is, and is not: Defining Social Psychology Ch. 1

Th 01-24-13 Video & Discussion: The Milgram obedience study\* Ch. 2

# Tu 01-29-13 The two axioms of social psychology Ch. 7

## Th 01-31-13 The two axioms (Continued)

Tu 02-05-13 Attitudes: When who says what to whom Ch. 8

Th 02-07-13 Persuasion: Sleepers, rumors & grasshoppers

**Tu 02-12-13** **Exam 1**

Th 02-14-13 Heuristics and other easy ideas: Social Cognition Ch. 3

Tu 02-19-13 Attribution and Person Perception Ch. 3

Th 02-21-13 The good, the bad & the busy social perceiver

Tu 02-26-13 Prejudice and discrimination: Ch. 5

Th 02-28-13 Why we do not trust the Pyreneans

Tu 03-05-13 Video & Discussion: Eye of the Storm Ch. 6

#### Th 03-07-13 Exam 2

Tu 03-12-13SPRING BREAK

Th 03-14-13 SPRING BREAK

Tu 03-19-13Conformity, compliance, & obedience Ch. 9

# Th 03-21-13 Video & Discussion: Zimbardo prison study Ch. 10

Tu 03-26-13 Attraction, affiliation, and love Ch. 11

Th 03-28-13 Understanding the ties that blind (more attraction)

Tu 04-02-13 Aggression: Eros, thanatos, & Bobos Ch. 13

Th 04-04-13 Prosocial Behavior: Why many hands make less help Ch. 14

#### Tu 04-09-13 Exam 3

Th 04-11-13 The social self-concept (Part I) Ch. 4

### 

Tu 04-16-13 The social self-concept (Part 2)

Th 04-18-13 Applied Social Psychology: Social Psychology & Health Ch. 12

Tu 04-23-13 The Social Psychology of *Candid Camera* Epilogue

Th 04-25-13 Summarizing Social Psychology (A Review of Basic Principles & Key Ideas)

**Tu 04-30-13 Final Quiz (on Soundtrack) and Class Discussion**

**Th 05-02-13 Final Exam**

**Note that textbook chapters do not always correspond with lecture topics.**

**SPECIAL NOTE ON TEXTBOOK STUDY GUIDES: Because I just adopted a new textbook in this course, I will be working on textbook study guides as we progress in the course. My goal will be to provide you with *some* kind of textbook study guide for a given exam period at least two weeks before each exam. For example, I hope to have a completed textbook study guides for exam 1 by Tuesday January 29.**