SEMINAR IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY: SOCIAL COGNITION

SEMINARS:
Section A: Tuesday & Thursday 10:30 - 11:50 in N2005
Section B: Tuesday & Thursday 12:00 - 1:20 in N2005

INSTRUCTOR:
Dr. Roger Buehler
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OFFICE HOURS:
Monday 12:00 - 1:00
Wednesday 12:00 - 1:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
The goal of this course is to familiarize you with the broad area of social psychology that focuses on social cognition. Researchers in this area seek to understand social psychological phenomena by examining underlying cognitive processes. In other words, they attempt to explain what’s going on inside people’s minds as they think about and interact with one another. Much of the research focuses on the sorts of judgments and thoughts that people are engaged in throughout the course of everyday life.

Each week we will be reading and discussing empirical research articles taken from leading journals in social psychology. We will examine theory and research on basic processes of social cognition (e.g., attributions; knowledge activation; memory; prediction) as well as applications of the social cognition approach to a variety of topics and issues within the tradition of social psychology (e.g., prejudice, the self, goal pursuit, and subjective well-being).

PREREQUISITES:
PS370 (or PS270 and two of PS394, PS395, PS397). Registration status: Honours Psychology Research Specialist programs (or permission of the department).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

[20%] 1. Class Participation: Part of your grade will be based on class participation. This is a seminar style course that involves a great deal of group discussion. Much of your learning will come from your own reading and discussion with classmates. Thus attendance and active participation at each of the class meetings is very important. Each week you should come to class prepared with comments and questions about issues from the readings that caught your attention. By preparing discussion questions in advance as well as responding to other students’ comments, everyone in the class should have something to contribute. Your grade will be based not only on the quantity of your participation but also the quality - your contributions in class should demonstrate that you have gone through the assigned readings carefully and given them some
thought, both individually and in relation to each other.

[10%] 2. Discussion Questions: You will be asked to read two or three journal articles each week. To help you think about these readings, you must prepare a discussion question (or comment) concerning each reading. Questions are to be turned in at the beginning of class on Tuesday and will be evaluated using a simple four point scale (1 = needs improvement, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = good, 4 = excellent). Questions will be considered 'good' if they demonstrate that you read and thought carefully about the material; excellent questions will be outstanding and show exceptional critical thinking or creative insight. I will not be returning the graded questions to you – I will only give you specific feedback if I find questions/comments that need improvement. Questions may be handwritten as long as they are legible. The questions should also serve as a stimulus for class discussion – you should keep a personal copy of your questions so that you will have them available during the discussion period. Although we may not get a chance to cover every discussion question, your credit will not depend on whether we discuss your questions in class.

[20%] 3. Article presentations: Every Thursday, one or two students will be required to present a research article and to lead discussion concerning the article; each student will do one article presentation. The presentation should be about 30 minutes long including discussion. When you present, keep in mind that the rest of the class will not have read the article. You should describe the research carefully, including the theoretical background, the hypotheses, the design, the method, and a summary of the results (a few tables or figures will be helpful here). Visual aids and class activities are encouraged. Also, a good presentation will “go beyond” the article itself. For example, you could discuss practical and theoretical implications of the research and relate it to other ideas (e.g., material covered in this course, other psychology courses, or your own personal experiences), or you could conduct a class activity or demonstration. You should also prepare a few questions for the class to discuss and be prepared to lead discussion of these questions or other issues that arise. You should select your preferred article from the scheduled list, and confirm with the instructor, at least two weeks before your presentation date. Right after your presentation, please send a copy of your slides to the instructor (you may delete speaking notes if you wish), to aid in grading.

[20%] 4. Quizzes: On four separate (unannounced) occasions, we will begin the seminar with a short “pop quiz” (approximately 15-20 minutes) that will test your comprehension of the assigned readings for that week. Only the best 3 of your 4 quiz marks will be counted. Note that no alternative quizzes or rewrites will be scheduled. If extenuating circumstances force you to miss class on the day of a quiz, you should notify the instructor as soon as possible and provide documentation. Otherwise a grade of zero will be assigned.

[30%] 5. Thought Papers: You will be asked to write three brief “thought papers” throughout the course. The thought papers should be 4-6 pages, typed, double spaced. The topic of your paper is open so long as it clearly relates to seminar readings and discussions from the previous weeks. You are expected to provide more than just a summary of the readings, but exactly what you talk about is up to you. You may want to consider problems that you’ve identified with a theory or a research approach, or suggest some way to extend a line of research in a new direction. You could discuss the ways in which a program of research may have practical implications in the
“real world” and illustrate with real or hypothetical examples. You could try to connect ideas arising in this course to ideas found in other disciplines or other areas of psychology. Two weeks before each due date, I will provide you with a few optional sample topics in case you’re having trouble getting started. **Due dates for the thought papers are Feb 9, March 9, and April 1.**
EXTENDED READING LIST:
Note: The assigned readings are marked with asterisks (**). The extra articles could be presented by students or discussed by the instructor, and may also be useful for the thought papers. All articles are posted as pdf files on myLS.

**Week 1 (Jan 4)**

**Introduction to social cognition**


**Week 2 (Jan 9, 11)**

**Social Judgment I: Attribution**


*Klein, N., & O’Brien, E. (2016).* The tipping point of moral change: When do good and bad acts make
good and bad actors? Social Cognition, 34, 149-166.

Week 3 (Jan 16, 18)
Social Judgment II: Perceptions and evaluations of others; Priming and judgment

Week 4 (Jan 23, 25)
Priming and automatic behavior


**Week 5 (Jan 30, Feb 1)**

**Time and psychological distance**


Week 6 (Feb 6, 8)

** Remembering the past


Psychology, 68, 157-161.

**Week 7 (Feb 13, 15)**

**Imagining and Predicting the Future**

**(A) Predicting future outcomes and behaviors**


**(B) Predicting future feelings**


***READING WEEK FEB 19-23***

**Week 8 (Feb 27, Mar 1)**

**Stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination**


**Gawronski, B. (2009).** Ten frequently asked questions about implicit measures and their frequently supposed, but not entirely correct answers. *Canadian Psychology, 50,* 141-150.


**Week 9 (Mar 6, 8)**

**The Self I: Self-perception and self-evaluation**


**Week 10 (Mar 13, 15)**

**The Self II: Self Control and Temptation**


**Week 11 (Mar 20, 22)**

**The Self III: Motivation and Goal Pursuit**


attention and goal pursuit: Deliberative and implemental mindsets affect breadth of attention. 


**Week 12 & 13 (Mar 27, 29, April 3)**

**Happiness and well-being**


Important Information for Students

1. **Accessible Learning Office:** Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact Laurier’s [Accessible Learning Centre](https://www.laurier.ca/departments/accessible-learning-centre) for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the [Academic Calendar](https://www.laurier.ca/calendars) for information regarding all services available on campus.

2. **Plagiarism:** Wilfrid Laurier University uses software that can check for plagiarism. If requested to do so by the instructor, students are required to submit their written work in electronic form and have it checked for plagiarism.

3. **Academic Integrity:** Laurier is committed to a culture of integrity within and beyond the classroom. This culture values trustworthiness (i.e., honesty, integrity, reliability), fairness, caring, respect, responsibility and citizenship. Together, we have a shared responsibility to uphold this culture in our academic and nonacademic behaviour. The University has a defined policy with respect to academic misconduct. As a Laurier student you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with this policy and the accompanying penalty guidelines, some of which may appear on your transcript if there is a finding of misconduct. The relevant policy can be found at Laurier's [academic integrity](https://www.laurier.ca/student-support-and-wellness/services/academic-integrity) website along with resources to educate and support you in upholding a culture of integrity. Ignorance is not a defense.

4. **Course Add/Drop Dates 2017/2018:** Please refer to the Undergraduate Academic Calendar - [Academic Dates 2017-2018](https://www.laurier.ca/calendars). For details of all important academic dates.

5. **Final Examinations:** The Academic Date section of the Calendar ([Academic Dates 2017-2018](https://www.laurier.ca/calendars)) clearly states the examination date period for each semester. **Students must note that they are required to reserve this time in their personal calendars for the examinations.** The examination period for the Winter Term: **April 7 – 25.** Students who are considering registering to write MCAT, LSAT or GMAT or a similar examination, should select a time for those examinations that occurs outside the University examination period. For additional information that describes the special circumstances for examination deferment, consult the [University calendar](https://www.laurier.ca/student-support-and-wellness/services/academic-integrity).

6. **Laurier Email Account:** Students are expected to regularly check their Laurier email account for important notices from the university community. Students are also expected to send emails to official members of the university community from their Laurier email account in order to ensure delivery. Emails sent from non-Laurier accounts, such as Hotmail, may be identified as spam and not be delivered. Your co-operation is appreciated.

7. **Centre for Student Success:** The [Centre for Student Success](https://www.laurier.ca/student-support-and-wellness/services/learning-support-and-success) supports and enhances your academic experiences at Laurier. These services include academic advising and assistance with learning, mathematics, study skills, and writing development. Most of these services are delivered in small groups and individual consultation settings and are designed to encourage the sharing of ideas and peer learning.
WATERLOO RESOURCES

- Foot Patrol is a volunteer operated safe-walk program, available Fall and Winter daily from 6:30 pm to 3 am. Teams of two are assigned to escort students to and from campus by foot or by van. All teams are equipped with two-way radio, flashlight and first aid kit. All Foot Patrol volunteers are certified with emergency first aid training for efficient safety service across the Laurier campus. 519 886 3668 (FOOT)

- Waterloo Student Wellness Centre – is the home of all physical, emotional and mental health services for students on our Waterloo campus. We are a multidisciplinary team offering comprehensive, collaborative service to help you get the best support in the most seamless and coordinated manner possible. Located on the 2nd floor of the Student Services Building, booked and same-day appointments are available Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30 am to 7:30 pm, and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8:30 am to 4:15 pm. 519-884-0710, x3146 wellness@wlu.ca or @LaurierWellness
All students have access to these services through their OHIP and extended health plans. We welcome and support diverse communities. You will be asked to swipe your health card every time you visit us.

After hours crisis support is available:
Here 24/7 Crisis Line. Call anytime to access Addictions, Mental Health & Crisis Services Waterloo – Wellington 1.844.437.3247
Good2Talk is a post-secondary school helpline. Call 1.866.925.5454 or through 2.1.1. Available 24/7/365

- The Food Bank provides food deliveries on a 24/7 basis confidentially supporting the dietary and nutritional needs of Laurier students. All dietary restrictions can be accommodated, and food packages typically last up to a week or more. All Laurier students are eligible to use this service to ensure they’re eating healthy when overwhelmed, stressed or financially strained.