Instructor: Scott Plous
TAs: Michael Inkles, Rebecca Lange, Becca Mark, Carolyn Mortell, Michaela Swee, Ema Tanovic
CAs: Chelsea Aiken, Deborah Cho, Nicole Okai, Rory O'Neill
Time: 1:10-2:30 pm, Tuesday and Thursday
Classroom: Kerr Lecture Hall (107 Shanklin)
Size limit: 150 students
Credit: 1.0 A/F (graded only)
Web sites: http://www.socialpsychology.org/courses/social11.htm
http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073370665/student_view0/

### Instructor and TA Office Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inkles</td>
<td>Fri, 11:00 am – noon</td>
<td>B3 Judd (x2206)</td>
<td>(516) 587-1228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>Mon, 3:00 – 4:00 pm</td>
<td>103 Judd (x2312)</td>
<td>(919) 619-5363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Sun, 8:00 – 9:00 pm</td>
<td>103 Judd (x2312)</td>
<td>(914) 417-7076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortell</td>
<td>Wed, 3:00 – 4:00 pm</td>
<td>103 Judd (x2312)</td>
<td>(952) 221-6172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plous</td>
<td>Tue and Thu, 2:45 – 3:45 pm</td>
<td>219 Judd (x2368)</td>
<td>(860) 685-2368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swee</td>
<td>Wed, 7:00 – 8:00 pm</td>
<td>103 Judd (x2312)</td>
<td>(917) 566-6964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanovic</td>
<td>Thu, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm</td>
<td>B3 Judd (x2206)</td>
<td>(860) 794-2658</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summary

This course provides an overview of classic and contemporary research in social psychology. A wide range of topics will be covered, including:

- Self-Perception
- Cognitive Dissonance
- Conformity
- Obedience
- Social Influence
- Persuasion Techniques
- Interpersonal Attraction
- Group Dynamics
- Stereotypes and Prejudice
- Conflict Resolution
- Happiness and Well-Being
- Sustainable Living
Course Requirements

Prerequisites--No prerequisites are required, though many students have found it helpful to take "Foundations of Contemporary Psychology" (Psyc105) or "Psychological Science" (Psyc101) before this course. Students who have taken other general introductions to social psychology, such as "Exploring Social Psychology" (Psyc263) at Wesleyan, are not eligible to take Psyc260.

Attendance--Because the lectures will cover material that goes beyond the readings, class attendance is absolutely essential (including the class before Thanksgiving Break). 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.

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

Readings--Unless otherwise noted in class, the required readings are as follows:

- Psychology 260 online library reserve readings (the course password is "psyc260").

I strongly recommend buying Myers' textbook, but if you'd rather not, copies of Social Psychology are on reserve in Olin Library (don't use earlier editions of the textbook--too much material is different from the current edition). Also, you can buy a 180-day subscription to an e-text version, in either online or downloadable format, from CourseSmart.com.

Assignments--During the semester you'll be given several class assignments worth a cumulative total of 40 course points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Random Assignment</td>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>6 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm Violation Assignment</td>
<td>October 11</td>
<td>8 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasion Assignment</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>8 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Interview Assignment</td>
<td>November 22</td>
<td>8 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th Annual Day of Compassion</td>
<td>December 6</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three of these assignments are web-based, and two are participant-observation activities that invite you to experiment with your life and report on the results. The details of each assignment will be given in class a few days before the assignment is due. If at any point you prefer not to complete an assignment (or if your attempt to complete it is unsuccessful), you can still receive full credit by turning in a one-page report discussing the barriers that prevented you from carrying out the assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted except in the event of a serious illness or family emergency; please back-up your work and print a copy at least one day before it's due.
**Illustrations**

On most Tuesdays, I will begin class by sharing a few illustrations of topics covered in the preceding week. In addition, the TAs and I will compile links to web sites and videos that illustrate course topics, and we'll post these links on a "Sites of the Week" web page available from the Psychology 260 home page. You're welcome to suggest illustrations -- from the web or elsewhere -- whenever you encounter items that might be of general interest to the class. If you contribute an illustration, please try to include the full item or article with complete reference information (date, volume, issue number, and page numbers, or web address in the case of an illustration from the Internet).

**Grading**

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 during finals week but will not be longer or count more than the exam before it). All three exams will cover material from class as well as the readings, and all three will contain a mixture of fixed choice formats (roughly 20 general multiple choice items, 15 applied multiple choice items, and 25 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 final exam score will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole point.

*Note: Make-up exams or extensions will not be given, except in the event of a serious illness or family emergency (e.g., death of a relative). If you're not feeling well before an exam, please contact me right away rather than taking the exam, because once an exam is taken, the score you receive cannot generally be erased.*

To help prepare for the tests, see the web links "Tips on Taking Multiple-Choice Tests" and "Online Social Psychology Quizzes" listed on the course web site. The Myers textbook also comes with a CD-ROM that contains study questions.

Because students often take awhile to develop a successful study strategy for the exams, the first exam will count less than the later two exams. Specifically, the first exam will count for 120 course points (2 points for each of 60 items on the test), and the later two exams will each count for 180 points (3 points per test item). Final letter grades will be determined by adding together points from two different sources: (1) the three exams (worth a total of 480 points), and (2) the five assignments (worth a total of 40 points). In other words, all course points are counted equally, regardless of whether they come from exams or assignments.

During the semester, you will be able to check your point total by clicking on the "GradeGetter" link at the top of the web syllabus. **Within one week of turning in an assignment or receiving a scored exam, you should check GradeGetter and email me immediately if you discover an error** (after that time, your scores will generally remain fixed). Likewise, if after speaking with the TAs you feel that your answer to an exam item marked wrong should actually be considered correct, you have one week to email me a statement explaining why your answer is correct.
Once the course is over, your cumulative point total will be translated into a final letter grade. Because the exams in this class will be created from scratch, it is difficult to specify in advance how various exam scores will translate into particular letter grades. Nonetheless, you may use the following cutoffs from a previous year as a rough guide in translating course point totals into letter grades (the final cutoffs will be different from these, but not by much). These cutoffs are based on Peterson’s, which is the most common method for translating between grades and 100-point scales:

www.petersons.com/college-search/college-admission-requirements-gpa.aspx

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Cumulative Point Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60.0% and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Laptops, Recording, and Special Needs**

Laptops are permitted, but studies suggest that they lower student performance and grades (e.g., from surfing the web in class, answering email, and other multitasking), so I wouldn't advise bringing one unless you absolutely need it. Also, if you have a disability or any special needs, please notify me and the Dean's Office during the first week of the semester, and I'll do my best to accommodate them. The TAs and I are committed to creating the most inclusive and supportive learning environment possible. Here's a statement that Wesleyan asks instructors to include in all course syllabi:

*It is the policy of Wesleyan University to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students, however, are responsible for registering with Disabilities Services, in addition to making requests known to me in a timely manner. If you require accommodations in this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The procedures for registering with Disabilities Services can be found at: [www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/](http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/)*

*Please note: Audio or video recording of lectures without permission is expressly forbidden.*
**Tentative Course Outline and Readings**

**NOTE:** Assignments should be read in the order below following each class (except for assignments immediately before an exam, which may be read early if you prefer). Because the schedule below may change, please regard the web syllabus as definitive.

**Tue, Sep 6:** Introduction

- Myers Chapter 1--Introducing Social Psychology

**Thu, Sep 8:** The Social Construction of Reality

- Myers Chapter 2--The Self in a Social World
- Ellyson & Halberstadt, Reading 7: Burger and Burns (1988)

**Tue, Sep 13:** Interpreting Behavior ("Interpersonal Perception Task" DVD)

- Ellyson & Halberstadt, Reading 5: Rosenhan (1973)

**Thu, Sep 15:** Attributional Biases

- Myers Chapter 3--Social Beliefs and Judgments
- Ellyson & Halberstadt, Reading 6: Abbey (1982)

**Tue, Sep 20:** The Relationship Between Attitudes and Behavior

**DEADLINE:** Random Assignment Assignment Due

- Myers Chapter 4--Behavior and Attitudes (pp. 122-140)
Thu, Sep 22:  Cognitive Dissonance and Self-Perception

- Myers Chapter 4--Behavior and Attitudes (pp. 140-153)
- Tips on Taking Multiple-Choice Tests (to help prepare for exam)
  http://www.socialpsychology.org/testtips.htm

Tue, Sep 27:  Deindividuation and Dehumanization ("Quiet Rage" Video)

- Myers Chapter 5--Genes, Culture, and Gender

Thu, Sep 29:  Obedience to Authority ("Obedience" Video)


Tue, Oct 4:  **FIRST EXAM**

Thu, Oct 6:  Conformity ("Candid Camera" DVD Clips)

- Myers Chapter 6--Conformity and Obedience

Tue, Oct 11:  **Persuasion: An Overview of Tactics**

**DEADLINE:** Norm Violation Assignment Due

- Myers Chapter 7--Persuasion
Thu, Oct 13: The Threat of Social Equality (guest lecture by Professor Clara Wilkins)


Tue, Oct 18: Compliance Techniques


Thu, Oct 20: Negotiation and Group Dynamics ("Abilene Paradox" Video)

**DEADLINE:** Persuasion Assignment Due


Tue, Oct 25: Fall Break!

Thu, Oct 27: Individual Versus Group Performance (Class Experiment)

• Myers Chapter 8--Group Influence

Tue, Nov 1: Group-Level Biases

• Myers Chapter 9--Prejudice
Thu, Nov 3: The Faces of Prejudice ("A Class Divided" and "Blue Eyed" DVDs)


Tue, Nov 8: Group Discussion on Discrimination (20/20 DVD Clip on Prejudice)


Thu, Nov 10: SECOND EXAM

Tue, Nov 15: Aggression ("Bobo Doll" and "Does TV Kill?" DVDs)

• Myers Chapter 10--Aggression

Thu, Nov 17: Attraction and Intimacy

• Myers Chapter 11--Attraction and Intimacy

Tue, Nov 22: Bystander Intervention ("Brother's Keeper" DVD)

DEADLINE: Web Interview Assignment Due

• Myers Chapter 12--Helping
Thu, Nov 24: Thanksgiving Break!

Tue, Nov 29: Peace and Conflict Resolution

- Myers Chapter 13--Conflict and Peacemaking

Thu, Dec 1: Clinical Applications of Social Psychology

- Myers Chapter 14--Social Psychology in the Clinic

Tue, Dec 6: Tips on Leading a Happy Life

DEADLINE: Day of Compassion Assignment Due

- Myers Chapter 15--Social Psychology in Court

Thu, Dec 8: Empathy--A Magic Bullet?

- Myers Chapter 16--Social Psychology and the Sustainable Future

Tue, Dec 13: THIRD EXAM [7:00-8:20 pm in Shanklin 107. Please don't ask to take the test at a different time. The Registrar sets exam times, and administering it at multiple times would create extra work for the TAs when they're taking their own exams. We thank you for your understanding.]
Social Psychology Teaching Apprentices

We've prepared this trusty overview to help acquaint you with your friendly TA crew. Please introduce yourself to at least two teaching apprentices within the first week or two of the term so that you're on a first-name basis with the teaching staff. Also, the TAs warmly invite you to stop by at least one office hour by the third week of class, just to make sure things are going well and to make sure you're well prepared for the first exam.

**Michael Inkles**
Email: minkles@wesleyan.edu
Phone: (516) 587-1228
Acceptable calling hours: 10:00 am to 11:00 pm
About me: I'm a senior psychology major who hails from Long Island, New York. Although I began my studies with a focus on developmental psychology, last year I decided to take Social Psychology, and now it's one of my favorite subjects. I've also studied language acquisition, cognitive abilities of animals, and early childhood math skills. Beyond psychology, my interests include playing music, acting, and speaking Spanish. I hope to teach at some point in my life — be it psychology, language, or music — and I'm looking forward to this experience working with all of you.

**Rebecca Lange**
Email: rlange@wesleyan.edu
Phone: (919) 619-5363
Acceptable calling hours: 11:00 am to midnight
About me: Hey! I'm a junior psychology and philosophy double major from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. I really loved Social Psychology, and my friends and I continue to talk about the things we learned in this class and the ways they relate to our lives – pretty corny but totally true. On campus I sing in an a cappella group, Onomatopoeia, and work in the Cognitive Development Laboratory. I also love attempting to bake, so if you ever want to exchange recipes or discuss social psychology over a warm cupcake, let me know. See you in class!

**Becca Mark**
Email: rmark@wesleyan.edu
Phone: (914) 417-7076
Acceptable calling hours: 11:00 am to 11:00 pm
About me: I'm a senior from Rye, New York. I'm an English major, but I also have a special place in my heart for psychology. Social Psychology has been my favorite course that I've taken at Wesleyan so far, and I just can't get enough of it. On a more personal note, I have two brothers and a Cairn terrier named Winnie. I love going snowboarding in Vermont, and when I'm not TAing psych, I'm most likely at the gym. I'm a huge sports fan, and I enjoy watching football in particular. If you ever want to discuss Social Psych or maybe even football, come find me!
Carolyn Mortell  
Email: cmortell@wesleyan.edu  
Phone: (952) 221-6172  
Acceptable calling hours: 11:00 am to 11:00 pm  
About me: Carolyn is a senior Psychology and French double major who is apprehensive about leaving the Wes bubble and entering the real world. However, she is optimistic that she'll be able to use the skills she picked up in Social Psych to become and stay employed. If worse comes to worse, she supposes she could use that French degree to become an ex-pat in Paris. In the meantime, she fills her days by singing, playing piano, running, and baking (she's pretty sure the last two cancel each other out, though). She is excited to spend her last Wes fall as a Social Psych TA!

Michaela Swee  
Email: mswee@wesleyan.edu  
Phone: (917) 566-6964  
Acceptable calling hours: 9:00 am to 10:30 pm  
About me: I'm a senior psychology major, and I am so excited to be one of your TAs this semester! I was born and raised in New York City. I love to sing, act, dance, travel, and bake. I also love my volunteer work at Connecticut Valley Hospital, where I co-lead art therapy sessions for criminal defendants deemed incompetent and/or untrustworthy by the courts. I plan to pursue my PhD in psychology and hope to ultimately develop a career that involves a combination of developmental, forensic, social, and clinical psych. I have always been fascinated by the diverse ways in which people relate to one another and by the human condition in general, which is one reason social psychology moved me. Psy260 was one of the best classes I have taken at Wesleyan, and I am thrilled to take it again and this time be here for you and help with any questions or concerns you may have along the way. I can't wait to get to know as many of you as possible, and I wish you all an incredible semester!

Ema Tanovic  
Email: etanovic@wesleyan.edu  
Phone: (860) 794-2658  
Acceptable calling hours: 1:00 pm to 10:00 pm  
About me: Ema is a sophomore from Bosnia and Herzegovina; she often passes for an American until she is quizzed on state capitals. She loves cats, and back home she has five of her own, with whom she Skypes regularly. Since Wesleyan does not offer a Feline Studies major, she plans to double major in Psychology and Science in Society. In the long run, she hopes to pursue a career as a clinical psychologist. She also likes creative writing and is interested in linguistics, especially the study and translation of idioms. When she is not studying or working, Ema likes playing Nancy Drew video games, practicing her Russian, and online shopping.

Note: If you call a teaching apprentice and the person does not answer, please leave a voicemail message identifying yourself as a student in Social Psychology.