PSYC 317: Social Psychophysiology
Wesleyan University
004 ALLB, 7-9:50pm Wednesdays

Instructor
Name: Joseph Wellman, PhD  
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Office: 106 Judd Hall  
Office Hours: TTH 8-9am or By Appointment

Course Overview:
In recent decades more and more research has incorporated physiological markers when examining psychological phenomena. This seminar aims to introduce students to current physiological methods and findings within social psychological research. Course readings will cover how psychophysiological techniques can be used to examine stress, intergroup interaction, emotion, health, and person-perception. Topics Include: Social Psychophysiology & Embodiment, Biopsychosocial Model of Challenge and Threat, Neuroendocrine Model of Social Evaluative Cortisol, Oxytocin, Facial Electromyography & Emotion, Event-Related Potential, & Psychoneuroimmunology.

Course Assignments

Reaction Papers: Over the course of the semester you will write 6 reaction papers of your choice from the 11 opportunities listed on the schedule. Each reaction paper should cover the readings for a given topic. Reactions should include a brief summary of the readings/topic (1-2 Pages) and a reaction to them (2-3 pages). Reactions can include: What are the implications of the research? What was compelling? What was lacking? How might the methods be applied to other areas of Psychology? What do you think of the research conclusions? What questions has the research left you with? How might your questions be addressed through an additional study? What didn’t you understand? More prompts given at end of syllabus. Papers should be emailed to the instructor before class begins.

Presenter/Discussion Leader: During the semester you will be required to lead class discussion(s) of the assigned readings. In addition to facilitating class discussion(s) you will present a PowerPoint of optional reading assigned (* indicates those readings assigned for presentation) for your discussion day(s) (about 15-20 minutes).

Final Paper/ Research Proposal: At the end of the semester, students will write a final paper/research proposal related to a topic in social psychology. Your paper must uses a psychophysiological method discussed during the course. See “final paper format” section below.

Final Presentation: Students will present their research proposal to the class in the form of an oral PowerPoint presentation during the last week of class.

Course Policies
Attendance and Participation:
Participation and attendance is a critical aspect of this course. You are expected to attend each class and to arrive on time. You should come to class having completed all of the required readings assigned for that day.

Cell Phones: All cell phones are to be off and stowed. Cell phone use in class is a form of disrespect. If you are using one during class you will be dismissed from the class period and your participation grade will be lowered.
**Computers:** Use of a computer for any reason other than note taking, by any student may result in the loss of in-class computer use for all students.

**Late Policy:** Each day the assignment is late, 10% will be subtracted. *If an assignment is more than a week overdue it will no longer be accepted.*

No late final papers will be accepted.

**Grading**

15% Attendance and class participation  
15% Leading discussion  
30% Reaction papers  
40% Final paper/Presentation

**Grading scale:**

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<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>100-95%</td>
<td>A</td>
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**Academic Misconduct:**

Don’t do it. Plagiarizing another’s work, giving or receiving unauthorized aid on examinations or other assignments, or otherwise acting dishonestly is not acceptable. The consequences are severe: *Being Reported to the College For Disciplinary Action (e.g. possible expulsion, see Honor Code).*

**Students with Disabilities or Special Needs:**

If anyone feels they may require additional assistance in order to meet the goals and requirements of this course please see me privately. Disabilities need to be registered with the University. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation and have not contacted them, please do so as soon as possible and contact me privately to make arrangements.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction: Social Psychophysiology &amp; Embodiment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Biopsychosocial Model of Challenge and Threat</td>
<td>React: Challenge</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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<td>Feb 12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cortisol</td>
<td>React: Cortisol</td>
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<td>Guest Lecturer: Dr. Crystal Quillen</td>
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<td>Feb 19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Neuroendocrine Model of Social Evaluative Threat</td>
<td>React: NeuroThreat</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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<td>Feb 26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cellular Aging: Telomeres &amp; Telomerase</td>
<td>React: Telomeres</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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<td>March 5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Testosterone</td>
<td>React: Testosterone</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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<td>March 26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oxytocin</td>
<td>React: Oxytocin</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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<td>April 2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Facial Electromyography: Emotion</td>
<td>React: Emotion</td>
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<td>Paper: Individual Meetings to Discuss Paper This Week</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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<td>March 9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Event-Related Potential</td>
<td>React: Event</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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<td>April 16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>EEG</td>
<td>React: EEG</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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<td>April 23</td>
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<td>fMRI</td>
<td>React: fMRI</td>
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<td>Discussion Leader:</td>
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**SPRING BREAK (7th-24th of March)**
Reading List

**Social Psychophysiology & Embodiment**

**January 29th 2014**

Selected chapters 1 & 3


**Cardiovascular: Biopsychosocial Model of Challenge and Threat**

**January 5th 2014**


**Optional Reading**


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**Cortisol**

**February 12th 2013**


**Optional Reading**


**Neuroendocrine Model of Social Evaluative Threat**

**February 19th 2013**


**Optional Reading**


**Cellular Aging: Telomeres & Telomerase**

*February 26th, 2013*


**Optional Readings**


**Testosterone**

*March 5th, 2013*


Optional Readings


Oxytocin

March 26th 2013


Optional Reading


Facial Electromyography: Emotion

April 2nd, 2013


Optional Reading


**Event-Related Potential**

**April 9th, 2013**


Engelhardt, C. R., Bartholow, B. D., Kerr, G. T., & Bushman, B. J. (2011). This is your brain on violent video games: Neural desensitization to violence predicts increased aggression following violent video game exposure. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 47*(5), 1033-1036. doi: 10.1016/j.jesp.2011.03.027

**Optional Reading**


**Event-Related Potential**

**April 9th, 2013**


Engelhardt, C. R., Bartholow, B. D., Kerr, G. T., & Bushman, B. J. (2011). This is your brain on violent video games: Neural desensitization to violence predicts increased aggression following violent video game exposure. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 47*(5), 1033-1036. doi: 10.1016/j.jesp.2011.03.027

**Optional Reading**


**EEG**

**April 16th, 2013**


Optional Reading


fMRI
April 23rd 2013


Optional Readings


Psychoneuroimmunology
April 30th 2013


**Optional Reading**


POTENTIAL DISCUSSION POINTS FOR REACTION PAPERS

1) What issues are confusing or need clarification?

2) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the research both in terms of the methods and the validity of them?

3) Discuss alternative explanations for the findings. Do the explanations provided by the researchers make sense to you? Are there other explanations that seem compelling?

4) How can these readings be applied to real life? Do they explain why a social phenomenon or problem exists?

5) What are the implications of this research -- for social interaction, for personal relationships, for public policy?

6) What additional research questions does this work stimulate? What specific questions need further exploration? How would you test those hypotheses?

7) What seems important, surprising or interesting to you?
The format of your final paper should be as follows.

**Abstract:** Goal is to provide a brief overview of your paper. It includes your research question, your methods, results, and implications. No more than 200 words long.

**Introduction:** Goal of intro is to provide justification and background information about why this research should be conducted.
*Briefly explain the question that your research is addressing.
*Review previous research relevant to your question. Thoughtfully analyze the methods, findings, and interpretations of previous studies in a way that makes a persuasive argument for why the study you are proposing is important.

*End of Introduction Should Include:
*Provide a general overview of the method you will use to address your question.
*State your hypotheses, along with the conceptual rationale for each.
*State briefly what your proposed research is designed to add to previous research.

**Method:** Goal is to convey what you would do in your study in enough detail that someone else could replicate it.
*Describe the sample of participants - e.g., age, sex, race, # of participants and how you will recruit participants.
*Describe your experimental design.
*Describe procedures in detail. How would you run the study? What measures would you use?
*If you propose to use any questionnaires or measures from previous research, cite the source and describe the measure: item content and format, instructions to participants, and evidence for reliability and validity. If you construct your own measure, present the measure either in the text or in an appendix.

**Results:** Goal is to clearly & concisely explain what you expect to find.
*Summarize what you expect to find. Present the results in a way the clearly conveys the expected results. These are hypothetical findings.
*Be clear but concise in explaining the expected results.
*Include at least one figure of the hypothesized results.

**Discussion:** Goal is to provide an interpretation of your results, suggesting limitations to your research, and proposing future research directions.
*Summarize your expected findings.
*Discuss the theoretical and applied implications of your findings.
*Discuss how your findings fit with previous research.
*Discuss possible limitations of your study.
*Make suggestions for future research.

Your paper should be 12 -15 pages in length & should follow APA conventions. For some helpful hints about using APA style, see: http://www.uwsp.edu/psych/apa4b.htm