PSYC3052A Advanced Social Psychology  
Course Outline (2015-2016 Semester I)

Lecture: Thursday 16:30 to 18:20 (CPD 3.28)  
Tutorials: Monday 10:30 to 12:10 (LG.61)  
Tuesday 10:30 to 12:10 (CPD 3.41)  
Course Instructor: Nerissa HO  
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Teaching Assistant: Lance WONG  
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Office hour: Tue 16:30 to 17:30, or by appointment

Course Goals
This laboratory course aims to:
1. explore selected controversies, emerging perspectives, and cutting-edge research in the realms of personality and social psychology.
2. critically review the utility of current personality and social psychological constructs in explaining and predicting behaviors.
3. examine the alternatives provided by competing theoretical and research approaches that seek a better solution to some problems in psychological research.
4. equip students with advanced research skills that enable students to conduct independent research and report findings to a broad audience.

Learning Outcomes
At the end of the course, students should be able to:
1. challenge existing modes of thought and resolve controversies through integrating seemingly opposing approaches.
2. analyze real-life issues and problems using personality and social psychological theories.
3. design a small-scale psychological study, formulate testable hypotheses, and write a scientific report individually.
4. communicate ideas, research materials, and findings via discussion, presentation, and writing.
5. discuss and critically evaluate others’ research ideas and design.

Class Schedule

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<th>Tutorial</th>
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<td>Sept 3</td>
<td>Public Holiday</td>
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<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>L1: Introduction and Orientation</td>
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<td>L2: Positive vs. Negative: A Double-Edged Sword?</td>
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<td>L3: Automatic vs. controlled: Who is responsible?</td>
<td>TP2</td>
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<td>TP3</td>
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<td>Poster Presentation and Peer Critique</td>
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<td>Revision Week: Poster Presentation and Peer Critique</td>
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<td>Assessment Period: No class</td>
<td>Final Proposal (Dec 10)</td>
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Course Activities and Requirements

Class Participation: Group Discussion / Presentation (10%) & Tutorials (10%)

This seminar is heavily oriented toward discussion, and so participation on the part of the students is vital for its success. Students are expected to attend all classes and to come prepared to discuss the assigned questions on each topic. Readings—including journal articles and book chapters—will constitute the bases of class discussions. In the discussions, each student will be assessed by how actively he or she (a) engages in the group discussion, (b) offers own ideas and relevant comments, and (c) builds on the ideas and comments of other students. The more students participate and are well prepared for class, the more they will retain what they have learned in this seminar. So please arrive in class on time, and remain for the duration of the class period. After the discussion, each group will share with the whole class what they have discussed by presenting their group answers.

Thought Piece (10%)

Prior to each class, students are expected to complete all the assigned readings and write a thought piece (1-2 double-spaced pages) on their reactions to the readings on each of the selected topics (TP1-TP4, see page 1). The primary purpose of these assignments is to prepare students for class discussion, and so late thought pieces will NOT be marked. Short, precise answers are expected, and long answers that exceed the page limit will not be read. Please submit all thought pieces VIA MOODLE before 10:00am on the due date (lecture date) and bring a paper copy to class. No late thought piece will be accepted.

Brainstorming (10%)

Students will form into small groups, with each topic (L2 to L7) being responsible by two groups. The groups responsible for the topic of a particular class will have to find a research study (related to the topic) and present to the whole class the method engaged for exploring the research question. The presenters will remark on the strengths and potential flaws of the study from a methodological viewpoint for the class to comment. This task is aimed to inspire students to diverse research ideas.

Research Proposal (50%)

At the end of the semester, each student will hand in a research proposal. The topic of the paper must receive prior approval from the instructor or TA. This paper provides students with an opportunity to delve into a topic covered in this course in greater depth, think critically about theories/principles and methodology, and gain some hands-on experience in conducting research. Students may work with other students to collect articles/books, discuss research or review each other’s papers; however, the final product must be independently written.

Each paper is to be 10-12 pages long (excluding title page, abstract, and references), double-spaced, typed, stapled, and must adhere to the APA Publication Manual. Papers not adhering to the APA style (6th edition) will lose points. Before submitting the final paper, students are required to submit two drafts. The first draft should be a group work of two students. This should include contents (in bullet forms) to be included in the Introduction and Method section (at least two relevant methods from existing research should be included) (5%). The second draft and final paper should be individual formal write-ups of the Introduction, Method, Expected Results and Discussion sections (10%). Both drafts should be submitted before 10:00am on due date (see page 1). The final paper (25%) is due by 5:00pm on due date (see page 1). Late drafts and papers will lose 20% of grade per day for
the particular course component. **No drafts or papers will be accepted 1 week after the due date.**

Please submit all drafts and the final paper in **BOTH paper and soft copies**. Soft copies should be submitted VIA MOODLE to the TA. Paper copies should be submitted to the **PIGEON HOLE of TA** at the Department Office (Room 6.27, Jockey Club Tower). **When you submit your second and final drafts, please attach the hardcopy of your previous draft(s).** The deadlines apply to BOTH paper and soft copies.

Evaluation of the draft/paper is based on the following criteria:

1) accuracy of application of personality/social psychological principles, formulation of hypotheses, and description of research methodology
2) conceptual adequacy and mastery of the literature
3) quality of argument and presentation of topic
4) critical evaluation of conceptualization and research design
5) quality and clarity of writing
6) utilization of feedback on drafts in revision (final paper only)

A copy of the grading criteria will be distributed, and you are advised to read them before preparing the draft and final paper. Each student will communicate his/her final work in the form of poster presentation (10%).

**Peer Critique (10%)**

During poster presentations, each student (the audience) is required to give constructive feedback based on the content of other students’ work.

**Reading List**

Personality and Social Psychology has grown so large that it is impossible to cover all topics, even when focusing only on recent works. The coverage of this seminar is thus somewhat selective. Because the course is intended as a broad overview of an extensive field, we will cover topics in a rather cursory fashion. Students who find the materials interesting and applicable to their further research interests are encouraged to discuss with the instructor.

**Topic 1: Introduction**


**Topic 2: Positive vs. Negative: A Double-Edged Sword?**

Topic 3: Automaticity vs. controllability: Who is responsible?

Topic 4: Trait vs. Situation: Human Mastering the Environment?

Topic 5: Universal vs. Cultural: We are the World?

Topic 6: Self- vs. Peer-Report

Topic 7: Experimental Approach
Important Notes (Please read them carefully)

Students should send the soft copy of the thought piece via Moodle BEFORE coming to class. Paper copies should be identical to the soft copies of the work. The soft copy will be checked for plagiarism against a database of articles, books, webpages, and essays submitted by students at HKU and other universities. No scores will be given for an assignment that contains plagiarized materials. Further penalties will also be applied. These penalties include a zero mark for the course. Plagiarism will also be reported to your Faculty for consideration of possible disciplinary action.

Although you are encouraged to share your views and course-relevant resources with your classmates, NEVER show them any of your own written work (drafts or completed assignments). Things other people wrote (whether published or unpublished) may be used in your assignments only with proper acknowledgement and referencing. Neither may you use materials submitted for another course without proper acknowledgement (This is called self-plagiarism).

All acts of dishonesty in any work constitute academic misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying other students’ work, and abetting to any of the above. Any academic misconduct will subject students to a Failing grade in this course.

Classroom citizenship. Sometimes we will discuss controversies in certain topics. Please respect other people in this class, even if they hold different and opposing opinions. Rudeness, lack of consideration, or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in such behaviors may be requested to leave the classroom. Moreover, to show respect to the presentation groups and other people, please switch off your mobile phone and do not use a computer (unless you have gained the instructor’s approval) in class.

Sick leave policy. For class participation, when original copy of the doctor’s certificate is submitted to your tutor within 1 week (longer time will be allowed with approval granted by tutor within that 1 week), participation will be based on the average of the other classes. Absence without doctor’s certificate or other valid reason preapproved by the lecturer/tutor will receive zero mark for participation of the particular class/tutorial. The same policy applies to thought pieces except that is permissible only if your doctor gives you TWO or more consecutive days of sick leave inclusive of the class day.

For submission of drafts / papers, if students get sick on the due date, he/she should notify (email) the tutor and send a copy of the current state-of-work before the due time in order to be granted extension, which is permissible only if your doctor gives you TWO or more consecutive days of sick leave inclusive of the day on which the work is due. Original copy of the doctor’s certificate should be submitted together with your work so that late penalty will be waived for the period of the sick leave. Note that for sick leave of longer than TWO consecutive days, students will also have to apply for formal medical leave from university in order to be granted further extension.