

SOC 401 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Syllabus

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COURSE CREDIT:

Three Semester Hours

PREREQUISITES:

SOC 201 The Sociological Imagination with a grade of C or above.

COURSE MATERIALS:

Required Text:

Lovaglia, M. *Knowing People: The Personal Use of Social Psychology, second edition*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (2007)
ISBN-10: 0-7425-4772-8 (paper back).

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will look at Social Psychology from a sociological perspective. It will consider (1) social experience gained from the individuals' participation in social groups, (2) interaction with others, (3) the effects of the cultural environment on both social experience and interactions with others, and (4) the emergence of social structure from these interactions.

Social psychology deals with the interface between society and individuals. It explores the influence of social forces on individual behavior, repeated patterns of everyday behavior, and keys to understanding everyday actions in many areas of human conduct. No other course in sociology deals so directly with understanding the ways in which people function on a daily basis.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Objectives:

1. Cover Symbolic Interactionism, Exchange Theory, and Micro-structural Sociology.
2. Provide students with a variety of frameworks, from which to view interpersonal interactions. These frameworks may include dramaturgy, ethnomethodology, and the exchange approach.
3. Provide knowledge about, and experience in, how groups can effectively work together.
4. Provide students with experiences in at least two areas of social psychology.
5. Provide students an opportunity to improve their discussion, presentation, and writing skills.
6. Points specifically emphasized include:
 - a. to have students understand the basic concepts involved in symbolic interactionism
 - b. to have students master the operational ideas within symbolic interactionist theory which must be mastered by human behaviorists in order to comprehend basic causes of human behavior
 - c. to give students hands-on practice with the ideas of symbolic interactionism in regards to specifically analyzing human interactions

Outcomes:

- A. Contrast micro and macro sociology.
- B. Recognize the basic tenants of symbolic interactionism.
- C. Examine the power of the situation in determining human behavior.
- D. Classify perspectives on impression management and persuasion.
- E. Apply principles of sociologically oriented social psychology to personal and professional life.
- F. Develop effective writing skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Requirements for this course include a self-description, answers to the Study Guide Questions for each of the ten chapters in the textbook, ten written exercises from the text (called Self-Applications in your textbook), and proctored (closed book and notes) midterm and final exams.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND SCALE:

In alignment with ASC academic policies, no D may apply to a major or minor field.

Grade Distribution:

Lovaglia Chapter Questions (Chapters 1-10)	50 points
Self-applications (Chapters 1-10)	50 points
Proctored Midterm Exam	100 points
Proctored Final Exam	<u>100 points</u>
Total Points Possible	300

Scale:

270-300	A
240-269	B
210-239	C
180-209	D
179 and below	F

COURSE INSTRUCTIONS

Proceed through this course in the following manner:

Write a self-description including anything you feel that would help me better understand you and your life situation. Any length is fine.

Read Lovaglia Chapter 1. Read it as many times as necessary to understand the material.

Answer the Study Guide Questions on Chapter 1. Respond thoughtfully and thoroughly if you wish your answers to count. DO NOT make the mistake of simply looking at a question then going to the chapter and searching for the answer. If you do this without reading the chapter, you will not understand how different ideas fit together and you will miss much material.

Do a Self-Application from the textbook for Chapter 1. You have great freedom to choose how you do this, but the general idea is to discuss a significant number of the major ideas from the chapter in regards to how they might apply to your own life or to the lives of others. Use as much of the language of social psychology found in your text as you have mastered. If upon completion you feel certain you have accomplished something major in advancing your own ability to understand and utilize this type of thinking, then your effort will be acceptable. Your self-application should be approximately one to two pages in length.

Self-Application Example:

Chapter 6: Self Application

Throughout this chapter, I learned some important information regarding the art of persuasion. I, like the author, like to argue and always want to be right. My belief is that logic and common sense should be prevalent enough to come up to the same conclusions that I have. I've not taken into account the emotions of a person and what they think might be in it for me. When I make arguments (depending on the situation), I want to come to a decision that will best accommodate everyone involved. Others will agree that I put other peoples' interest way before my own. For example, during the holiday season, there was an overnight shift at work that had to be covered for someone who had a family emergency and was unable to work. The person who did the scheduling for the program came to me and said that she had talked to everyone personally and nobody was willing to cover the shift. During staff meeting a couple days later, I discussed the open overnight shift. In my discussion I talked up the team as to how great we were compared to other programs, how tight we have bonded and are always helping one another. At the end, I offered to cover part of the overnight shift (mentioning that I was an exempt employee and wouldn't get paid for the extra hours) and was looking for others who would split the shift with me. More than half of the staff offered to help with the shift. My staff is aware that I do not expect them to do anything that I have not or will not do myself and although I don't have to prove it, it reassures their perception of me when I do.

While revisiting this situation, I wondered why the supervisor was unable to get anyone to work the overnight shift. She was more than prepared to do it herself until the staff meeting. She has a good rapport with most all of the staff but is still somewhat new to her position as supervisor. I have a greater influence over the staff than she does due to my position, competence and rapport with all the staff members individually and as a team. Since she is new to the position, she has yet to gain this status and trust with all the staff. Talking up the team as a whole put everyone in a good mood, not to mention that I announced we were awarded "Provider of the Year" by the Division of Youth Corrections for this year. When I presented the lack of coverage as a team issue, the majority of staff was willing to jump in and help out. Everyone but myself was to gain financially from this shift as it would have been overtime for most. Showing that I was willing to go above and beyond set the bar high for everyone and many were ready to meet the challenge.

Above I mentioned that I always like to be right, and so does my wife. Often times this ends up in pretty funny debates as to how we can convince each other of our view. Most of these debates are over trivial issues that neither of us care about and being right or wrong will not impact us either way. We both like to argue. In my bookcase I have a book by Gerry Spence *How to Argue and Win Every Time*. This is a book I read almost 10 years ago and barely remember the information in it. My wife has seen the book (not read it) and refers to it often in the context that I might need to brush up and read the book again just to spite me. Recently we had a discussion regarding preschool for our oldest daughter. She did a lot of research regarding the educational opportunities in our community and had scheduled a tour. The school we were to tour was for low to middle class families and a very few high income families. To my complete astonishment we were considered high income. The chances were not good that we would be able to get into this school due to our status. Other schools in the area were primarily Christian based schools. My wife is uncomfortable with sending our children to Christian schools mainly because she never has been to church and it is "the unknown" to her. She has no

desire to even attend a church sermon to see what it's about. I on the other hand, went to church every Sunday of my youth. I am much more comfortable sending my children to a Christian school than she is because of my familiarity with it. In my persuasion to get her to at least consider a Christian school, I mentioned that neither one of us has anything to lose in this situation. The schooling is for our daughter and regardless of biases we need to consider all options. Maybe I do remember a thing or two from Gerry Spence. In the end we both agreed to visit 3-4 preschool programs and pick the one we felt would be best for our daughter, biases aside.

In this situation we both had emotional views that went beyond our daughter's education. I am more comfortable with a Christian based school due to my past experiences with church and the type of people that church collects (as in good natured people). On the other hand, a school for mostly low income families can put our daughter in a position of mingling with children or siblings of our clients. Not that she would have any knowledge of this but the idea that we do make enemies could potentially put her at harm. What a thought. Might as well home school!

COURSE INSTRUCTIONS (continued)

Go on to Chapters 2 – 5 answering the Study Guide Questions and Self-Applications for each chapter.

E-mail (much preferred), mail, or fax your assignments to me two or three chapters at a time. I will respond with comments as soon as possible. Save a copy of the answers to the chapter questions as they will be your study guide for the midterm and final exam.

After sending in Chapters 1 – 5 (Study Guide Questions and Self-Applications) and receiving my feedback on these chapters, but before beginning Chapter 6, you must take the Proctored Midterm Exam over Chapters 1 – 5. Refer to the Guidelines for Proctored Exams and submit your Exam Request Form **three weeks BEFORE** you plan to take the exam.

After receiving your midterm exam grade and feedback, you may then continue with Chapters 6 – 10 and submit the Study Guide Questions and Self Applications for each chapter.

After sending in Chapters 6 – 10 (Study Guide Questions and Self-Applications) and receiving feedback, you may take your Proctored Final Exam over Chapters 6 – 10. Refer to the Guidelines for Proctored Exams and submit your Exam Request Form **three weeks BEFORE** you plan to take the exam.

After I have received and graded your final exam, I will turn in your course grade to the ASC Extended Studies Office as soon as possible.