

# PSYC\*4310, Course Outline: Winter 2026

## General Information

**Course Title:** Advanced Topics in Social and Applied Social Psychology

**This course will be presented in the Face-to-Face format.**

The course has a set day, time and location of class.

University of Guelph **strongly recommends** that all students, faculty, and staff receive updated vaccinations against COVID-19. However, please see the website listed below for the most recent information on COVID-19 requirements at the University of Guelph and what to do if you become ill.

**If you develop a cough or any respiratory illness symptoms**, according to university guidelines, you must wear a properly fitted (medical) mask in all public settings (including in class) for 10 days after the start of your symptoms.

<https://news.uoguelph.ca/covid-19/safety-practices/>

### **Course Description:**

This course will critically examine theoretical approaches and research in the field of applied social psychology, with a particular focus on community-based research and work aimed at generating intervention strategies intended to ameliorate social and practical problems. The course will also consider implications for social policy.

**Credit Weight:** 0.50

**Academic Department (or campus):** Department of Psychology

**Semester Offering:** Winter 2026

**Class Schedule:** Mondays 2:30-5:20pm

**Location:** MCKN 231

### **Instructor Information:**

Instructor Name: Dr. Shayna Skakoon-Sparling, Ph.D.

Instructor Email: [s.sparling@uoguelph.ca](mailto:s.sparling@uoguelph.ca)

*(please include **PSYC 4310** in subject of all emails).*

*I will attempt to respond to emails within 48 hours, Monday through Friday.*

Office location: MacKinnon Extension, room 4016

Office hours: by appointment (virtual or face to face)

**GTA Information:**

Name: Riya Sharma

Email: [rsharm32@uoguelph.ca](mailto:rsharm32@uoguelph.ca)

Office Hours: Please contact the TA to make 10-15-minute appointments, as needed.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the course, a successful student will be able to:

1. Extract and integrate information from assigned readings.
2. Ask and attempt to answer questions from a critical perspective.
3. Actively listen to one's classmates and thoughtfully and respectfully respond to one's classmates' points and questions.
4. Express your ideas effectively through participating in class discussions, participation responses, and written responses to course material.
5. Write in a sophisticated and persuasive manner, clearly conveying an intended message to a target audience.
6. Apply social psychological theory to several different contexts, including your own research interests.

**Throughout this course**, a successful student will be able to:

7. Demonstrate personal responsibility to their classmates by thoroughly reading all assigned readings and arriving at class on time.
8. Demonstrate personal responsibility to the instructor and the TAs by being highly familiar with the course syllabus and all other official course documents, announcements, and emails.
9. Demonstrate appropriate academic independence, personal organization, and time management in completing assigned course tasks.

**Course Content:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Jan 5 <sup>th</sup>	<i>No Class</i>	
Jan 12 <sup>th</sup>	Overview of applied social psychology	
Jan 19 <sup>th</sup>	AS Theories #1: Social Cognitive Theory & #2: Theory of Planned Behaviour	
Jan 26 <sup>th</sup>	AS Theories #3: Social Identity Theory & #4: Social Norms	<i>Group Presentation x2</i>
Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Applied Social Psychological Interventions	Group Presentation
Feb 9 <sup>th</sup>	Health Psychology	Group Presentation
Feb 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Reading Week</b>	<b>No Class!</b>
Feb 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Community-Based Research	<b>Exam #1</b>
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sexuality and Sexual Health	Group Presentation
March 9 <sup>th</sup>	Sexuality and Sexual Health	Group Presentation
March 16 <sup>th</sup>	Loneliness	Group Presentation
March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Loneliness	Group Presentation
March 30 <sup>th</sup>	None	<b>Exam #2</b>

**Course Assignments and Tests:**

<b>Assignment or Test</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Contribution to Final Mark (%)</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes Assessed</b>
Participation in seminar discussions	Varied	17%	1,2,3,4,6,7,9
Group Presentation and discussion facilitation	Varied	20%	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9
Infographic	March 27 <sup>th</sup>	13%	1,4,5,8,9
Exam #1	Feb 23 <sup>rd</sup>	20%	1,4,5,6,9
Exam #2	March 30 <sup>th</sup>	30%	1,4,5,6,9

## **Participation in seminar discussion**

Given that this course is a seminar, most of the learning will take place via your readings and during in-class discussions. The seminar will be a collaborative effort between the students to produce thoughtful analysis and discussion. The class will meet once a week to discuss the assigned topics. The readings are organized around a particular topic area and are intended to provide a common knowledge base from which relevant theoretical, methodological, and practical issues can be addressed. Class members are expected to read the assigned material in advance and be prepared to discuss a) the strengths and weaknesses of the research, b) the adequacy of the existing research, c) ideas for future research, and d) confusing points in the readings. Some reminders of important participation skills will be provided during the first meeting.

## **Required Texts:**

All of the articles in the schedule of readings can be found at the library. Copies will be made available on Courselink for your convenience whenever possible.

## **Other Resources:**

Please visit the [CourseLink](#) site regularly to obtain important information and materials for this course (e.g., readings, grades, etc.).

## **Cost of Texts:**

There are no costs associated with obtaining the reading materials for this course.

## **Course Policies**

### **Grading Policies**

[Undergraduate Grading Procedures](#)

### **Past/Future Work**

Work done in this class cannot duplicate work you have already submitted for another class (including thesis and independent study courses). You can work on a component of your thesis/dissertation/other upcoming project if it is a good fit for the class assignment, but your submission for this class cannot be material that another faculty member has already given you feedback on.

### **Policy regarding materials provided by the instructor and their designates**

The material shared by the course instructor or by their designate (e.g., TA) as part of this course, including copies of the lecture slides, are solely for the personal use of the authorized registered student for the duration of the course and may NOT be reproduced, or transmitted to others, whether it is in their original format or a modified

version, without the express written consent of the course instructor. This includes sharing course materials to other websites or large language models (AI bots).

**Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:**

Electronic recording of classes by students is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted (that is, you have asked for the presenter's permission and they have said yes) these are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced or transmitted to others without the express written consent of the instructor.

**University Policies**

**Email communications**

Ontario legislation on the right to disconnect from work requires employers to create a written policy. Correspondingly, University of Guelph has developed a written [Disconnecting from Work Policy](#) and a corresponding [FAQ](#). Following from this policy, email responses to student questions will only be sent during business hours Monday to Friday. The instructor will endeavour to respond to student questions within 2 business days.

**Academic Consideration**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Grounds for Academic Consideration](#)

**Academic Misconduct**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the appropriate section of the [Graduate Calendar](#).

**University Policy on the Use of AI Technologies**

Students' work must reflect their unique intellectual capacity and demonstrate the application of critical thinking and problem solving. Unauthorized use of AI to complete assessments violates the fundamental intellectual purposes of the University and does not demonstrate student achievement of course learning outcomes.

Submission of materials completed by AI, without permission of the instructor, constitutes an offence under the University's academic misconduct policies, either as a form of plagiarism or the use of unauthorized aids.

Acceptable use of AI should be determined by the course instructor and may vary across disciplines, programs and types of assessments. In setting out course requirements and assessment criteria, the instructor should specify allowable uses of AI, if any, through the course outline and/or the learning management system (e.g., CourseLink). Clarity about the acceptable use of AI is critical for students and instructors. Students are responsible for appropriately referencing how and to what extent they have used AI in assessments in keeping with University and course requirements.

*\*Please note that the use of AI/LLM is not permitted for PSYC\*4310.*

### **Accessibility**

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email [csd@uoguelph.ca](mailto:csd@uoguelph.ca) or see the website: [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

### **Student Feedback Questionnaire**

These questionnaires (formerly course evaluations) will be available to students during the last 2 weeks of the semester. Students will receive an email directly from the Student Feedback Administration system which will include a direct link to the questionnaire for this course. During this time, when a student goes to login to Courselink, a reminder will pop-up when a task is available to complete.

[Student Feedback Questionnaire](#)

### **Drop date**

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is in the graduate calendar. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Academic Calendar: [Current Graduate Calendar](#).

Instructors must provide [meaningful and constructive feedback, at minimum 20% of the final course grade, prior to the 40th class day](#). For courses which are of shorter duration, 20% of the final grade must be provided two-thirds of the way through the course.

**A Note on The Grading of This Course:**

*Grades and other evaluations reflect your performance in a course. In other words, your mark is something that you earn based on the quality of your work; it is not something assigned to you at random by the instructor or your TAs. Sometimes you can work really hard on an assignment or test and still receive a grade lower than what you hoped for because your work did not meet the requirements. Similarly, I could try really hard to knit a sweater and the result may still not fit the wearer how I hoped it would, no matter the amount of time or effort I felt I had expended.*

*Your TAs and I take time to carefully evaluate the performance of all of our students throughout the course. Still, there are a handful of students every semester who insist on contacting us to argue their grades, without being able to present strong evidence for a grading error. Many instructors find these types of attempts to negotiate for a higher grade a sign of disrespect. Additionally, it can be interpreted as a sign that the student thinks that their instructor or TA doesn't carefully evaluate grading and performance. I understand that this may not be your intention, but nonetheless, be mindful when sending emails.*

*This does not mean that you should not feel welcome to raise any concerns you may have about your assignments or exams, I wish only for you to be aware that unfounded negotiation can be a detriment to your reputation as a student. If you feel that an error has been made in the grading of an exam or assignment, I encourage you to raise your concerns with us; however, I will ask that you be able to present strong evidence of a grading error if you do so. Importantly, if you are unclear about the value of an assignment (or extra credit) for any course, please take time to clarify with your instructor and/or your TAs well before the end of the semester or the due date of an assignment.*