

# PSYC\*4310-01, Course Outline: Winter 2016

## General Information

**Course Title:** Advanced Social Psychology: The psychology of social groups

**Course Description:**

North American psychology's disciplinary tradition is to approach issues from an individualistic perspective. It typically is based on the assumption that individuals are independent of their social environment. Yet, the way in which individuals perceive themselves and how they act, however, is inextricably shaped by the socio-cultural groups they belong to.

This course aims to change how you view the world from a psychological perspective by introducing you to the notion of social groups and their influence on human psychology. Whether they are defined through a shared characteristic (e.g., ethnicity, language) or a common interest (e.g., occupation, sport) socio-cultural groups help people define who they are and provide norms on how members should typically act. Individuals rely on these norms as reference points to guide and assess their actions as they negotiate their complex social world. Through these processes, and others, socio-cultural groups play a fundamental role in how people live their lives, such as by helping them fulfill many of their needs, including the need to experience affiliation, or by shaping how they interact with members of their group and of other groups

Throughout the course we will examine the psychology behind joining and maintaining membership in socio-cultural groups, as well as the consequences, both functional and dysfunctional, of the influence of groups for human emotions, thoughts and behaviour.

Beyond learning about the psychology of social groups a central feature of this course involves experiential learning about the psychology of social groups. In small groups students will work on questions assigned by the instructor. These group work experiences will provide direct experience about the phenomenon discussed in the course, such as groupthink and group polarization. In addition, students will learn key skills to optimize their functioning when working in groups, such as active listening skills, and they will practice using these skills as they work in groups.

**Credit Weight:** 0.50

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

**Semester Offering:** Winter 2016

**Class Schedule and Location:** Fridays 8:30am to 11:20am, MACK 236

**Course website:** Please visit regularly the course website at <http://courselink.uoguelph.ca> to obtain important information and materials for this course (e.g., instructions for assignments, lecture slides).

**Prerequisite(s):**

1. PSYC\*3300, PSYC\*3310, PSYC\*3500 or PSYC\*3450
2. A cumulative average of at least 70% in all course attempts in Psychology is also required, see psychology core statement for important additional information

**Instructor Information**

Instructor Name: Dr. Benjamin Giguère

Instructor Email: bgiguere@uoguelph.ca

Office location: MacKinnon Building Extension (MACK) 4007 (*newer part of MACK, with 4 digit rooms*)

Office hours: Mondays 10:30am to 11:30am  
Wednesdays 1pm to 2pm

**GTA Information**

GTA Name: R. Tom Beggs, MSc

GTA Email: beggsr@uoguelph.ca

GTA office location: TBA

GTA office hours: TBA

**Course Content****Specific Learning Outcomes:****Specific Learning Outcomes:**

1. **Critical and creative thinking:** Critical and creative thinking is when one applies logical principles and known evidence, after much inquiry and analysis, to solve problems with a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking and risk taking. The specific aspects of this outcome that are intended for students in this course:
  - 1.1. Demonstrate mastery of a body of knowledge about psychology of social groups
  - 1.2. Gather, review, evaluate, and interpret information; compare the merits of alternate hypotheses in core areas of psychology
  - 1.3. Extract and integrate information from social psychology original work
  - 1.4. Critically evaluate the limits of their own knowledge and how these limits influence analysis
  - 1.5. Ask in-depth and specific questions regarding psychological material, including reliability of the source, and evaluate it critically
  - 1.6. Recognize the importance of supporting statements with evidence

2. **Literacy:** Literacy is the ability to extract information from a variety of resources, assess the quality and validity of the material, and use it to discover new knowledge. The ability to use methodological and quantitative literacy also exists in this definition. The specific aspects of this outcome that are intended for students in this course:
  - 2.1. Evaluate relevance and quality of sources used, including of the psychological information within those sources
  - 2.2. Identify gaps in the existing knowledge base tied to the relevant topics
  - 2.3. Generate theory to fill identified gaps in the existing literature covered in the course
  
3. **Communication:** Communication includes the ability to communicate and synthesize psychological research and theory, generate and communicate arguments, communicate constructive feedback, and communicate analyses accurately and reliably. Four specific aspects of this outcome are intended for students in this course:
  - 3.1. Demonstrate a well-developed ability to extract theoretical and empirical information from complex psychological texts and articles
  - 3.2. Generate ideas and questions from written text in the field of psychology
  - 3.3. Write with appropriate vocabulary, APA style adherence, proper referencing, and little grammatical, spelling or functional errors
  - 3.4. Use a breadth of vocabulary appropriate to the discipline of psychology
  - 3.5. Effectively edit their own work and that of others
  - 3.6. Facilitate discussion of complex concepts effectively
  - 3.7. Demonstrate the ability to present information in ways that the receiving party can easily understand
  - 3.8. Actively listen, reflect upon, and respond effectively to questions while acknowledging limitations to one's psychological knowledge
  - 3.9. Use experience and psychological knowledge and apply this to solve complex problems or explore complex psychological issues in an original way
  - 3.10. Integrate psychological knowledge and communicate this effectively
  
4. **Professional and ethical behaviour:** Professional and ethical behaviour requires the ability to accomplish the tasks at hand with proficient skills in teamwork and leadership; while remembering to use ethical reasoning and research results when making decisions. The ability for organizational and time management skills is essential in bringing together all aspects of managing self and others. Academic integrity is central to mastery in this outcome. Four specific aspects of this outcome are intended for students in this course:
  - 4.1. Demonstrate a personal responsibility and accountability to the group
  - 4.2. Demonstrate awareness of each member's contributions to the group
  - 4.3. Demonstrate sensitivity to the complex interpersonal processes that result from group work
  - 4.4. Has a positive effect on others when in a leadership role
  - 4.5. Influence and guide others to work in a manner which is effective
  - 4.6. Effectively guide a group using a strategic vision

**Course Content:**

The structure of this course involves both more traditional approaches to education, such as lectures and exams, as well as more active and experiential forms of learning, such as group work and evaluation of group peers. Thus, this course is about more than learning content, it involves experiencing group phenomenon. The multifaceted approaches involved in this course make it rather different than a course primarily based on lectures. Success in the course, in terms of meeting the objectives, depends highly on your willingness to genuinely participate in the activities that we do in class.

Weekly meetings will consist of a combination of lectures and small group discussions (approx. 6-8 students each). One person in each group will take primary responsibility for leading the discussions among their small group—alternating from one person to the next. The format will change for the last few weeks of the course during which we will have student presentation.

It is **essential** that you come to class prepared by carefully reading the assigned materials, taking notes and thinking through the issues. A large part of each meeting is discussion based. Being a fourth year advanced seminar it is expected that you will take charge of your learning, demonstrating emerging maturity as an autonomous student (as opposed to depending on a professor to tell you what is important, or what you should learn), given that in a few months you will not be able to rely on professors after your graduation. You thus need to ensure that you read and understand the readings before coming to class.

Discussions are meant to promote learning outcomes, such as making connections between different aspects of the content of the course and exploring controversies through critical thinking. They will also provide you direct experiences with many of the group processes we will discuss during the course. In line with some of the other activities of the course (presentations, peer review) group discussions aim to provide you opportunities to develop your “soft skills” (e.g., communication, team work, leadership), which are increasingly coveted on the job market across multiple fields.

Discussion questions will be made available approximately one week before class in order to help you prepare for the discussions.

In addition to discussion, short lectures will complement the readings either by extending them or discussion other notions tied to the theme of the topic. A PDF copy of the lecture slides for each lecture, with the copyrighted material removed, will be posted on the course website. Please review the policy regarding course material found in the course policy section of this outline before downloading them.

Week	Meeting	Date	Topic
1	1	Jan 15th	Course overview & Overview of the psychology of social groups part 1
2	2	Jan 22th	Overview of the psychology of social groups part 2, group discussion skills & creation of discussion groups
3	3	Jan 29th	Productivity and performance
4	4	Feb 5th	Working and Brainstorming in groups
5	5	<b>Feb 12th</b>	<b>Exam #1 (10% or 20%)</b>
		<i>Feb 19th</i>	<i>No class Reading week!</i>
6	6	Feb 26th	Thinking and Decision making
7	7	Mar 4th	Groups as social categories
8	8	Mar 11th	Social influence (or minority influence)
		<i>Mar 11<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>is the 40<sup>th</sup> day of class-- Last day to drop one semester courses</i>
9	9	Mar 18th	Group identity
10		<i>Mar 25th</i>	<i>No class scheduled (holiday)</i>
11	10	<b>Apr 1st</b>	<b>Exam #2 (10% or 20%)</b>
12	<b>11</b>	<b>Apr 8th</b>	<b>Group project work session (5%)</b>

### Course Assignments and Tests:

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
Exam 1	Feb 12th	10% or 20%	1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 2.2; 2.3; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.9;
Exam 2	April 1st	10% or 20%	1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 2.2; 2.3; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.9;
Participation to and facilitation of group discussion	Varies by component (see participation instructions)	30%	1.4; 1.5; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 3.1; 3.2; 3.4; 3.6; 3.7; 3.8; 3.10; 4.1; 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5; 4.6
Group project Collective vs. individual solutions to a collective problem	Varies by component (see term project instructions)	40%	1.6; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5; 3.7; 3.9; 3.10; 4.1; 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5

**Additional Notes:**

**Exam #1:** The exam will contain approximately 10 multiple-choice questions and 3 open-ended questions (approximately one to two handwritten page each). These questions are directly taken from or adapted from the discussion questions done in class. The exam will cover all the material up to the exam date. The highest of exam 1 and 2 will be worth 20% of your final grade, while the lowest will be worth 10% of your final grade. **Please MAKE SURE YOU HAVE your student ID card, a few sharpened HB pencils and an eraser with you at the exam.**

**Exam #2:** The exam will contain approximately 10 multiple-choice questions and 3 open-ended questions (approximately one to two handwritten page each). These questions are directly taken from or adapted from the discussion questions done in class. The exam will focus on all the material covered since exam 1. There will not be any detailed questions on the material covered before exam 1. However, please note that some material covered prior to exam 1 may still be relevant to the questions of this exam. The highest of exam 1 and 2 will be worth 20% of your final grade, while the lowest will be worth 10% of your final grade. **Please MAKE SURE YOU HAVE your student ID card, a few sharpened HB pencils and an eraser with you at the exam.**

**Participation:** Participation will be primarily based on your involvement in group discussions held in class (15%). Your genuine contributions to these discussions through relevant comments on assigned readings, for example, will play a key role in participation. Your participation will also include your facilitation of group discussion (5%), the evaluations completed by your peers (5%), as well as your evaluation of your peers (5%). More information on how participation is assessed is available on the course website.

**Term project:** For your term project, in teams of 2 (3 if needed), you will be asked to put your newly acquired knowledge about the psychology of social groups into practice by taking a challenge that individuals face in Canadian society (e.g., prejudice, mental illness, being physically active; disparities in health, such as obesity, or in education) and compare an individual approach to think about it and/or address it to a group based approach. You will be asked to find specific examples of each approach. Your comparison will cover your theoretical approaches for each perspective, its ease of implementation and discuss its (potential) effectiveness. Your term project grade will also include your participation to the project during the group project work session (5%), the evaluations completed by your peers (5%), as well as your evaluation of your peers (5%) pertaining the work done for the term project. More information will be posted on the course website.

The term project report is due **April 15th 2015 5pm** (see term project instructions for more information).

**Final examination date and time:**

There is no final exam for this course.

## Course Resources

### **Required Texts:**

None

### **Recommended Texts:**

None

### **Lab Manual:**

Not applicable.

### **Other Resources:**

Please visit regularly the course website at <http://courselink.uoguelph.ca> to obtain the resources for this course (e.g., instructions for assignments, readings, lecture slides).

### **Field Trips:**

Not applicable.

### **Additional Costs:**

Not applicable.

## Course Policies

### **Grading Policies**

The time and date for the midterm are indicated in this course outline.

The procedure for grading along with other important grading information for the research experience is available in the research experience instructions posted on the course website.

The time and date for submitting the mindfulness research report are listed in this course outline. The procedure to submit the mindfulness report is indicated in the mindfulness report instructions. Late submissions for the mindfulness report will be penalized 10% of the marking grade per day. Please note that technology issues (e.g., hard drive crashing--make sure to have backups) and leisure travel are not valid reasons for extensions.

Please also note that work submitted for grades may be **screened electronically for academic misconduct**, including breaches of academic integrity and plagiarism. In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph.

All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing academic misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

The last date to submit any materials for evaluation for this course is the last day before the final exam period starts, *April 8<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 5pm*, with the exception of the term report.

**Please note that there will be no supplemental evaluation/examination for this course.**

### **Policy on missed classes and exams**

All of the information related to the logistical and administrative components of this course will be communicated during class time. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to make contact with a fellow student and catch up on what you missed, regardless of whether the absence was justified or not.

**If you miss an evaluation (e.g., exam, due date for an assignment) you may wish to seek academic consideration for your absence (e.g., if you believe your absence qualifies for medical or compassionate reasons).** Please contact the course instructor as soon as possible if you miss an exam or a due date or if you have an ongoing personal or health issue that will affect your ability to meet any due date or deadline.

Any documentation provided (e.g., doctor's notes) may be verified by different means, including calling the doctor's office for confirmation. See the undergraduate calendar for detailed information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

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

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they 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.

### **Policy regarding materials provided by instructor and his designates**

The material shared by the course instructor or by his designate (e.g., TA) as part of this course, including copies of the lecture slides, are solely for the personal use of the authorized student 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.

### **Policy on emails**

Only questions that can be answered simply, for example by yes or no or with a short sentence, will be answered by email. For longer answers you will most likely receive an email asking you to come and see me.

Emails will usually be answered within 24 to 48 hours during weekdays. It is possible that some emails that are not from a university address (e.g., @hotmail.com) may be treated as spam. So do not hesitate

to come and see one of us if your email was not answered. The university expects you to check your U of Guelph email account regularly and us to use it to communicate with you.

### **Policy regarding exam copies**

Copies of the exam are loaned to registered students for the duration of the examination only. They remain the property of the course instructor at all times. All copies must be returned to the instructor or his designate at the end of the examination time. They cannot be removed from the examination room under any circumstances. All material contained in the exams is copyrighted, and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

## **University Policies**

### **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:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](#)

### **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 Undergraduate Calendar:

[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

### **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 Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

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

### **Course Evaluation Information**

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) .

### **Drop date**

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