**PSYC W2640Y: Introduction to Social Cognition**

**Spring 2017**

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**I. Bulletin description**

PSYC W2640Y: Introduction to Social Cognition (3 points). Spring 2017.

Mondays & Wednesdays, 10:10 a.m. – 11:25 a.m., 501 Schermerhorn.

Prerequisites: An introductory psychology course.

An introduction to basic concepts in social cognition, an approach to understanding social judgment and behavior by investigating the underlying mental processes. Topics include attitudes, identity, and prejudice, among others.

Instructor: Larisa Heiphetz

lah2201@columbia.edu

212-854-1348

355C Schermerhorn Extension

Office hours: Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (noon). If you have another course during these hours, I’d be happy to set up an appointment with you at another time.

I typically reply to e-mails within 48 hours, although I don’t check my e-mail on Sundays. The TAs and I are happy to meet with you throughout the course of the semester to discuss the course material. If you have questions about psychology more broadly, please e-mail me or drop by my office hours. If you have questions about course policies and logistics (like when something is due or what will be on an exam), please e-mail one of the TAs or come to their office hours.

Teaching Assistants:

Daniel Barulli Maneeza Dawood

djb2168@columbia.edu md2811@columbia.edu

Office hours: TBD Office hours: TBD

**II. A full description of the content of the course.**

How do we understand the social worlds we inhabit? This is the guiding question of PSYC W2640, which focuses on understanding the mental processes that underlie social judgments and behaviors. The course will include a discussion of the theoretical frameworks psychologists use to understand social cognition. We will also explore classic and recent experiments on topics including (but not limited to) attitudes, identity, and prejudice.

The course consists of biweekly lectures that will include time for student participation. Evaluations include small in-class assignments, two in-class exams, and a cumulative final exam.

**III. The rationale for giving the course**

PSYC W2640 is an introductory class designed for undergraduates who have passed an introductory psychology course and wish to learn more about the mental processes underlying social judgments and behaviors. It fulfills the following requirements:

* For the psychology major or concentration in the College and in the School of General Studies, for the psychology minor in Engineering, and for the psychology postbac certificate, this course will fulfill the Group III (Social, Personality, and Abnormal) distribution requirement.
* For other undergraduate students, this course will fulfill one term of the social science requirement of the School of General Studies.

This course complements several courses that are already offered in the psychology department at Columbia. Social Cognition builds on the foundation that students acquired in their introductory psychology course and sets the stage for more in-depth study of topics within social psychology (e.g., Cultural Psychology, Moral Psychology, Psychology of Stereotyping and Prejudice). This course also dovetails with Social Psychology, providing a more in-depth look at the mental processes underlying some of the topics typically covered in that course (e.g., stereotyping, emotion).

**IV. The reading list and weekly syllabus**

A few notes to keep in mind:

* The schedule below is subject to change.
* You should read the readings in the right-hand column before coming to class on the day the readings are listed.
* Chapter numbers refer to the following book: Augoustinos, M., Walker, I., & Donaghue, N. (2014). *Social cognition: An integrated introduction (3rd edition)*. Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage. A copy of this book has been placed on reserve in the Science and Engineering Library.
* The readings for 4/12, 4/17, and 4/19 will be posted on our CourseWorks page.
* Power Point slides for each lecture will be posted on CourseWorks after each lecture.

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| **Date** | **Topic** | **Readings** |
| 1/18 | Introduction & methods in social psychology |   |
| 1/23 | Methods in social psychology | Gilovich, Keltner, & Nisbett, ch. 2 (on CourseWorks); Augoustinos et al., ch. 1 |
| 1/25 | Theoretical foundations | ch. 2 |
| 1/30 | Theoretical foundations |   |
| 2/1 | Social perception | ch. 3 |
| 2/6 | Social perception |   |
| 2/8 | Make-up day / Review for exam 1 |   |
| 2/13 | EXAM 1 |   |
| 2/15 | Attitudes | ch. 4 |
| 2/20 | Attitudes |   |
| 2/22 | Attitudes |   |
| 2/27 | Attributions | ch. 5 |
| 3/1 | Attributions |   |
| 3/6 | Self & identity | ch. 6 |
| 3/8 | Self & identity |   |
| 3/13 | Spring break |   |
| 3/15 | Spring break |   |
| 3/20 | Prejudice | ch. 7 |
| 3/22 | Prejudice |   |
| 3/27 | Prejudice |   |
| 3/29 | Make-up day / Review for exam 2 |   |
| 4/3 | EXAM 2 |   |
| 4/5 | Ideology | ch. 8 |
| 4/10 | Ideology |   |
| 4/12 | Judgment and Decision Making | Fiske & Taylor ch. 7 |
| 4/17 | Moral Judgment | Haidt, 2001 |
| 4/19 | Affect and Cognition | Fiske & Taylor ch. 14, p. 370-385 |
| 4/24 | Inside Out |   |
| 4/26 | Inside Out |   |
| 5/1 | Wrap-Up | ch. 9 |

**V. Course requirements**

Grades will be determined as follows:

*In-class assignments (15%)*

Occasionally, in class, I will ask you to provide a written answer to a short question. These questions may ask you to reflect on the readings assigned for that day (e.g., “Briefly describe a situation in which cognitive dissonance, as opposed to self-perception processes, is likely to operate”), to connect the day’s topic to your own experiences (e.g., “What is one dimension on which you are schematic?”), or to do another task related to that day’s lecture topic. Responses are graded as follows:

√+ (answers question accurately; if asked for an example, provides one that shows understanding of the concept)

√ (makes an attempt to answer the question but does not provide an accurate/complete response)

√- (does not answer the question)

If you are not in class when responses are collected, you will automatically receive a √-. There are no make-ups for in-class assignments. Throughout the semester, there will be at least 8 opportunities to complete an in-class assignment, and I will only count your top 5 scores. I may provide bonus in-class assignments (e.g., a 9th or 10th opportunity to complete an in-class assignment). Bonus assignments do not change how many assignments are counted in your grade; I will still only count your top 5 scores. They are just an extra opportunity for you to earn the points. **You can earn five extra credit points, to be applied to your final exam score, by completing ALL in-class assignments.**

Note that because in-class assignments must be written and handed in, **you must have paper and a writing utensil with you to do the in-class assignment.** The TAs and I will not have extras, and we are not able to accept e-mailed or computer generated assignments.

*Exams 1 and 2 (25% each)*

Exam 1 will include all class material covered prior to the exam. Exam 2 will include all class material covered after Exam 1; material that was included in Exam 1 will not be re-tested in Exam 2. Most of the material on the exams will have been covered in lecture as well as in the readings, but each exam will include some questions on material covered only in the readings and some questions on material covered only in lecture. Because some students do better with multiple choice questions while others do better with open-ended questions, exams will contain a mixture of both. More information about format will be provided prior to the first exam.

After each exam, you will receive your graded answer sheet. The TAs have copies of the exam and are happy to go over specific questions with you. If you believe that a question on your exam was graded incorrectly, please bring this to a TA’s attention. If this does not resolve your issue, please e-mail me a paragraph including all of the following information: (a) your name; (b) which question(s) you are asking about; (c) for each question, the answer you wrote on your exam; (d) why you believe each of your answer(s) to be correct. Your response to part (d) must include at least one of the following pieces of information: (1) the page number of the textbook where your answer is found or from which you derived your answer; (2) a citation to one of the articles posted on our CourseWorks site, and the page number of that article where your answer is found or from which you derived your answer; or (3) the date of the lecture in which your answer was given, and the slide number on which your answer appears or from which you derived your answer. **To consider your argument, I must receive this paragraph no later than one week after the date on which exam grades are made available.**

Make-up exams will only be offered in the case of emergencies, such as a severe illness. You must provide me with a note from your dean to excuse your absence. **Make-up exams may have a different format than regular exams.**

*Final exam (35%)*

The final exam will be cumulative; anything that was covered in the course is fair game. The exam will be weighted toward material covered after Exam 2 and material that requires students to synthesize information from different weeks. Like the in-class exams, the final exam will mostly include material covered in readings as well as in lecture; however, some questions will be on material covered only in the readings and some questions will be on material covered only in lecture.

The format of the final exam will be similar to the in-class exams. The final exam will include at least one open-ended question asking you to connect the movie Inside Out to material covered in class.

The date and time of the final exam will be determined by the registrar’s office. This office also sets the policy for make-up final exams, which are typically not given. You can find more information here: http://registrar.columbia.edu/content/exams.

For more information on academic integrity (which pertains to all the course requirements listed above), please see http://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity-statement. If you have any questions about academic integrity, please contact one of the TAs or me.