MOTIVATION SCIENCE PSYC UN3671

INSTRUCTOR:

Federica Pinelli (she/her/hers), Ph.D. candidate
fp2224@columbia.edu
Student hours: Monday Before Class from 1 to 2:00 or by appointment
Office: 329 Schermerhorn Hall

Course Information
Location: 400C
Term: Fall 2021
Days: Monday
Time: 2:10pm-4:00pm

COURSE RATIONALE AND DESCRIPTION:

The course is meant to survey the main motivational theories and examine the internal forces or influences directing individuals towards goal attainment in everyday life. In class, we will scientifically investigate the forces that have traditionally directed individuals towards goals attainment. The main focus will be on social-cognitive processes and how situational factors trigger various responses that can then drive behavior. The course explores theories on cognitive determinants of motivation (e.g., goal setting, mindsets, control beliefs), affect processes (e.g., emotions both giving rise to and arising from progress or hindrance in goal pursuit), and valuation mechanisms (e.g., values influence motivation via the processes of goal content, goal striving, and identity development). In addition, we investigate the sociocultural level of motivation. We expand the conceptualization of motivational drive to include external factors such as culturally based knowledge and social interaction as potential motivators.

We will answer questions such as “what do people really want?”, “why they want what they want?” and “Where does motivation come from”. We will investigate those questions in all different domains: learning, performance, work settings, and emotional process in interpersonal relationships. And we will uncover how motivation takes place. Students will learn how to foster motivation and how to effect changes in themself and others in their life.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Students will become more critical consumers of motivational science. To do that, they will:

- Learn the main theoretical framework in the field (lecture + offline work)
- Discuss the relevant literature in class and written assignments (with peers + feedback on written assignments)
Students will be able to identify and leverage some of the tools used to motivate others and themselves. To do that, students will:

- Work through case studies where they’ll have the opportunity to apply different motivational tools. (in-class discussions)
- Draw on course content to design & write an empirical application of those tools. (final project)

Students will consider how the motivational forces that we will study and discuss could have shaped their own life and identity. (personal reflection offline)

**COURSE FORMAT:**

This course will meet once weekly for 2 hours. The primary purpose of the class will be the discussion of readings, relevant exercises, and clarification, while there will be time for introducing new material.

**PREREQUISITES:**

Science of Psych (PSYC UN1001) or equivalent introductory psych course Introduction and either Social Psychology (PSYC UN2630) or Introduction to Social Cognition (PSYC UN2640), a Research Methods course, and instructor permission. Students who have not taken all the pre-requisites but have other relevant backgrounds may be admitted with instructor permission.

**ROLE IN THE PSYCHOLOGY CURRICULUM**

This seminar is an advanced seminar designed particularly for undergraduates majoring in Psychology and Neuroscience & Behavior and for students participating in the Psychology Postbac Certificate Program. Senior majors & Postbacs will have priority in registration, followed by junior majors followed by non-majors. The course will fulfill the following degree requirements:

- For the Psychology major or concentration in the College and in G.S. and for the Psychology Postbac certificate, it will meet the Group III (Social, Personality, and Abnormal) distribution requirement.
- For Psychology Postbac certificate students and for Psychology majors who enter Columbia in Fall 2013 or later, it will fulfill the seminar requirement.
- For the Neuroscience & Behavior major, this course will fulfill the P5 Advanced seminar requirement.

**COURSE POLICY:**

**Attendance:** Class participation is the foundation of this course. Of course, there are times when life gets in the way of things, but more than one absence will be detrimental to your learning – and your grade. One absence will not negatively impact your grade, but please inform me of the absence as soon as possible. You will still be responsible for the work due in that class, e.g., reading responses and interim deadlines for the final paper.
Class Etiquette: Cell phones are not allowed to be taken out in class and should be kept on silent (not vibrate). Laptops or tablets may be used for anything course-related. However, out of courtesy to your classmates and respect for your learning, please refrain from using these for any other purpose.

Late assignments: It is unfair that you get more time on your assignments than your peers. If there’s an appropriate reason for turning an assignment in late, please discuss it with me well in advance so that we can work out an arrangement. I will have to penalize late assignments unless there is an appropriate reason and the revised due date has been agreed upon ahead of time.

Diversity & Inclusion: I aim to foster a learning environment that supports a diversity of perspectives and experiences and honors your identities. Please reach out to me with any concerns or suggestions you may have to address your learning needs better and improve the course effectiveness. I look forward to working together to create a classroom community built on mutual respect and inclusivity.

Students with Disabilities: Students with special needs who may require classroom/assignment accommodations should make an appointment with me before or during the first week of class. You should also contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in Lerner Hall before starting the course to register for these accommodations. The procedures for registering with ODS can be found at http://health.columbia.edu/services/odsor by calling (212) 854-2388.

Academic integrity: As members of this academic community, we are responsible for maintaining the highest level of personal and academic integrity: “[E]ach one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity.... The exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited. In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others’ ideas in all of your research papers and projects. You must always submit your work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent” (from the Columbia University Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity: https://www.college.columbia.edu/faculty/resourcesforinstructors/academicintegrity/statement).

Plagiarism—whether intentional or inadvertent—is a severe violation of academic integrity. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and/or how to properly cite sources, please come to me, and I am more than happy to help. Similarly, if you put yourself in a situation, e.g., starting an assignment very late, in which you think your best option might be to cut some corners, see me. It is far better to have a few points deducted from a paper than to compromise your academic integrity and potentially put your academic standing in jeopardy.
The citations should follow APA guidelines: http://www.apastyle.org/. If you have any doubt throughout the semester about how to cite something or whether it would constitute plagiarism, feel free to ask me.

**Academic support services:**
Writing Center - [https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center](https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center)
Columbia Libraries - [http://library.columbia.edu/](http://library.columbia.edu/)

**Readings:** There is no textbook required for this course. Readings will comprise scientific articles, book chapters, and literature reviews in the fields of motivation science. PDFs of all readings will be available through CourseWorks/Canvas.

### COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRAADING:

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<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Class participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Think pieces</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Discussion leading</td>
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<td>Final project:</td>
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**Either:**

a) Grant proposal
   - 10% presentation,
   - 35% written paper
or
b) Motivational Challenge
   - Motivational Plan 20%
   - Motivational Biography 20%
   - Motivational Challenge Plan – presentation 5%

**Projects:**
- Grant proposal - 10% presentation, -35% written paper
- Motivational Challenge - 20% Motivational Plan
- Motivational Biography - 20% Motivational Biography
- Motivational Presentation - 5%

**Participation** is an essential component of this course. Our class is small and depends almost entirely on discussion within the group. Students are expected to attend and actively participate in every class. They must share their thoughts on the readings throughout the class and raise questions encouraging their peers to share theirs. Additionally, students are expected to give their peers respectful and constructive feedback on their opinions and participation. Class participation could include:

- Asking insightful or clarifying questions
- Connecting the assigned readings to other readings we have reviewed in the course or reading you might have done on your own while drawing parallels and/or contrasts among findings or concepts
• Actively listening to classmates and responding to their ideas in a constructive and respectful manner
• Offering thoughtful critiques of the reviewed research and providing convincing arguments and suggestions for how it might be improved
• Bringing in other academic and non-academic sources that shed light and facilitate the gaining of new insights on the topics covered
• Applying the various concepts and research findings discussed to current events, domestically and globally, in a way that further illustrates these concepts and findings

Participation will be graded with √, √+, √- (check, check +, check-) after every class: based on your active involvement and relevance of the points raised in the class discussion. One of my objectives for this course is for students to develop their communication and critical thinking skills, so I encourage every student to come to see me during office hours to chat about class participation. Participating in class can be more difficult for some students, and if that's the case, please see me at the beginning of the semester so that we can work out ways you can contribute.

Think Pieces: 15% (3 pieces 5% each) *Due the night before class*

3 Think Pieces (2 pages, double-spaced) integrate two weekly assigned readings into one “think” piece. All think pieces are due before the start of the class whose readings are covered in the piece and should be submitted to me via email (fp2224@columbia.edu). Students can choose any three weeks (from week 2 to 14 -excluding review classes as specified in the syllabus) to submit their think piece. The goal of these thought papers is to promote active reading and critical thinking and stimulate thoughts to discuss in class: you can raise theoretical or methodological questions related to the readings, share insights or comment on the implications of empirical findings, or relate the readings to previous class discussions. Students have to integrate two or more readings into each thought paper. Students should bring a copy of these to class and prepare to share their thoughts with their peers. These will not be formally graded but will be checked for completion/effort (each worth 5 points [those completed but with an evident lack of effort will receive only 2 points]. Note that greater length does not necessarily indicate more significant effort!

Discussion leading: 20%

Beyond weekly contributions to the class discussion, each student will serve as a facilitator for two of the class sessions together with another student (the number of sessions will depend on the size of the class). The list of discussion time-slots will arrange ahead of time before the first class so that each student can select a topic of interest. You and your partner will give a brief 15/20-min overview and synthesis of the required readings for that day, describe supplemental readings (that you and I will arrange beforehand), and then moderate a stimulating class discussion. This does not mean simply summarizing the readings but instead being prepared to offer a few
questions and comments that hopefully begin a deep discussion of the main issues, strengths, weaknesses, controversies, and gaps in the readings for a particular week.

The discussion leaders’ role is to sustain a constructive discussion involving (ideally) all of your classmates. I will lead the first-class discussion to give you an example of what types of discussion questions and moderation styles can be used, along with class activities that you can use to stimulate discussion. Discussion leaders should assume that the other seminar participants have read the material carefully. Hence, their job is primarily to generate discussion, not provide a lecture or summary of each article. Discussion leaders should send me a list of questions to guide the discussion 48 hours before class and meet with me to discuss the class plan.

Discussion questions might include: *What hypothesis is tested in this article? What are the implications/ the meaning of the findings? What alternative explanations did the researchers rule out (or not!) in their study? How do these readings answer a particular question in the syllabus course description?*

As a discussion facilitator, your grade will reflect: your preparation (7%), quality of the synthesis offered to your classmates (7%), ability to keep the discussion focused (2%), ability to advance and deepen discussion (2%) and provide an opportunity for all classmates to be heard (2%).

**LONGER FINAL ASSIGNMENT EITHER:**

**A) Grant proposal Draft** 10% presentation, 35% of the final Grade

Grant Project: produce a grant proposal related to the topics we have covered in class. By writing a mini-grant proposal, students will:

- gain an understanding of all steps of scientific discovery
- review what is known on the topic of interest
- plan a well-designed study to explore the topic of interest

The project will be assigned starting at week 9, and a different part of the grant will be due every week up to week 12, when the finished grant proposal will be due.

1A – Students come to class with an idea for a grant project and an elevator pitch for it. Elevator pitch → a brief (~2 minutes) persuasive speech that students use to spark interest in their idea. Week 9

2A- End of Week 9 deliverable: “Letter of Intent.”
 Students will identify a fruitful area of research and write a convincing proposal. One single-page proposal idea (Called a “Letter of Intent”) explains the topic, central research questions, general idea for proposed studies, and significance. It should be 1-1 & 1/2 pages (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font) → student will receive feedback
3A- Week 12 deliverable: Aims and Theory development & Significance and Background
Major Aims and Theoretical development: This section aims to introduce the research question and why it is important, provide a brief summary of the main arguments in the research proposal, and articulate how the proposal advances knowledge in the motivational science field. Additionally, in this section, students should offer 2-3 novel hypotheses and present a compelling theory (i.e., explanatory logic) supporting those hypotheses. The hypotheses should be novel and worth pursuing in future research (~2-3 pages).
Significance and Background: This section aims to review prior relevant research on the research topic. Students will lay out what is known and unknown about the topic. This section is meant to help the “grant manager (i.e., the reviewer)” understand how and why the research will advance understanding in an important way (~1-2 pages).
The deliverable should be 3-4 pages (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font).
→ student will receive feedback

4A- Week 12 deliverable: Method session
This session aims to provide a broad technical description of the research plan: activities, methods, data, and theory. Students will write to convince that the idea deserves funding. Students will clearly state their hypotheses, predictions, methods they plan to use (recruitment and number of subjects, etc.), research designs, prepare for data analysis, and expect results.
The deliverable should be 2-3 pages (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font).
→ students will receive feedback

5A - Week 14 deliverable: Timetable, dissemination plan, and references.
Students will present a plan for how they will go about addressing/attacking/solving the questions and hypotheses students have raised. Also, address where they will publish their result.
Students will list their references (they do not count in page limits).
The deliverable should be 1/2-1 page (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font)
→ students will receive feedback

6A - Week 15 deliverable: ~10 minutes presentation to the class of the final proposal

7A - Week 15 deliverable: Grant Proposal
A final draft of the Grant Proposal (Major Aims and Theoretical development, Significance and Background, Methods, Timetable, dissemination plan, and references) is due. Students need to incorporate the feedback from the instructor into their final draft
The final grant proposal should be ~ 6 pages (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font).

Papers will be graded based on creativity and originality of the proposed theoretical idea (15%), thoroughness of the literature review (20%), integration of relevant and empirically valid methodology (20%), the logic of the predicted results (20%), thoughtfulness of discussion (20%), and overall presentation (grammar, spelling, APA formatting, etc.) (5%). I’ll provide feedback after every intermediary step it is submitted towards the final proposal and a grade based on: A (exceptional work), B (good work), or C (needs improvement) and will be worth 5% of the final grade.

or

B) A Motivation (Auto)biography 20% + A Motivational Challenge Plan (20%) + Motivational Challenge Plan – Presentation (5%)

Deliverables are as follow:
1B – week 9 – Students come to class with an idea for a motivational challenge that they are ready to take on an elevator pitch to explain motivation drivers, significance, and
impact. A real-world motivational challenge related to a day-to-day issue that an individual experiences and it can be effectively addressed using motivational principles from the course. The challenge can be something personal to the student or to an individual the student is familiar with: a friend, a co-worker, etc., etc.

Pitch elevator → a brief (~2 minutes), persuasive speech that student uses to spark interest in the idea

2B- end of Week 9 deliverable: “Motivation Challenge idea.”
Students will identify a real-world motivational challenge that they want to address. In this first proposal, they will articulate:
→ what is the motivation behind wanting to address this challenge? Why invest in addressing this specific change?
→ how are they planning to address the challenge?
→ what are the theories that could be leveraged? Are there competing theories that could be applicable? What about complementary theories building on each other?
It should be 1/2 pages or 1 page (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font)
→ student will receive feedback

Before diving into the challenge, students need to provide an accurate motivation profile of the subject facing the motivational challenge and, if relevant, the context/environment (from a motivational point of view):

3B – Week 12 deliverable “A Motivation (auto)biography.”
Students will submit a total 2 pages (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font) narrating a brief life story from a motivational perspective about the “protagonist” of the motivational challenge. The paper has to review ways he/she motivates himself/herself, the major motivational influences (both positive and negative) in his/her life to this point, and how are those inferred or are known. The narration and inferences have to be integrated with the motivational theories covered during the class. The motivational challenge and biography don’t need to be personal and autobiographical. Still, it could be helpful to students to learn and master the material by spending time reflecting on what motivates them. Students should cite at least five sources from class reading, lecture, or outside reading on motivation topics to support the observations and the link between the individuals’ behaviors, identified motivators, and cognitive mechanisms in the paper.

4B Week 15 deliverable: ~ 7 minutes presentation to the class of students’ real-life motivational challenge
Students will analyze the challenge and recommend implementable solutions as per the paper due the same day.

5B Week 15 deliverable: Motivational Challenge Plan
Students will submit three pages (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font) paper describing how they would use motivational principles from the course to deal effectively with a real-world motivational challenge relevant to the life of the subject presented in the MB. The challenge of their choice will be the one they have previously received feedback on. The paper will describe the challenge and how the student would meet it using motivational principles from the course, providing arguments and research evidence for why students believe applying those principles would be effective.

These two (M(A)B and MCP) papers will be graded based on thoughtfulness shown in the assignment and capacity of analysis with respect to events, challenges, and solutions (30%), thoroughness in references, and literature review (20%), integration of relevant class material (30%), logic and clarity of exposure (10%), and overall presentation (grammar, spelling, APA formatting, etc.) (10%).
**PEER REVIEW in class (week 9) →** Elevator pitch or lightning round grant research and motivational challenge. Part of the week 9 class will be dedicated to allowing students to prepare an elevator pitch description of their grant or motivational challenge idea (< 2 minutes) and present it to at least 6 other people in the class but a low stake environment. Students will be randomly assigned to two groups and then rotate to talk with other students (in pairs). Students will have the opportunity to pitch and receive feedback and listen to and give feedback to at least half of the students in the class.

**SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every Monday</td>
<td>Complete the reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Every Monday (from week 2 to 14)</td>
<td>Three think pieces due to before the beginning of class</td>
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<td>1st think-piece</td>
<td>By Feb. 28th</td>
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<td>2nd think-piece</td>
<td>By April 4th</td>
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<td>3rd think-piece</td>
<td>By the May 2nd</td>
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<tr>
<td>01/31/2022 - end of Week 1</td>
<td>Check coursework for Lead discussion assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>03/21/2022- Week 9</td>
<td>Come to class with an elevator speech for either a Grant Proposal or a Motivational Challenge</td>
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<tr>
<td>03/25/2022- end of Week 9</td>
<td>Motivation Challenge idea (brief paper) or Letter of intent for Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/20/2022- Week 12</td>
<td>A Motivation (Auto)Biography</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/20/2022 - Week 12</td>
<td>Grant: Aims and Theory development &amp; Significance and Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/25/2022 - Week 14</td>
<td>Grant: method session, Timetable, dissemination plan, and references</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/25/2022 - Week 14</td>
<td>Presentation Grant proposal or Motivation Challenge Plan (First 3-4 presentation)</td>
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<td>05/02/2022 - Week 15</td>
<td>Presentation Grant proposal or Motivation Challenge Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>05/06/2022 – End of Week 15</td>
<td>Grant proposal or Motivation Challenge Plan (Written assignment due)</td>
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## Schedule and required readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>01/24/2022</strong>&lt;br&gt;Week 1</td>
<td>A brief history of Motivational Science  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Discussion:</strong> When you try to motivate someone, what are you trying to do? What do you want to happen? Given what you want to happen, how do you make it happen?</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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### 02/14/2022

**Week 4**

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<tr>
<th><strong>Value as Motivator</strong></th>
<th><strong>Either:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Pursuing goals with a promotion vs a prevention regulatory focus</td>
<td>- Scholer, A. A., Cornwell, J. F., &amp; Higgins, E. T. (2019). Regulatory focus theory and research: Catching up and looking forward after 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- When there is a match between the orientation toward a goal and the means used to approach that goal the motivation can be intensified</td>
<td>3. Cesario, J., Higgins, E. T., &amp; Scholer, A. A. (2008). Regulatory fit and persuasion: Basic principles and remaining questions. <em>Social and Personality Psychology Compass</em>, 2(1), 444-463.</td>
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**02/21/2021**

**Week 5**

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<th><strong>Control and Truth as Motivator</strong></th>
<th><strong>Either:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
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| 02/28/2021 | Week 6 | Motivation and Close Others | - People are means to goals not differently than objects or activities  
- Partners promote versus inhibit one another’s goal pursuits.  
Optional:  
| 03/07/2022 | Week 7 | Motivation and Culture | Autonomy drive, regulatory focus and regulatory mode across different culture  
Disjoint model of agency, focused on the self, the fulfillment of personal happiness as motivator versus the conjoint model of agency, focus on the experience of the self as interdependent and in-relation-to-others, and reciprocally enmeshed the collective. | Either:  
Or  
Optional: |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Resources/Notes</th>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Topic</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>05/02/2022</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Students to present</td>
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Optional:
