

**Psychology 4646: Socio-Ecological Psychology**  
**Spring 2020**

Thursday @2:10-4pm  
405 Schermerhorn Hall

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Office hours: TBA

**Course Description:**

This course explores the ways in which socio-ecological factors such as residential mobility, density, and geography affect individuals' thoughts, feelings, and actions, and the way in which individuals' thoughts, feelings, and actions help create particular socio-ecological conditions.

**Week 1 (Jan 23):** Organizational Meeting (background in *Oishi & Graham, 2010, Perspectives on Psychological Science*; *Oishi, 2014, Annual Review of Psychology*)

**Week 2 (Jan 30): Social Ecology and Adaptations**

1. Dunbar (1993): Social brain hypothesis. *Brain and Behavioral Sciences* (p. 681-693 only).
2. Goldschmidt (1971). Ecology of independence. *Anthropological Quarterly*
3. Gelfand et al. (2011). Social ecology and cultural values. *Science*
4. Talhelm et al. (2014). Rice theory of culture. *Science*

**Week 3 (Feb 6): Social Ecology and Relationships**

1. Milgram (1970). The experience of living in cities. *Science*.
2. Alex de Tocqueville (1840/1862). Democracy in America (Vol 2. Sec 2: Ch. 2-5 p. 119-134)  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=dgwTAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=alexis+de+tocqueville+democracy+in+america&hl=ja&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiG4JewhpnAhVEnFkKHdkbDCUQ6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=individualism&f=false>
3. Bahns et al. (2012). Ecology of friendships. *Group Process & Intergroup Relations*.
4. Adams & Plaut (2003). Ecology of enmeshment. *Personal Relationships*

**Week 4 (Feb 13): Social Ecology and Relationships**

1. Richard Florida (2002): The rise of creative class (Ch. 1 & 16)
2. Thomson et al. (2018): Relational mobility. *PNAS*
3. Sng & Ackerman (2020). Population density & sex ratio. *Current Opinions in Psychology*
4. Buss (2000). The evolution of happiness. *American Psychologist*.

**Week 5 (Feb 20):**

**In-Class Midterm Essay Exam**

**Week 6 (Feb 27): SPSP: Social Ecology and Emotion**

1. Cohen et al. (1999). The culture of honor. *Social Psychology Quarterly*
2. Anderson (2001). Climate & aggression. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*
3. Rychlowska et al. (2015). Heterogeneity and emotion expressiveness. *PNAS*

**Week 7 (Mar 5): Social Ecology and Politics**

1. Purdie-Greenaway & Turetsky (2020). Diversity science. *Current Opinions*.
2. Robert Putnam (2007). e pluribus unum. Diversity and trust. *Scandinavian Political Studies*
3. Enos (2014). Diversity and political attitude: A field experiment. *PNAS*
4. Enos (2016). Housing project and political attitude: A natural experiment. *Am J of Political Science*

**Week 8 (Mar 12): Social Ecology and Morality**

1. Sales (1972). Economic recession and religion. *JPSP*
2. Hovland & Sears (1940). Economic conditions and lynching. *J of Psychology: Interdiscip. Appl.*
3. Bianchi (2020). Economic recession and values *Current Opinions*.
4. van Leeuwen et al. (2014). Ecology of moral concerns. *Evolution & Human Behaviors*

**Week 9: Spring break!!****Week 10 (Mar 26): Social Ecology and the Economic Behavior**

1. Joe Henrich et al. (2005). Trust, fairness, and social ecology. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences (first 20 pages)*
2. DeVoe et al. (2013). Fast food and financial impatience. *JPSP*
3. Mani, Mullainathan, Shafir, & Zhao (2013). Poverty impedes cognitive function. *Science*

**Week 11 (Apr 2): Social Ecology and Personality**

1. Park & Peterson (2010). Ecology of character strengths. *American Psychologist*
2. Jokela et al. (2015). Geography of personality. *PNAS*
3. Sandstrom et al. (2017). Personality and mood: A Smartphone sensing study. *JRP*.
4. Twenge (2020). Technology and mental health. *Current Opinions*

**Week 12 (Apr 9): Social Ecology and Well-Being**

1. Hatzenbuehler et al. (2010). Social ecology and the mental health of LGBT. *American J of Public Health*
2. Kaplan & Berman (2010). Social ecology of executive functioning. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*
3. Christakis & Fowler (2007). The social network of obesity. *The New England Journal of Medicine*
4. Lu (2020). Air quality. *Current Opinions*.

**Week 13 (Apr 16): Social Ecology and Human Development**

1. Francis, Diorio, Liu, & Meaney (1999). Epigenetics. *Science*
2. Turkheimer's (2003) Socioeconomic status modifies heritability of IQ. *Psych Science*.
3. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*.
4. Tottenham (in press) Early adversity and the neotenus human brain development. *Biological Psychiatry*

**Week 14 (Apr 23): Future Directions?**

1. Payne et al. (2017). Inequality and risk taking behavior. *PNAS*
2. O'Brien (2016). 311 reports. *Am J of Community Psychology*
3. Kanze, Conley, & Higgins (in press). Organization as a social ecology of motivation. *OBHDP*
4. Robert Bellah et al. (1985/2008). Social science as public philosophy.

**Week 15 (Apr 30). Wrap-up****Assignments and Points Allocation:**

1. You are expected to read all the required readings every week before each class, and turn in one-page questions/comments on the readings via e-mail. Each reaction paper will be graded on a 4-point scale (4 = very thoughtful/insightful; 3 = somewhat thoughtful/insightful; 2 = some sign of thought; 1 = not thoughtful). **44** points in total.
2. The in-class essay exam in Week 5 (Feb 20<sup>th</sup>) is an "open-book" exam to assess your understanding of materials covered up to that point, and to give you an opportunity to reflect on topics that interested you most up to that point. **10** points
- 3a. (for undergraduate students) A term paper (8-10 pages, references included). **20** points. Due on the last class.
- 3b. (for graduate students) A term paper (10 –15 pages, references included). **20** points. Due on the last class
3. Class participation: 2 points (0 = absence; 1 = present but not focused/attentive; 2 = active listening/participation) per session, or **26** points in total.

**Grading (100 points in total)**

A+ = 95 or higher; A = 90-94, A- = 88-89; B+ = 86-87; B = 82-85; B- = 80-81; C+ = 78-79; C = 72-77; C- = 70-71; D+ = 68-69; D = 63-67; D- = 61-62; F = 60 or lower.

**\*No laptops**: Recent research suggests that note-taking by writing, rather than by typing, improves conceptual learning (see Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014). Additionally, with laptops, tablets, and phones, some students distract others by viewing non-course material during class.