

**Fall 2018**  
**PSYC 351 - Social Cognition, Section 01**  
Mondays & Wednesdays 4:00pm – 5:15pm  
Academic Hall Rm: 205

**Instructor:** Daniel R. Berry, PhD  
**Email:** drberry@csusm.edu  
**Office:** SBSB 3208

**Course Website:**  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 12:00p-3:00p

**PREREQUISITES:**  
Not applicable

**TEXT AND CHAPTER OUTLINES:**

There is no text for this class, but there will be readings assigned each week and the instructor of record will post those readings on the course website

**COURSE OVERVIEW:**

Welcome to social cognition! This course is a selective survey of social cognition topics that will discuss historical, theoretical, research-based, and applied approaches to classic and contemporary questions about how we make sense of other people and ourselves. As social beings, we are usually interacting directly or indirectly with other people, and so this course will help you in your future psychology courses and potentially could be applied to benefit your daily life. The main emphasis of this course is conceptual in nature – you will have to think logically about course content and ideas, real-world social problems, and the science underlying our understanding of social cognition. You will be asked to demonstrate competency in the course content, which will be evaluated in three exams and five brief reading quizzes. Perhaps more importantly, you will be asked to demonstrate critical thinking skills specific to how the course content can be used to improve your life and the lives of others; this will be evaluated in five application journals, participation in several in-class discussions and activities, written responses on exams, and an op-ed assignment.

**PROGRAMMATIC STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE**

PSLO 1: *Describe the major concepts theories, empirical findings, historical trends in psychology and their application to behavioral and mental processes*

PSLO 3: *Apply creative and critical thinking and employ skeptical inquiry to addressing issues and solving problems related to psychological phenomenon.*

PSLO 4: *Thoughtfully consider and appraise alternative viewpoints, diverse socio-cultural perspectives and ethical issues related to psychological topics*

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN CHILD AND ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT**

PSLO 2: *Locate, interpret and critically evaluate scholarly articles in developmental psychology.*

PSLO 6: *Demonstrate effective written communication skills in a variety of formats and for a variety of audiences, using APA format when appropriate.*

PSLO 7: *Evaluate the role that context (i.e., families, peers, schools, communities, cultures) plays in development.*

## INSTRUCTOR'S LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. To encourage greater appreciation for the breadth of human social experience.
2. To build our knowledge of the aims and scope of the rapidly growing field of social cognition.
3. To improve your ability to critically evaluate societal myths, published research, and to think creatively about the study of social cognition.
4. To integrate and apply concepts of social cognition to benefit your own lives.
5. To practice the art and science of effective oral and written communication of ideas to other individuals.

## HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED:

You will be evaluated in five ways in this course: (1) participation in discussion, (2) five quizzes, (3) ten application journals, (4) three exams, and (5) one op-ed paper.

## PARTICIPATION IN DISCUSSION

Each class will have dedicated lecture and discussion time. During discussion time, we will analyze current theories, studies, and research practices in the field of social cognition. For each class, I will designate one or two discussion topic questions and assign videos, brief exercises, popular media articles, and empirical articles to read alongside the assigned text reading for that day. I expect you to be prepared (i.e., have completed the assignments *before* class), to be actively engaged in class, and to take good notes. Professor Berry is responsible for facilitating discussion, and he will try to make sure that everyone gets a fair chance to participate. Your contributions are valued, encouraged, and needed for class. You will receive **3.5 points for each of the 28 classes** that you *attend* and in which you *actively participate* (98 points total). And you will receive 2 points for taking all three exams. Thus, you can receive a maximum of **100 points (10% of final grade)** for class participation. Missing even one class may significantly reduce your grade, so avoid it at all costs.

*High quality* class participation involves coming to class on time with questions on issues that are unclear in the readings/assignments, raising questions that you think we should cover, constructively criticizing, and commenting on ideas you think are interesting. Class discussion also means volunteering insightful answers to questions that provide contrasts and integration of ideas, actively listening to others' contributions to discussion, and moving the discussion along toward a shared understanding. Comments about personal experiences can be helpful in class discussions (and are encouraged) as long as a connection is made between your experience and the class topic and readings. In sum, what I am looking for is evidence that you have done the assignments and thought about the relevant issues. I especially value comments that contribute to our collective learning

## QUIZZES:

Quizzes will be administered on random days throughout the course and prior to the discussion portion of the class. The quizzes will be multiple choice, and you may discuss answers with your classmates. The goal is that these quizzes provide a jumping-off point for discussion and help you get a feel for questions that might be on the exams. You will receive up to **10 points for each quiz**. Thus, you can receive up to **50 points (5% of final grade)** for class quizzes.

## APPLICATION JOURNALS:

Each class after we begin a new chapter you will be asked to complete an application journal. This journal entry will be due by the start of the following class. There are 12 possible days that you could turn in a journal. However, you will only need to complete **10 application journals entries**. Thus, it is your choice which ten you will complete. The goal of the application journal is to get you thinking critically about events in your social life that apply to concepts we are learning in class. Journaling can provide a great deal of self-knowledge, and can improve writing quality. Please read the following instructions below.

**Instructions:** After learning new class content, you will choose one concept, research study, theory, or idea shared in discussion and write about how it applies to your life or a current social issue. Journal entries should (1) identify one of the concepts you learned from lecture, readings, or discussion, (2) define the concept in your own words, (3) and identify a life event that happened to you or to someone else that relates to the topic. Next (4) provide some insight on the outcome of the event. For example, why do you think the event unfolded the way that it did? How could you stop it from happening in the future (or make it occur more)? Journal entries will be due by 4:00pm (start of class) on the days indicated on the course schedule below. You will post your journal entries on cougar courses (preferably as a word or rtf document); your responses will not be shared with anyone. Your journals entries should be about 150 words—a little shorter than this paragraph.

### Application Journal Grading Breakdown:

**10 Points:** great! entry was very relevant to a class concept and very insightful.

**8.5 Points:** good; entry was very relevant to a class concept and insightful.

**7.5 Points:** average; entry was somewhat relevant to a class concept and somewhat insightful.

**1 - 6 Points:** below average; entry is not relevant to any of the discussed topics.

**0 Points:** did not turn in an entry on time.

10 entries X 10 possible points per entry = **100 possible points (10% of final grade)**

## EXAMS:

You will take **three exams** in this course. Exam questions will be one short essay (30 points), five short-answer (50 points), twenty multiple choice questions (80 points), and six true/false question (6 points). All together each exam will account for **166 points** each (**166 x 3 = 498 points or 50% of final grade**). If you're wondering where the other 2 points show up, there will be a seventh true false question added to two of the exams. The final exam will not be cumulative. Exams will be given on days indicated on the syllabus. The material in this course is acquired gradually because new material builds on previously learned concepts. It is very difficult to "cram" for any exam. Thus, it is important that you read and actively participate in class. You can use your notes, reading quizzes, and exam review notes on exams. On the written portion of the exam you can choose which questions you answer as long as you write one essay and complete 5 short answer questions. Because so much opportunity for choice is offered on the exam, I do not offer any extra credit in this course.

**OP-ED PAPER:**

Due on the final day of class (@ 4:00pm; **submit a copy on cougar courses**). This assignment is worth **250 points (25% of final grade)**. Op-eds are short for “opposite the editorial page.” They are opinion articles written in prose and are often published in newspapers or magazines by authors not affiliated with the publication’s editorial board. In this paper, you are required to take a position on (make an argument for or against) a social, political, educational, cultural, or other societal issue that relates to social cognition. This paper is not report or a literature review; it is an opinion piece. So please review lecture slides on the topic and read op-eds available in your favorite magazines or newspapers. Please see grading rubric and project guidelines available on Cougar Courses. **Note if you submit your op-ed to magazine, journal, or newspaper and it is published, you will receive up to 20 points for extra credit to go toward your final grade! (10 points for submitting, and 10 more if it is published).**

**GRADING SYSTEM:**

The table to the right details the total points available in this class. Dr. Berry will grade assignments quickly but carefully before returning the feedback to you. You can find your grades posted on the class website (Cougar Courses). Should you have any questions about your grades, Dr. Berry encourages you to share your concerns.

| <u>Assignment</u>        | <u>Points</u> | <u>Percent</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 5 Quizzes                | 50            | 5%             |
| Exams                    | 500           | 50%            |
| Op-Ed Paper              | 250           | 25%            |
| 5 Application Journals   | 100           | 10%            |
| Discussion Participation | 100           | 10%            |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>1000</b>   | <b>100%</b>    |

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

| <u>Points</u>     | <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>Points</u>    | <u>Letter Grade</u> |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>950 – 1000</b> | <b>A</b>            | <b>730 – 759</b> | <b>C</b>            |
| <b>900 – 949</b>  | <b>A-</b>           | <b>700 – 729</b> | <b>C-</b>           |
| <b>860 – 899</b>  | <b>B+</b>           | <b>660 – 699</b> | <b>D+</b>           |
| <b>830 – 859</b>  | <b>B</b>            | <b>630 – 659</b> | <b>D</b>            |
| <b>800 – 829</b>  | <b>B-</b>           | <b>600 – 629</b> | <b>D-</b>           |
| <b>760 – 799</b>  | <b>C+</b>           | <b>0 - 599</b>   | <b>F</b>            |

**CLASS EXPECTATIONS:**

**Come prepared.** Complete all readings prior to lecture, and come to class after thinking about the material. Bring your textbook, and be prepared to take notes. Check Blackboard regularly.

**Contribute.** Come to class prepared with questions from the readings. All questions will be respected. Please, share your unique perspective with the class! It is an opportunity to demonstrate your competence, help clarify the material for others, and promote an engaging classroom environment.

**Be respectful.** People relate to psychological theories and concepts in different ways. Please remain open and respectful to alternative perspectives of the course material. Use reason and evidence to challenge ideas presented in this class.

**Minimize distractions.** You may use laptops/tablets in this class. For each class Dr. Berry will share a Google Doc with the class prior to lecture as a way to crowdsource notes and create an interactive learning

environment. Do not surf the web, check your email, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, IM, Snapchat, etc, during class. While these great activities are only few clicks away, they will not help you or your neighbors accomplish the course objectives. Please be mindful of your classmates when using your computers.

#### **COURSE POLICIES:**

**Academic integrity:** Academic dishonesty is a bad scene; don't go there. All assignments must represent your own work. However, in doing self-reflection papers you may find it useful to confirm your logic, phrasing, and formatting with classmates – just make sure you write your assignments individually. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism), please ask me.

**Meeting course requirements:** Generally, the only reasons I consider legitimate for missing a class or assignment deadlines are: conference attendance, medical illness (appropriate documentation required), or personal/family emergencies that require you to leave school. Oversleeping, heavy work load, forgetfulness, assignment disappearance (e.g., computer meltdowns), and alien abduction will not be considered legitimate failures to meet course requirements. Assignments that are late with no excuse will not be accepted. If an extension is granted for a late assignment, the length extension will be made on a case-by-case basis

#### **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS:**

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disabled Student Services (DDS). This office is located in Craven Hall 4300, and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, or TTY (760) 750-4909. Students authorized by DSS to receive reasonable accommodations should meet with me during my office hours in order to ensure confidentiality. Should you have any questions about services provided through Disabled Student Services, please call 760-750- 4905 or go to [http://www.csusm.edu/dss/handbooks/student\\_book.html](http://www.csusm.edu/dss/handbooks/student_book.html)

#### **WRITING REQUIREMENT:**

As stated in the course catalog, all CSU students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation. This requirement mandates that every course at the university must have a writing component of a least 2500 words (approximately 10 pages). The writing requirement in this course will be satisfied through your Op-Ed paper and five application journals.

### COURSE OUTLINE AND DUE DATES

| Date  | Lecture   | Discussion   | Before Class   | Due               |
|-------|---|--|--|-------------------|
| 8/27  | Course Orientation and Introduction to Social Cognition | -Do we have thought without social relationships?  |  |                   |
| 8/29  | Introduction to methods and good/bad practices          | -Should psychology ignore the mind and focus on behavior?<br>-Bad practices in social cognition  | -Read Baumeister et al. (2007)<br>-Read Battacharjee (2013)<br>-Read Blum (2018) |                   |
| 9/3   | No class scheduled                                      |  |  |                   |
| 9/5   | Attention   | -Is bad stronger always than good?   | -Read Baumeister et al (2001)  | <b>Journal 1</b>  |
| 9/10  | Attention and Emotion                                   | -Does meditating change the way see the world?   | -Skim Hölzel et al. (2011)<br>-Watch Brewer (TED)                                |                   |
| 9/12  | Emotion and Memory                                      | -Why have false memories?<br>-Are eyewitness testimonies reliable?   | -Watch Loftus (TED)<br>-Read Wixted et al. (2018)                                | <b>Journal 2</b>  |
| 9/17  | Memory  | -What is transactive memory?<br>-Does our technology serve as a form of transactive memory?  | -Skim Wegner (1994)<br>-Watch Gruber (TED)                                       |                   |
| 9/19  | Dual Process Theories                                   | -Is our social life on autopilot?  | -Watch Ariely (TED)  | <b>Journal 3</b>  |
| 9/24  | Dual Process Theories                                   | -Does mind wandering make us happy?  | -Read Killingsworth (2010)   |                   |
| 9/26  | <b>Exam 1</b>   | <b>*Focus: The Basics of Social Cognition</b>  |  | <b>Journal 4</b>  |
| 10/1  | Heuristics Part 1                                       | -Do heuristics help us make social decisions?  | -Read Tversky (1973)   |                   |
| 10/3  | Heuristics Part 1                                       | -Do heuristics lead to errors?   | -Watch Gilbert (TED)   |                   |
| 10/8  | Ordinary Personology                                    | -How do we make attributions?  | -Watch Saxe (TED)  | <b>Journal 5</b>  |
| 10/10 | Ordinary Personology                                    | -Are there errors in attribution?  | -Read Jones & Harris (1967)  |                   |
| 10/15 | Heuristics Part 2                                       | -Do our heuristics lead to errors? (reprise)<br>-Can we benefit from our heuristics  | -Read Dijksterhuis (2006)  | <b>Journal 6</b>  |
| 10/17 | The Self  | -Are positive illusions good or bad for us?  | -Read Taylor (1994)<br>-Watch Sharot (TED)                                       |                   |
| 10/22 | The Self  | -Should we strive for self-esteem or self-control?   | -Read Baumeister (1993)  |                   |
| 10/24 | Relationships   | -Do we have a basic need to belong?  | -Watch Pinker (TED)<br>-Watch Glibert (TED)                                      | <b>Journal 7</b>  |
| 10/29 | <b>Exam 2</b>   | <b>*Focus: Social Cognition in Interpersonal Interactions</b>  |  | <b>Journal 8</b>  |
| 10/31 | Attitudes and how they form                             | -Do we behave in ways consistent with our attitudes?   | -Read LaPierre (1934)  |                   |
| 11/5  | Attitude Change   | -What are the consequences of behaving inconsistently with attitudes?  | -Read Festinger and Carlsmith (1959)   |                   |
| 11/7  | Attitude Change   | -Can persuasion be used for good acts?   | -Watch Cialdini (TED)  |                   |
| 11/12 | Group Relations: Stereotyping                           | -Does categorization breed conflict?   | -Read Sherif (1954/1961)   | <b>Journal 9</b>  |
| 11/14 | Stereotyping  | -how does stereotyping affect its victims?   | -Read Steel (1995)<br>-Watch Williams (TED)                                      |                   |
| 11/19 | Group Relations: Prejudice and Discrimination           | -Where does group conflict come from?  | -Read Macrae (1994)  | <b>Journal 10</b> |
| 11/21 | Prejudice and Discrimination                            | -How do we reduce group conflict?  | -Read Sherif (1958)  |                   |
| 11/26 | Empathy   | -What reduces empathy?   | -Read Genovese (1964)  | <b>Journal 11</b> |
| 11/28 | Empathy   | -A social cognition model of empathy   | -Watch Ramachandran (TED)  |                   |
| 12/3  | Empathy   | -How do we increase empathy?   | -Read Batson (1997)  |                   |
| 12/5  | Empathy   | -Can paying attention help empathy grow?   | -Read Berry (2018)   | <b>Journal 12</b> |
| 12/10 | <b>Final Exam</b>                                       | <b>*Focus: Social Cognition in Society</b><br><b>*note that the exam is from 4:00-6:00pm in the room where we typically meet—Academic Hall 2</b> |  | <b>Op-ed</b>      |