



MODULE BOOKLET

Module Title	Special Topics in Social Psychology
Module Code	PY3002C
Session	2011/12
Semester	Spring

1. Welcome to Special Topics in Social Psychology

Welcome to this honours level module which aims to provide you with advanced knowledge and understanding of selected topics in social psychology. This module will introduce some alternative and challenging perspectives on these topics and will also apply social psychological theory and research to some contemporary social issues. An outline of the module as a whole is provided in the Module Specification (see section 3).

2. Teaching team

Module Leader

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3. Module specification

1. Module title

Special Topics in Social Psychology

2. Module code

PY3002C

3. Module level

H

4. Module Leader

Alexios Arvanitis

5. Home academic department

DOP

6. Teaching location

Kifissia and Glyfada

7. Teaching semester

Spring

8. Teaching mode

Day

9. Module Type

STAN

10. Credit rating for module

15

11. Prerequisites and co-requisites

PY2003 Social Psychology

12. Module summary

This module aims to provide students with advanced knowledge and understanding of selected topics in social psychology.

Semester: Spring

Prerequisites: PY2003

Assessment: Examination (100%)

13. Module aims

To provide students with advanced knowledge and understanding of selected topics in social psychology. More specifically, to:

1. introduce some alternative and challenging perspectives on social psychological phenomena; and,
2. consider the application of social psychological theory and research to a range of contemporary social issues.

14. Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module, the student will,

1. be able to provide an account of some alternative perspectives on social psychological phenomena.
2. be able to evaluate the application of social psychology theory and research to some contemporary social issues and understand the practical implications.

15. Syllabus

Topics will be drawn from

- The study of self
- Negotiations

- Justice
- Influence
- Social comparison

All topics will be discussed on the bipolar dimension of individual VS society and with special emphasis on social psychology's concept of the 'situation'. Students will be asked to contemplate on these issues on the basis of original classic papers as well as contemporary ideas.

16. Assessment strategy

The assessment comprises an unseen examination of two essays from a choice of six questions. The examination tests depth of knowledge and understanding and the questions require students to review and evaluate empirical evidence, but also to engage in theoretical discussions with a particular emphasis on critical thinking.

17. Summary description of assessment items

Assessment type	Description of item	% weighting	Qual mark	Qual set	Tariff	Week due
EXU	2 hr Exam	100	-	-		

18. Learning and teaching

The extended teaching session comprises (a) delivery and explanation of core material to students (e.g., key concepts, empirical work and theoretical explanation), providing a framework for further reading and independent study; and (b) programmed discussion of issues at key points during the session along with practical exercises, providing an opportunity for more active student participation.

4. Lecture summaries and reading lists

Lecture 1: The role of situation in social psychology

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Have an understanding of the importance of the situation in social psychology.
- Be aware of the delicate balance between focusing on the individual and focusing on the situation.
- Be able to discuss the Stanford Prison Experiment and the controversy around it in terms of its implications for the study of behaviour.

Key readings

Lewin K. (1943). Defining the "Field at a Given Time." *Psychological Review*, 50, 292-310.

Haney, C., Banks, C., & Zimbardo, P. (1973). Interpersonal dynamics in a simulated prison. *International Journal of Criminology and Penology*, 1, 69-97.

Haslam, S. A. & Reicher, S. D. (2003). Beyond Stanford: Questioning a role-based explanation of tyranny. *Dialogue* (Bulletin of the Society of Personality and Social Psychology), 18, 22-25.

Lecture 2: Reinvigorating the concept of situation in social psychology

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Have an understanding of the abstract elements of situations.
- Appreciate the central role of the situation in social psychological theories.
- Be able to understand how cognition, relationships and culture blend with the concept of the situation.

Key readings

Reis, H. T. (2008). Reinvigorating the concept of situation in social psychology. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 12, 311-329.

Ross, L., and Nisbett, R. E. (1991). *The Person and the Situation: Perspectives of Social Psychology*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. (Chapter 1: pp.1-20)

Lecture 3: Influence as dominance

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Have an understanding of how and when a situation can one-sidedly influence behaviour.
- Appreciate the consequences on the individual.
- Be able to identify situational variables that have an effect on influence.

Key readings

Milgram, S. (1965). Some conditions of obedience and disobedience to authority. *Human Relations*, 18, 57-76.

Asch, S. E. (1955). Opinions and social pressure. *Scientific American*, 193, 31-35.

Lecture 4: Influence as an active process

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Have an understanding of how the individual responds to influence.
- Appreciate the consequences on the individual.
- Understand more about minority influence.

Key readings

Gardikiotis, A. (2011). Minority influence. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 5, 679-673.

Lecture 5: Negotiation as a 'game' of interests

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Understand the impact of the decision-making approach in the study of negotiation.
- Appreciate the role of cognitive biases.
- Be able to approach negotiation based on the individuals' strategic intentions and goals.

Key readings

Carnevale, P.J., & Pruitt, D.G.(1992). Negotiation and mediation. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 43, 531-582.

Lecture 6: Negotiation as a communicative process

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Understand the role of discourse in negotiation.
- Contrast the discourse approach to an interest-based approach.
- Be able to approach negotiation on an intersubjective level.

Key readings

Arvanitis, A., & Karampatzos, A. (2011). Negotiation and Aristotle's Rhetoric: Truth over interests? *Philosophical Psychology*, 24, 845-860.

Putnam, L. L. (2005). Discourse analysis: Mucking around with negotiation data. *International Negotiation*, 10, 17–32.

Lecture 7: The justice motive

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Know about the justice motive and the justice heuristic.
- Distinguish between self-interested and justice motives.
- Understand more about how and why we justify systems.

Key readings

Lerner, M.J. (2003). The justice motive: Where social psychologists found it, how they lost it and why they may not find it again. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 7, 388-399.

Jost, J.T., & Hunyady, O. (2002). The psychology of system justification and the palliative function of ideology. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 13, 111-153.

Lecture 8: The social function of emotions

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Know about the social role of emotions.
- Understand their usefulness on an intraindividual, interpersonal, group and culture level.
- Understand more about the emotion of embarrassment.

Key readings

Keltner, D., & Haidt, J. (1999). Social functions of emotions at multiple levels of analysis. *Cognition and Emotion*, 13, 505-522.

Lecture 9: The self through social comparison

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Understand about the motivational processes of social comparison.
- Appreciate the effects of social comparison.
- Know about the basic principles of upward and downward comparison.

Key readings

Festinger, L. (1954). A Theory of Social Comparison Processes. *Human Relations*, 7, 117-40.

Suls, J., Martin, R., & Wheeler, L. (2002). Social comparison: Why, with whom, and with what effect. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 11, 159-163.

Lecture 10: Self-Determination Theory

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Have an understanding of a theory that focuses both on individual and environment.
- Understand the role of a needs-based approach in social psychology.
- Understand the role of the self and the environment in Self-Determination Theory.

Key readings

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227-268.

Lecture 11: Summary and exam preparation

5. Teaching sessions and handouts

The aim of the teaching sessions is to deliver core material (e.g., key concepts, empirical work and theoretical explanation) and provide a framework for further reading and independent study, as well as allowing time for discussion of key issues.

Latecomers are asked to come in as quietly as possible and avoid disturbing those who are already there.

For each session the lecture slides and other materials will be posted onto the Intranet site for this module in advance of the sessions so you can print out copies if you would like them available during the lecture.

6. Recommended reading

As this is an honours level module there is no set textbook. A selection of articles for all sessions will be posted onto the intranet.