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
Name: Alexios Arvanitis
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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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment type</th>
<th>Description of item</th>
<th>% weighting</th>
<th>Qual mark</th>
<th>Qual set</th>
<th>Tariff</th>
<th>Week due</th>
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<tr>
<td>EXU</td>
<td>2 hr Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
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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.
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

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
**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**


**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**


**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**

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


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


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.
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

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

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.