
Social Psychology 7,5 course credits

Psychology 2, Spring 2024
Department of Psychology,
Stockholm University

Course leader: Torun Lindholm Öjmyr

Overall purpose and content

The overall purpose of this course is to provide advanced knowledge within the field of social psychology. The advanced knowledge will hopefully aid in navigating the social arena – that is to provide psychological explanations for social phenomena that occur constantly in our environment. The course highlights these social phenomena from the perspective of the individual, the environment and the interaction between the individual and their environment. An important goal for the course is to identify different levels of analysis which span from cognitive intra-individual perspectives to more social inter-individual perspectives. Groups are formed during the course introduction.

Expected study results

To pass the course, the student must be able to:

- Explain and provide examples of central theoretical concepts/models/theories and empirical findings in social psychology
- Summarize, communicate, and critically examine social psychological research.
- Formulate and give an account of new research hypotheses based on existing social psychological research.

Group work and seminars

Groups are formed during the introduction of the course. The group work consists of two parts; (1) a task that is to be presented orally with the help of a presentation software for instance PowerPoint in a first series of seminars (seminar 1A, 1B or 1C) and (2) a task that is to be presented through a poster during a second seminar (seminar 2). Attendance is mandatory for all four seminars. One out of four missed seminars may be compensated with a written task. Please contact Torun who will determine if that is feasible.

Common starting point for both tasks

The two tasks are separate but share starting point. When the groups are formed each group will be assigned one out of three pre-determined broad topics within social psychology.

Start the work by reading the assigned chapter(s) in Fiske and deciding on a scientific article referred to in the chapter(s). The article should be published no later than 2005, concern empirical data with one or several studies/experiments. Also, make sure that the results are central to the topic. All members of the group are to read the entire article. By the time specified in the schedule the groups are to submit in Athena what article they have chosen. Give the full reference according to APA as well as link to download the article (open access or through the University library). It is expected that all course participants download and read all articles for seminar 1A, 1B and 1C, that is *even those articles that the own group is not presenting*.

Seminar 1A, 1B, and 1 C (oral presentation)

In this task the groups are to orally and with the aid of a presentation software (A) describe the article that they have chosen as their starting point. In addition, they are to (B) introduce and discuss at least one concern, issue, problem, or question that they themselves have discussed in the group while reading the article. The B-part should be presented in such a way as to stimulate involvement and in-depth discussion from remaining course participants. The greater the involvement, the more help you will likely receive for the subsequent group work, so seize this opportunity!

The presentation and discussion should include the following parts;

- **A) Description of the study**

- The purpose of the study, that is, how it is motivated in the article
- Method
- Main results
- How results are discussed by the authors
- What conclusions are drawn by the authors, and what they have discussed in terms of weaknesses and strengths of the study

- **B) Discussion of group's own issue, concern or question**

- Finally, one of the group's own concerns, issues, problems or questions should be presented and discussed with the remaining course participants in order to advance the group's continued discussions for the next task.

The presentation is to be done orally with the aid of e.g. PowerPoint. State full names of each group members who have contributed equally to the task in the first slide. The final PowerPoint is to be e-mailed to Charlotte before midnight the day before the seminar. Depending on the number of groups, each group will have **about 15 minutes for their presentation including about 5 minutes for discussion with the remaining course participants**. Make sure you sift through the information in the article in order to make the presentation understandable while still keeping the time.

Each of the non-presenting group should - through at least one group member depending on time - involve themselves in the discussion-part of the presentation. Note that it is taken for granted that everyone has read all articles and therefore that involvement means advancing the knowledge about the area rather than posing questions where the answers can readily be found in the articles.

Seminar 2 (poster session)

For this task the groups will through a poster (see below) describe a new study that they would like to conduct and which is directly connected to the article they have previously presented. This article must be centrally connected to the study that the group is formulating and also published later than the presented article. The two articles can be

directly related to each other, for instance such as they concern the same phenomena. Or the connection between them can be through the new study, for instance the latter is about merging two social psychological phenomena/areas. Avoid choosing the second article on more peripheral grounds for instance that it contains an instrument that you wish to use in the new study. ***In addition, the groups need to update themselves about methodological aspects in social psychological research (Fiske ch. 2) and key concepts and central stand points in social psychology (Fiske ch. 1).***

The new study is to be thought-out in detail for each of the aspects below. For the poster, make sure each aspect is described in as much detail as is needed in order to understand the contents, but still making sure not too much text is being used.

- **The purpose of the new study**, that is a rationale and background. In this part the connection between the two articles should be made clear. The rationale could be based on some critique on article 1 in terms of methodology and which the group is aiming to bridge in the new study or it could be about investigating a new hypothesis that the group formulated based on the results of both articles. Do not choose hypotheses or suggestions for future research stated in these articles., but rather make sure to formulate a question of your own. Also, avoid formulating a question that only marginally makes out a "new" study, for instance investigating the same things as was done in article 1 but using a different population (e.g. employed persons instead of students) or with only the addition of a different instrument et cetera.
- **Method** should be thought-out in as much details as possible giving specifics about how the study will be conducted, including specific instruments for data collection, specified experimental manipulations of the independent variable et cetera.
- **Expected results, discussion and conclusions**, that is, what the group think would be the outcome if the study had actually been conducted and what significance these results would have (practically and/or theoretically). Expected – i.e. fabricated! - results can be illustrated in the poster in the form of figures and/or tables and in F- and t-values. Such illustrations can be a concrete visualization of the group's comprehension of theory and the topic, as well as an aid in the process of discussing this with the examiner and the remaining group participants – it can help clarifying sometimes vague ideas about theory and relationships, phenomena and topics, to be exposed and worked on in order to become more concrete and understandable.
- In the poster both articles should be **referred to** throughout. Include a list of references at the end with full references to both articles as well as to any other (extra) sources.

Please observe that the group may *not* conduct a data collection, but only formulate a hypothetical study! Also, it is not permissible to use AI for instance in the form of Chatgpt when drawing conclusions or formulating starting points or new hypotheses in the group tasks.

There is a PowerPoint-template at Athena that can be used for the poster, just make sure to erase the instruction texts and illustrative images before you use it. On Athena you can find a guide that provides tips when writing a poster. It is for instance important that the text in your poster is large

All posters are shared simultaneously and digitally during the poster seminar (projected on screens in the lecture room) to allow for conversations and discussions with other groups and the examiner regarding your study and your work. Each group needs to bring a laptop. Contact Charlotte well in advance if you need technical advice. The final poster is to be submitted (in PowerPoint format or the like) on Athena before the time specified in the schedule.

During the seminar each participant will circulate the room to take part of all other groups' posters; to enable interaction at least one of the members of the group should stay at all times with the poster (swap places within the group so each member gets a chance to circulate and a chance to stay with the own poster). As a visitor you are expected to ask questions about the poster or request the group to talk them through their work. In other words, presentations are conducted in parallel and driven by interaction and each person's curiosity in the current phenomena. During the seminar the examiner will talk with each group individually where the conversation will be based on the group's study; the group will be given the opportunity to give an account of how they have conducted their work, what they have considered in each step and how they have landed in their conclusions. The examiner will pause for questions and clarifications aimed at each group member. A schedule for these examiner-conversations will be published on Athena before the seminar.

Individual exam

The course is examined with an individual written exam. The exam will be digital and is given at SU. Room number will be provided closer to the exam date.

The exam includes a number of questions that are to be answered based on all course literature according to instructions. The questions are of essay type, requiring analytical reasoning and application. Examples of exam questions will be put on Athena at course start. Please observe the format has differed between course occasions.

Absence

The course requirement includes active participation in all four seminars, that is, even those where the own group is not presenting. If participation is prohibited on a maximum of one seminar please contact the examiner who will determine the possibility to do a suitable oral or in-writing replacement task. The group work however require that group members contribute equally towards the presentations. Absence from more than one seminar or from group work requires that these elements are done again during the next course occasion.

Own work

The course requires own studies and reading of the course material, above and beyond the scheduled lectures. To aid in this process there are two scheduled occasions with specific tasks to be worked on in each group. Both occasions are student led and tasks are not to be submitted. The course leader is available for questions about layout and instructions, but will not provide feedback on the work. The work can be conducted in Zoom or in a group room that you book yourself in Albano. The occasions are not mandatory but from previous student's feedback it is evident that many appreciate the possibility to bounce terms, models and reasoning off of other group members, not least for the upcoming exam.

There are also study questions connected to each chapter of the Fiske text book which may be worked on continuously during the course. You may work on the questions individually or with others. You may post your responses in the open discussion thread on Athena, or note them just for your own eyes. This work is also student led, non-mandatory and will not receive feedback from the course leader.

Plagiarism, cheating and unallowed cooperation

Students are responsible for knowing about the rules of examination. Detailed information can be found on the home page of Stockholm University (links to Swedish and English pages can be found on Athena).

Teachers are required to report suspicion about breaches of these rules to the principle and the Disciplinary board. Such reports always become a disciplinary matter and may lead to suspension. One example of plagiarism is to verbatim (word-by-word) or almost verbatim copy a text (also few sentences and translations) regardless of whether source is given or not. This also applies to self-authored texts (self-plagiarism). Cheating also includes for instance making use of unallowed resources or aids. On this course it is not allowed to let someone outside the seminar group write or otherwise contribute to texts in the seminars, or to use AI such as Chatgpt for similar purposes.

<https://www.su.se/english/staff/organisation-governance/governing-documents-rules-and-regulations/education/guidelines-for-disciplinary-matters-at-stockholm-university-1.181>

Course requirements and grading

The grading of the exam counts as final grade on the course. The exam is graded on a seven-grade scale (F-A) based on below criteria.

In order to receive a final grade, fulfilment of the course requirements is also required (i.e. active participation in all four seminars and in the group work leading up to the seminars). A decision about the possibility to do a replacement task will be made by the examiner in each individual case.

Grading scale

The grades on the course are as follows

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|-----------------|---|
| A. Excellent | The student can explain central concepts, theories and research in social psychology in a nuanced, thorough and relevant way. The student is also able to apply terms and models in social psychology with insight and confidence, and problematize and evaluate theory and research in a convincing and relevant way. The student also demonstrates a thorough understanding of the scientific approach and argumentation. |
| B. Very good | The student can thoroughly explain central concepts, theories and research in social psychology and use them in a relevant way. The student is also able to apply terms and models in social psychology with confidence, as well as problematize and evaluate theory and research. The student is demonstrating a good understanding of scientific approach and argumentation. |
| C. Good | The student is able to explain central concepts, theories and research in social psychology. Moreover, the student is able to apply terms and models in social psychology with confidence, and also problematize and evaluate theory and research. The student is demonstrating an understanding of a scientific approach and argumentation. |
| D. Satisfactory | The student is able to explain central concepts, theories and research in social psychology. The student is also largely able to apply terms and models in social psychology, and to some extent, problematize and evaluate theory and research. The student is largely demonstrating an understanding of a scientific approach and argumentation |
| E. Sufficient | The student is can on a basic level explain central concepts, theories and research in social psychology. The student is also able to apply terms and models in social psychology to some extent, and demonstrates attempts to problematize and evaluate theory and research. The student demonstrates a basic understanding of a scientific approach and argumentation. |
| F.Fail | One or several of the following shortcomings: The student is showing a lack of understanding for central concepts, theories and research in social psychology. A basic problematization and evaluation of theory and research is missing. Lack of nuance or a lack of understanding of a scientific approach and argumentation. |
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Literature

Fiske, S. T. (2018). *Social beings: Core motives in social psychology* (4th edition). John Wiley & Sons.

Denoted F in the schedule. Fourth edition is printed 2018 or later; according to the publisher there is no difference in content as long as you have this edition and therefore all printing years from 2018 and onwards are acceptable on this course. Other editions, earlier printing years or other text books are not acceptable for the take-home-exam however. Note that all chapters of the book is subject for examination.

About 10 scientific articles will be included as part of the readings on the course. These articles are the ones that groups choose for the first part of the group work. Links to download them will be available on Athena after the deadline to submit the full reference to the chosen article.

Reference literature

The course is given on Psychology 2 which requires a more advanced course content that is also processed in a more advanced way. The text book by Fiske mirrors this advancement within the discipline of psychology. However, there is no requirement that students should have taken social psychology before. The readings of Fiske can instead be supported by more basic text books within social psychology. Below are some examples of reference literature for this purpose. Please note that these books are less advanced than the text book by Fiske and should therefore not replace the Fiske book.

Gilovich, T., Keltner, D., Chen, S., & Nisbett, R. R. (e.g. 7th edition, 2023). *Social psychology*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Kenrick, D. T., Neuberg, S. L., & Cialdini, R. B. (e.g. 7th edition, 2020). *Social psychology: Goals in interaction*. Pearson.

Smith, E. R., & Mackie, D. M. (e.g. 4th edition, 2015). *Social psychology*. Routledge.

Course leader: Professor Torun Lindholm, tlm@psychology.su.se

Teachers: Associate professor Sabina Cehajic Clancy