**SOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND PERSONALITY**  
PSY 258S, Section 01  
Fall 2011  
Thursday 1:15-3:45, 319 Soc/Psych

**Instructor:** Rick Hoyle  
**Office:** 321 Soc/Psych  
**Contact:** 660.5791, rhoyle@duke.edu  
**Office hours:** Tuesdays 2:30-4:00, and by appointment

Course website: [http://www.duke.edu/~rhoyle/teaching/psy258/](http://www.duke.edu/~rhoyle/teaching/psy258/)

**Readings**


Various articles and chapters will be made available for download at least one week prior to and one week after the class meeting during which they will be discussed.

**Description and Goals of the Course**

Our goal in this seminar course is to survey major topics in social psychology, including personality and individual difference variables relevant to those topics, at a level appropriate for advanced undergraduates and first-year graduate students. I assume familiarity with the methods of psychological science, including basic statistical methods, as well as some prior exposure to social psychology. The course is structured to promote depth of understanding, integration, and creativity. The major activities of the course are purposeful reading, lively discussion, and original writing. In order to take full advantage of the course, it will be necessary to devote about five hours each week to preparation. Successful students will complete the course with a solid understanding of major themes and methods in social and personality psychology.

**Elements of the Course**

*Readings for Class Meetings*

The success of a seminar course hinges on preparation and participation by all class members. The assigned readings provide the foundation for active participation. It is essential that you arrive at each class meeting having thoughtfully completed the readings. For each class meeting, these consist of a chapter from the textbook and several journal articles or book chapters. Each week’s readings are divided into three parts, corresponding to three portions of the class meeting. The types of readings and their role in class meetings are as follows.
Background readings. These consist of one chapter from the textbook and one or more short articles of historical significance. We typically will devote the first 50 minutes or so of the class meeting to material covered in these readings. I will take primary responsibility for presenting and encouraging discussion of this material.

“Target” readings. For each topic, I have chosen one article (or a matched set of articles) for extended discussion. Target articles are provocative, controversial, or groundbreaking, and should provide the basis for spirited discussions. You and I will share responsibility for promoting discussion of these readings during the second 50 minutes or so of the class meeting.

“Choose-one” readings. Given that you can’t devote all of your academic effort to this one course, I am asking you to choose one additional reading from a list of readings we all would read if time were not an issue. (I encourage graduate students, particularly graduate students in the social psychology program, to read all of the choose-one articles.) During the final 50 minutes or so of the class meeting, you will stimulate discussion of the choose-one article you read. I suggest taking notes and preparing in advance a question or idea you think the group might discuss. This is to be a student-led discussion, so avoid long, uncomfortable periods of silence by arriving prepared.

Discussion Questions

To help you to prepare for and contribute to the discussion, you are to prepare and submit one or two discussion questions for each set of readings. These are due each Wednesday by 5:00. Please email your questions to me (rhoyle@duke.edu). Your grade for the discussion questions will begin at 100, with 10 points subtracted for each failure to hand the questions in on time.

The discussion questions are so named because they should promote discussion. Although there are no hard and fast rules for formulating questions, the most successful questions are integrative (i.e., they ask the respondent to relate ideas in different readings to one another). These questions are important to the success of the class; please spend some time on them.

Idea Papers

Over the course of the semester, you are to hand in 10 idea papers. Everyone is required to produce an idea paper for the second class meeting. You may choose the class meetings for which you produce the remaining nine papers. An idea paper is a one-to-two page (double-spaced) document in which you describe in very general terms a study you might do (or believe someone ought to do) given what you read for that week’s class meeting. Your idea must draw on at least two of the readings for the week. Idea papers begin with a reference to the articles that inspired the idea and the particular aspects of the readings from which the proposed study derives. The heart of the paper is a general description of a study or set of studies one might do based on the readings. The idea paper concludes with a statement about how the results of the proposed study would make a significant contribution to the literature represented by the readings. Idea papers are due no later than the beginning of the class meeting for which they are relevant. Each idea paper will receive a score from 0-10, yielding a total of 100 points for the set.
Mid-Term Exam

You will sit for an exam during the September 22 class meeting time. The exam will consist of your choice of a subset of short essay questions from a list based on the readings to that point. These questions may ask you to critique studies; analyze strengths and weaknesses of a theory; integrate or apply ideas from several readings; or propose a new study to test a specific hypothesis raised by the readings. In short, the questions are designed to elicit creative, independent thought rather than a demonstration of your ability to remember facts. As such, the exam will be “open book”; you may bring all the readings as well as any notes you may have prepared beforehand. In preparation for the exam, you should read for comprehension and understanding rather than memorizing specifics from the readings. If you carefully and thoughtfully do the readings and actively participate in discussions, you should not need to do extra preparation for the exam.

Review Manuscript

The culminating assignment is a manuscript that reviews the literature on a topic within social or personality psychology. Your review must be written in APA style and format, comprising a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 40 pages of text (i.e., exclusive of title page, abstract, references, notes, tables, figures, and the like). In addition to consultation with your faculty mentor, you will find useful information about writing a review manuscript in these documents:


I will provide additional information about the review manuscript toward the middle of the semester. A key issue is that your review must have a point; that is, it must do more than just provide a synopsis of all the published studies on the topic you have chosen. I strongly recommend that you consult with your faculty mentor early in the semester both to identify a topic and to develop an angle that will guide your organization and synthesis of the literature on the topic. You will be asked to hand in several preliminary documents (e.g., topic area, outline) during the latter half of the semester to ensure that you are on course to develop a high quality manuscript by the time it is due, 5:00 on Friday, December 9.
Course Grade

Your grade for the course will be based on the total percentage of points you obtain from four sources, weighted as follows:

- Discussion questions: 10%
- Idea papers: 30%
- Mid-term exam: 20%
- Review manuscript: 40%

Grades will be distributed as follows:

Undergraduates

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<td>C-</td>
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Graduate Students

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Course Outline

**September 1  history and background**

*Background:*
Chapter 2 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

-or-

*Target:*

*Choose one:*

**September 8  social influence and conformity**

*Background:*
Chapter 11 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

*Target:*

*Choose one:*

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1 All readings available for download at [http://www.duke.edu/~rhoyle/teaching/psy258/reading.html](http://www.duke.edu/~rhoyle/teaching/psy258/reading.html)


**September 15  social cognition**

*Background:*

Chapter 3 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)


*Target:*


*Choose one:*


**September 22**  mid-term exam

**September 29**  attitudes and behavior

*Background:*
Chapter 6 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

*Target:*
Take an IAT or two at [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/takeatest.html](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/takeatest.html)

*Choose one:*

**October 6**  self and identity

*Background:*
Chapter 5 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)
Target:  
**Discussion: Does self-esteem matter?** (You will be assigned one of the following.)

**Read both of these:**

**Choose one:**

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**October 13**  
**personality and individual differences**

**Background:**
Chapter 21 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

**Target:**

**Choose one:**
October 20 social exchange and prosocial behavior

Background:
Chapter 8 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

Target:

Choose one:

October 27 antisocial behavior

Background:
Chapter 9 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

Target:

Choose one:
November 3  prejudice and stereotyping

Background:
Chapter 10 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

Target:

Choose one:

November 10  attraction and rejection

Background:
Chapter 12 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

Target:
Choose one:


November 17  close relationships

Background:
Chapter 13 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)

Target:

Choose one:


December 1  intergroup processes

Background:
Chapter 15 in Baumeister & Finkel (2010)
Target:

Choose one:


December 9 research proposal due by 5:00