San Jose State University

Tolerance in American Culture - A Social Psychology Perspective

Psych 190 - 09; Spring, 2011

Instructor: Greg Berg, Ph.D. Office: DMH 310

Telephone: 408-840-1273

Email: gberg2000_2001@yahoo.com

Office Hours: Mon & Wed. 4-4:30 pm, or by appointment

Class Days: Wed. 6-8:45 pm Room: DMH 359

Prerequisites: Psych 100W, Psych 120, and senior standing


COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Our course objectives are as follows:

1. to review and develop skills in understanding differing epistemologies or sources of knowledge and to critically evaluate their role in the science of human behavior
2. to focus, refine, and provide evidence of your critical thinking skills in literature evaluation
3. to demonstrate competence in oral presentation and communication
4. to demonstrate competence in written communication by analyzing, synthesizing, and integrating existing psychology literature relevant to this topic
5. to demonstrate an integration of knowledge and skills developed across the psychology major
6. to provide evidence of skills in researching the psychology literature (including accessing electronic and print journal articles in libraries and beyond)
7. to thoughtfully apply these skills to topics of interest
ASSIGNMENTS

1. Term Paper 100 points
2. Position papers (9) 90 points
3. Quizzes (9) 90 points
4. Group presentation 50 points
5. Reality check 20 points
6. Movie review 20 points
7. Various other group and class assignments 20-50 points

Position Papers: On nine separate occasions, you will be responsible for contributing to and facilitating a discussion of that week’s topic. Please note that your role as a discussant is a serious one. We will be looking for you to make a tangible contribution to each day’s discussion. Merely posing a question or two from the reading, or providing an interesting anecdote will not suffice. This is a key opportunity for you to develop your critical thinking and evidence based responses that are the crux of the position papers for this course.

For each chapter assigned for that week, you are responsible for providing a brief response, which will be due the following week. We are looking for you to write about the topic from a personal or philosophical perspective (2-3 pages). You may make references to the articles assigned for that week. The specifics of these writing assignments will vary from week to week and will be delineated on the day of that chapters quiz.

Responses are due at the beginning of each discussion day. There are two purposes to the article responses: (1) to encourage you to read thoughtfully, and (2) to provide evidence to me that you have both read and engaged (to the best of your ability) each article.

“Reality Check” Assignment: Each student will be required to go out in the “real world” so to speak to engage with some aspect of this course as it is actually practiced outside of academics. This task is meant to be both enjoyable and directly applicable to your individual interests. The assignment is to interview or observe a person doing some work related to tolerance. You will then write a brief 2-3 page double-spaced summary of your experience. This paper will include a brief summary of what you did (whom your talked to or observed), what you heard from them (no direct transcripts here), and what you learned.

Again, the goal of this assignment is to be of interest to you and your goals as related to the course. You may, for example, choose to interview or observe a teacher with a diverse classroom. You could interview a therapist or counselor. You could also interview any other professional who might deal with tolerance on a regular basis.
**Group Presentation:** In collaboration with one or two other students, each student will be expected to prepare and present a 30 min. PowerPoint presentation that summarizes the topic for that week. This summary will not be based solely on the three articles from the assigned chapter. It will use the title of the weeks assignment as a departure from which to present important findings, research, or concepts from the topic area. The important thing to remember is that your presentation should NOT simply be a summary of the readings, but rather a succinct presentation and discussion of the topic for that week.

**Term Paper:** Each student must write a literature review paper based on a topic covered during this course. This paper will represent the culmination of your efforts in this class (and in Psychology), providing you an opportunity to delve deeper into a topic-analyzing, synthesizing, and integrating the existing psychology literature into a cohesive thesis of your making. We will be discussing the details of this assignment as the semester progresses, but students should expect to produce a scholarly, typewritten paper between 10-15 pages and based on the current APA Style Guide.

**CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT**

The class will use a seminar format with assigned reading and classroom discussion/debate. The quality of the class will depend, in part, on how well each participant contributes to the work we do in the classroom. If we all are to gain from our efforts, it is very important that everyone comes to class prepared to participate actively in discussion of the issues at hand. Each member of the class is expected to:

1. Attend all classes
2. Complete all assigned readings prior to each class
3. Participate in classroom discussion on those readings

**WRITING POLICY**

The quality of your writing is graded in this class. You will lose points if we cannot understand what you are trying to say. If your grammar is too difficult to understand, you should seek additional assistance with your writing. The Psychology Department has adopted a writing policy in which papers are to be docked a minimum of 10% if 5 or more grammatical mistakes are found. It is the student's responsibility to proof read or have the paper proof read prior to submission. Whenever referencing something you have read, you are expected to provide a complete, APA-style reference. It is assumed that you know, understand, and can properly apply APA-style. If not, it is your responsibility to re-familiarize yourself with this style guide. Never reference a web site or web source, ever. If you find a good article referred to on the web, get it, read it, and use that original source.

At SJSU plagiarism is the act of representing the work of another as one’s own (without giving appropriate credit) regardless of how that work was obtained, and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements. Plagiarism at SJSU included but is not limited to:
• The act of incorporating ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, or the specific substance of another’s work, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as one’s own work;
• And, representing another’s artistic/scholarly works such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, painting, drawing, sculptures, or similar works as one’s own.

The following URL will take you to the SJSU library’s plagiarism tutorial. If you have not yet completed this, it is worth your while to do so, http://tutorials sjlibrary.org/tutorial/plagiarism/index.htm

All papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com. Scores obtained should be less than 30% before the paper is submitted for grading.

LATE WORK POLICY

All assignments must be handed in immediately upon request according to the schedule below. Material handed in after this period will be considered late. Ten percent (10%) will be deducted from the final grade for each day that an assignment is late. Assignments more than three days late will not be accepted unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor.

UNIVERSITY POLICY

Dropping and Adding: Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on add/drop are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html. Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advisin/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Academic Integrity: Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material
you have submitted or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instruction.

**Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act:** If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

---

**Schedule of Classes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 26</td>
<td>Introduction / Group Formation / Topic Selection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 02</td>
<td>Writing Papers / Researching / Presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 09</td>
<td>Tools of Social Psychology / Attraction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 16</td>
<td>Social Perception</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 23</td>
<td>Social Cognition</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 02</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 09</td>
<td>Social Identity</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 16</td>
<td>Prejudice and Discrimination</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 23</td>
<td>Prosocial Behavior</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 06</td>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 13</td>
<td>Group Behavior</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 20</td>
<td>Social Influences</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 27</td>
<td>Reality Check discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 04</td>
<td>Movie Discussion / paper review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
May 11  Paper presentations

May 25  Final (17:15-19:30)

* On days that a chapter is assigned, there will be a quiz covering that chapter.