NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY
PSY 216 - SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY (3 CR.)

Course Description

Examines individuals in social contexts, their social roles, group processes and intergroup relations. Includes topics such as small group behavior, social behavior, social cognition, conformity, attitudes, and motivation. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose
To acquaint students with a scientific understanding of how the presence of other people and other situational factors influence human thoughts and behaviors. Previous psychology study is recommended.

Course Prerequisites/Corequisites

Prerequisites: PSY 200, 201, or 202 or permission of instructor. ENG 111 suggested

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Articulate the major methods of research that social psychologists use and explain different ethical considerations in conducting social psychological research
- Explain research on social perception, including perception of the self, of other individuals, and of social groups
- Describe social influence processes, including attitude formation and change, conformity, obedience, and group processes, and how they processes are found in everyday life
- Identify processes involved in social relations, including attraction, altruism, conflict, and aggression
- Recognize similarities and differences among different cultures regarding social psychological processes

Major Topics to be Included

- Research methods in social psychology: experiment, survey, correlational research, and observational research
- Ethics in social psychological research: informed consent, deception of research participants, consequences of deception
- Self-concept, self-esteem, self-control, self-serving bias, self-presentation
- Attributions of causality, fundamental attribution error
- Social cognition: priming, belief perseverance, heuristics and biases, self-fulfilling prophecy
- Stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination: definitions; explanations, including social, cognitive, and motivational; consequences
- Attitudes: definitions, formation, and the links between attitudes to behavior and behavior to attitudes
- Conformity: definition, explanations of why and when people conform
- Obedience: definition, explanations of why and when people obey orders
- Group processes: definition, social facilitation, social loafing, deindividuation, group polarization, groupthink
- Attraction: causes and correlates of friendship, attraction, and love; Sternberg’s model of love
- Altruism: Explanations of helping, including social exchange, norms, evolutionary, and altruism; influences on helping, including bystander effect, situational pressures, and interpersonal factors
- Aggression: definition; theories of aggression, including biological and learning; causes and correlates of aggression; reducing aggression
- Conflict: definition, social dilemmas, perceptions of fairness, conflict resolution

Optional Topics To Be Covered
• Evolutionary psychology as related to social psychology
• Clinical applications of social psychology
• Social psychology and law
• Materialism/consumerism; social psychological applications to business
• Social psychology and health