

**Lab in Personality and Social Psychology (V89.0039) – Spring 2011**  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30 – 11:20 am, Meyer 159

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*\*Office hours by appointment*

**Course description**

This class is designed to equip you with basic skills to answer questions of interest in social psychology, with a specific focus on self-regulation and the self-regulatory strategy of planning. Throughout the semester, you will acquire the skills necessary for designing and conducting research, analyzing data, presenting findings, and critically reviewing others' work. We have chosen to focus on one topic in social psychology because it will allow you to systematically examine the research process from different angles.

Social psychological research is often conducted in research teams, and success sometimes depends on which team tests an idea most effectively and creatively. We would like to illustrate this by dividing you into competing research teams for the semester. Each team (containing 4-5 members) will adopt a specified research design to answer similar questions, with two teams using correlational methods, two teams using experimental methods, and two teams using field methods.

To reflect the rigorous editorial process often encountered when publishing research, we encourage you to be critical (yet respectful) of one another's work. This will also allow you to explore the advantages and disadvantages of certain research designs.

**Course objectives**

- Identify and apply the scientific methods that are used by researchers in social psychology.
- Understand the steps involved in good research, beginning with asking good questions and ending with dissemination of results.
- Gain confidence in your ability to conduct research.
- Improve your ability to think critically about research that you encounter in day-to-day life.

**Readings**

**Text (required)**

Smith, R. A., & Davis, S. F. (2010). *The psychologist as detective (5<sup>th</sup> edition)*. New York: Prentice-Hall.

**Reference Manual (optional)**

*APA Publication Manual (6<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. APA style rules and examples are covered in your textbook, but the manual may be of considerable value.

**Additional readings (on Blackboard)**

Gollwitzer, P. M., & Oettingen, G. (2011). Planning promotes goal striving. In K. D. Vohs & R. F. Baumeister (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation: Research, theory, and applications* (2nd edition). New York: Guilford.

Bem, D. J. (2002). Writing the empirical journal article. In J. M. Darley, M. P. Zanna, & H. L. Roediger III (Eds.). *The compleat academic: A career guide*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

## **Grading criteria**

### **1. Participation and Informal Group Presentations (10%)**

The psychological research process is highly communicative and collaborative, and this course is designed to operate in a similar way. Therefore, you are expected to participate in class and group discussions.

### **2. Writing assignments (5%)**

Writing is integral to success in this course, and we want you to be prepared for it. In the first few weeks of the semester, you will submit an informal writing sample (i.e., a story about a goal conflict that you have encountered).

### **3. Quizzes (25%)**

To ensure that you are retaining the information you learn in class, four surprise quizzes will be given throughout the semester. Each will be completed at the beginning of class. They will consist of three open-ended questions on the assigned reading and/or the discussions from a previous class.

### **4. The Research Project (60%)**

The capstone exercise for this course is an independent research project. For this group project you will develop research ideas, conduct the research, write up the results of the project, and present those results to the class.

Through the latter half of the semester, you will submit drafts of each section of the research paper. After receiving comments from the instructors and the class, you will submit a revised version.

- a) Introduction & Discussion sections (30%)
- b) Method & Results sections (30%)
- c) APA formatting (20%)
- d) Final presentation (20%)

### Course schedule

*Subject to change according to class progress*

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Due</b>
<b>1</b>	1/24	Introduction (formation of groups)		
	1/26	Discussion of Chapters 1 & 2	Chapter 1,2	
<b>2</b>	1/31	Discussion of reading: Planning Promotes Goal Striving	Gollwitzer & Oettingen, 2011	
	2/02	Present your phenomenon/ Discussion of Chapter 5	Chapter 5	
<b>3</b>	2/07	Discussion of Correlational Methods	Chapter 4	Writing sample
	2/09	Lit Review / Qualitative Methods	Chapter 3	
<b>4</b>	2/14	Correlational Team 1 presents		
	2/16	Correlational Team 2 presents / Discussion of Experimental Methods	Chapter 6	
<b>5</b>	2/21	President's Day: No class		
	2/23	Experimental Team 1 presents	Chapter 7	
<b>6</b>	2/28	Experimental Team 2 presents	Chapter 8	
	3/02	Discussion of Field Experimental Methods / Group meeting time	Chapter 13	Group research proposal (correlational groups)
<b>7</b>	3/07	Field experimental Team 1 presents		Group research proposal (experimental groups)
	3/09	Field experimental Team 2 presents / Group meeting time		
<b>8</b>	3/14	Spring Break: No class		
	3/16	Spring Break: No class		

<b>9</b>	3/21	Discussion of preparing materials; ethics		
	3/23	Present materials / Pilot testing		Group research proposal (field experimental groups)
<b>10</b>	3/28	Discussion about writing the article	Bem; Chapter 14	Lit review assignment
	3/30	Data collection / Writing time		
<b>11</b>	4/04	Data collection / Writing time		<i>Methods</i> draft
	4/06	Data collection / Writing time		
<b>12</b>	4/11	Data collection / Writing time		<i>Introduction</i> draft
	4/13	Statistics / SPSS review	Chapter 9	
<b>13</b>	4/18	Analyzing data in SPSS	Chapters 10 & 11	
	4/20	Data analysis / Writing the results and discussion		
<b>14</b>	4/25	Group meeting time		Complete draft (including revised intro/methods sections and first draft of <i>results/discussion</i> )
	4/27	Final Presentations		
<b>15</b>	5/02	Final Presentations		
	5/04	Last-minute help with papers		
<b><i>Final Papers Due: May 9, 2011 (in class)</i></b>				