



OTRP online

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology

**Summer 2005 Course Syllabus for
Social Psychology, 42.224a & 42.224b
June 1 – June 30, 2005**

Faculty Information

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Course Blackboard Address: <http://framingham.blackboard.com>; Course Number X05.42224.a

** E-mail is the most effective way to reach me during this course. I will check e-mail at least once a day M-F and will make every attempt to respond to questions within 24 hours. E-mails sent Friday after noon through Sunday evening will be responded to the following Monday at the latest.*

Course Description & Objectives

From the Framingham State College (FSC) Catalog: An introduction to the factors and processes involved in people's understanding of themselves, others, and social interactions. Attention is given to research in such areas as social perception, gender, group interaction, attitude formation and change, aggression, social influence, interpersonal attraction, prejudice and discrimination, and pro-social behavior. Prerequisite: 42.101 General Psychology or sophomore status. *Meets requirements for Gen Ed Goals 9, 12.*

By the end of the course, students will:

- become familiar with the many ways in which people and social situations impact our thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- better appreciate how social psychologists use the scientific method to develop knowledge in the field.
- practice critical thinking skills, including applications of material to their own lives.
- enhance their computer skills.

Textbook & Technology Requirements

Text (Required):

Exploring Social Psychology (3rd edition). By David G. Myers, 2004. McGraw-Hill. New York. ISBN: 0-07-284212-1.

Students will need the textbook within the first TWO days of class to complete the first week's assignments. Used copies of the textbook are perfectly acceptable. If ordering from an on-line

bookstore, check the ISBN to make sure you are obtaining the correct edition. The book can be purchased in the FSC bookstore or on-line at most textbook sites (e.g., Amazon, Alibris), including FSC (<http://www.bkstr.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/StoreCatalogDisplay?storeId=10572&langId=-1&catalogId=10001>).

Technology Needs

1) **Reliable Internet Access.** Since this is an on-line course, you will need reliable, daily access to the Internet. FSC recommends the following technology guidelines:

“To be successful in an online course you will need access to an Internet-ready computer (PC or Mac) with high-end capacity in terms of speed and RAM. We recommend at least 500-600 MHz and 64 MB RAM and that students use Microsoft Internet Explorer as their Internet Browser. (Explorer is available for FREE download at www.microsoft.com.) When working at home, most online students find that a 56K modem provides very acceptable Internet access. Cable or DSL will work faster.”

2) **Internet Explorer Browser.** The course requires weekly on-line quizzes. While some Blackboard functions work well with any browser, the quiz function is particularly sensitive and works best with **Internet Explorer**, the browser that Blackboard designed its software around. Students who do not use Explorer often experience “freezes” when taking the quiz; therefore, if you do not already have it, download Explorer for free from www.microsoft.com and use it when working from Blackboard on our course. *Note: I am not in the business of marketing or recommending certain technology over others! My recommendations come simply from previous problems when teaching on-line courses through Blackboard and knowledge of how to prevent those problems.*

3) **An e-mail account that you check daily & that will receive group e-mails.** When you registered for this course, FSC enrolled you into Blackboard using the e-mail address you supplied during registration. Since we do not meet in person, it is imperative that you check your e-mail regularly AND that you read any messages sent from me carefully. It is also important that your e-mail account accepts group e-mails (i.e., ones sent to several addresses at once). When I write the class, I do so from Blackboard so the e-mail is sent to 40 people at once. As a filtering process, some internet providers automatically reject such group e-mails or send them directly to a “junk” mail folder. Check your settings to make sure this “filter” has been removed and/or contact your ISP for guidance on this issue.

*** In my experience with Blackboard, AOL accounts are particularly problematic- students who use an AOL address often say they never receive e-mails at all. Therefore, I strongly recommend not using AOL and instead using another provider, like “Yahoo” or “Hotmail”, etc. These alternate providers have free accounts that do not seem to reject group messages as regularly as AOL. If you choose not to change addresses and have trouble receiving e-mails for other reasons, it is your responsibility to check the “Announcements” section of Blackboard for any important updates.

4) **Microsoft Word.** All assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word attachments since this is the only word processing program FSC provides faculty. If you do not have Microsoft Word, you may also submit your assignments in rich text format (rtf).

Course Format

This course is completely on-line, meaning we will likely never meet face-to-face and you can complete all course requirements from a personal computer that has a reliable Internet connection. It is also asynchronous- there are no required times when we all have to be on-line to “talk” or take quizzes. Instead, you can meet the course requirements in a much more flexible way. For example, you can submit assignments or contribute to discussions at 3 in the morning as long as you meet the required deadlines. Many people take on-line courses for this perceived flexibility.

While this course is more flexible as described above, there are two major factors you should be aware of when deciding to commit to the course:

1) Amount of work. Some students take on-line courses because they think there will be less work than a traditional face-to-face course. For more students, the opposite is true- they find that an online course takes just as much (or more) time. For example, you'll be contributing to group discussions several times/week. Thinking about what to say, formulating it into words, and typing them is a lengthier process than simply responding to a question out-loud in a traditional classroom setting.

2) This is a SHORT summer course that moves fast! We have 4 weeks to cover what would normally be covered in a 15-week traditional semester. This means that each day is equivalent to a full week of work! You will have multiple commitments to stay on top of each week. In addition, once a deadline has passed, the work cannot be made up. Therefore, it is important that you be able to schedule work every day and stay on top of deadlines. If you anticipate being "out of commission" for several days or do not self-schedule/motivate well, a summer on-line course may not be the format for you. On the other hand, if you are organized and disciplined in your approach to the class, you should be able to do quite well. See the end of the syllabus for some advice from previous on-line students, too.

Course Requirements & Grading

This course is divided into **five** units. Each unit covers 3-6 modules (i.e., chapters) from the book. To help you learn the unit content and to assess your learning, you will have weekly activities/discussion boards, quizzes, and critical thinking assignments. Each of course requirements is described in more depth below.

On-Line Discussions

On-line discussions will occur weekly. By posting comments and responding to your classmates, the discussion boards provide you with an opportunity to focus on key concepts from the book. They will also help you prepare for the unit quizzes. The format of the discussions will vary each week. For example, for one discussion format you may complete an on-line activity related to one of the modules and comment on it in Blackboard. In another format you may focus on research studies and findings from a module. Whatever the format, the topics will correspond with the modules that you are reading for that week. There will be three discussion boards per unit (see course outline for specific due dates).

Rules of Engagement

To promote a safe environment for sharing, please follow these simple guidelines during discussions:

- Respect another person's ideas even if you do not share his/her beliefs.
- Focus responses on the *ideas* offered by others, not on their perceived personalities.
- Keep course words to a minimum.
- Address any concerns immediately to the instructor.

Discussion Criteria & Grades

At the end of the syllabus is a timeline for posting and responding to comments for each on-line discussion. Comments/responses must be posted by these dates/times to receive credit. Remember, there are three different discussion boards each week. Each board will require you to post an original comment and to reply to your classmates. **LATE POSTINGS WILL EARN "0" POINTS.**

If received on time, postings will be evaluated for thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and effort. In other words, I will look to see if you *fully* addressed the questions/instructions, *thoughtfully* replied to your classmates, etc. Generally students who wait until the last minute to post their comments do not do as

well as those who participate daily in the discussions. Posting on time and putting effort into your comments will assure that you earn the maximum points for each discussion.

Each unit of discussion is worth 20 possible points and there are 5 units in the course. No discussions will be dropped. **Total possible points: 100.**

The “Potpourri” Discussion Board. *One discussion board will be dedicated solely to your questions/comments/ideas about the course, syllabus, assignments, chapters, etc. This is also a place where you can post stories, thoughts, web links, etc. for the class that are related to the course content. Participation in this discussion board is voluntary. Enjoy!*

Unit Quizzes

For each unit, there will be one on-line, 30-question multiple choice quiz. The quizzes are non-cumulative, meaning they cover only one unit at a time. **The quizzes are open-book; however:**

- 1) **There is a 45-minute time limit to each quiz.** If you have read the modules carefully and followed the suggested study tips, this should be more than enough time to complete each quiz.
- 2) **Each quiz can only be opened once/taken one time.** Once you open the quiz you should be prepared to take it as you will *not* be able to re-open or re-take it at another time.
- 3) **You must take each quiz during the time period specified on the course outline (see end of syllabus).** A quiz will be available only during the days which we are discussing the modules on the quiz. **NO EXCEPTIONS** so mark your calendars now!

Study tips. Remember, you are not hearing traditional “lectures” on the material- you must therefore teach yourself many of these concepts through careful and critical reading. My major piece of advice is to prepare for these quizzes in the same way as you would prepare for a closed-book quiz in a “traditional” classroom. In fact, when taking a quiz, you should only refer back to the book to double-check your answers; you will not have enough time to look up every answer and still do well on the quizzes. Here’s more advice on how to work with the book each week:

- First, read the module carefully and *take notes* as you go. When taking notes, summarize the point of each paragraph in a sentence or two and then move on. Noting any links to your own life is a helpful way to process the material too. The major point is that simply skimming/highlighting the text is usually not deep enough involvement to prepare for a quiz.
- Second, once you are done reading and taking notes, use the practice exercises on the textbook publisher’s website before taking the final quiz. One of the most helpful exercises is the practice multiple choice quiz. You can find these exercises by going to the publisher’s website directly (http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072842121/student_view0/) or through Blackboard. On Blackboard, go to the “Quizzes” button. After clicking on this button, you will see folders for each unit we are covering. In each folder you will find a link to the publisher’s website.
- Third, read the “*Student-Generated Suggestions for Success in this Class*” near the end of the syllabus. Several students have shared their strategies for quiz preparation in their comments.

Taking a quiz. When you are ready to take the actual unit quiz, click on the green “Quizzes” button on Blackboard. Find the appropriate unit, click on the link, and find the unit quiz. Clicking on the quiz will open it- remember, it can only be opened once so be prepared to take the quiz when you open it. Here is some other important information about taking a quiz:

- As stated above, there is a 45-minute time limit to each quiz. There will be a timer at the bottom of the screen to help you pace yourself. However, Blackboard will NOT close you out of the quiz if you go over 45 minutes. Instead, I will receive an alert in the gradebook that the quiz went over the time limit and I will then assign deductions (see quiz grades for more info). Therefore, it is VERY important that you watch the timer. If it nears 45 minutes, finish up quickly and make sure to hit the “submit” button before it reaches 45 minutes.
- Once you have “submitted” your quiz to Blackboard (by literally selecting the “submit” button) the quiz will be automatically graded. You will also be able to view your scores (with correct answers) immediately if you choose.

Quiz grades. Each quiz contains 30 multiple-choice questions. Each question is worth 1 point; therefore, each quiz is worth 30 points. All quiz grades will count (i.e., no quizzes will be dropped). ***Total possible quiz points: 150.***

- **Going over the time limit.** If you go over the time limit on a quiz, 1 point will be deducted for *each* minute you exceed the limit. For example, suppose you earned 24/30 points on a quiz but you spent 49 minutes on it. Your final quiz score would then become 20/30 (24-4 = 20).

Critical Reading/Thinking Assignments

Four critical reading/thinking assignments are required for this course. The first assignment is designed to familiarize you with the many functions of Blackboard and requires you to carefully read the syllabus. The subsequent three assignments will require you to perform an activity and to write a critical evaluation of the activity as it relates to the course material. Assignment 2 will focus on the Stanford Prison Study, Assignment 3 will focus on implicit/explicit attitudes, and Assignment 4 will focus on television aggression.

Grading Criteria: I will post detailed assignment guidelines at least one week before each assignment is due. While the requirements for each assignment will vary, I will primarily be grading for 1) content (accuracy of information, synthesis across topics), 2) effort, and 3) writing clarity. Papers with consistent grammatical/spelling problems will lose points. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Assignment point values are related to the amount of time required to complete each assignment. The first assignment is worth 10 points, the second is worth 30 points, the third is worth 20 points, and the fourth is worth 20 points. All assignments are required. ***Total possible points: 80.***

Course Grade

Your course grade will reflect the number of points you earn in the following course requirements:

Discussion Boards	100 points
Quizzes	150 points
<u>Critical Thinking Assig.</u>	<u>80 points</u>
Total Possible Points	330 points

Your course grade will be calculated by dividing the total number of points you earn by 330. Final grades will NOT be curved. The percentage you earn will be assigned a letter grade as follows:

Points	Percentage	Grade	Interpretation
307.0 – 330.0	93.0-100%	A	Outstanding/exceptional mastery of course content
297.0 – 306.5	90.0-92.9%	A-	
287.0 – 296.5	87.0-89.9%	B+	Above average mastery of course content
274.0 – 286.5	83.0-86.9%	B	

264.0 – 273.5	80.0-82.9%	B-	Average mastery of course content
254.0 – 263.5	77.0-79.9%	C+	
241.0 – 253.5	73.0-76.9%	C	
231.0 – 240.5	70.0-72.9%	C-	
221.0 – 230.5	67.0-69.9%	D+	Below average mastery of course content
208.0 – 220.5	63.0-66.9%	D	
198.0 – 207.5	60.0-62.9%	D-	
197.5 points or fewer	59.9% and below	E	Failure to master minimal level of course content

NOTE: You can check your grades regularly by clicking on the green “Student Tools” button on Blackboard and then clicking on “Check Grades”.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

I will pursue any violation of FSC’s Policy on Academic Honesty fully. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- 1) copying or closely using the work of another classmate or other sources without proper citations.
- 2) turning in a paper that is partially or fully plagiarized (including lifting sentences from the textbook or from websites). FSC and I use plagiarism detection software to catch plagiarized papers.

Possible penalties for violating the honesty policy include a failing grade in the course. For more information, visit Framingham State College’s “Policy on Academic Honesty” at http://www.framingham.edu/catalog_acadreg.htm.

Announcements/E-mails

It is your responsibility to check the announcements page regularly and to keep a functioning e-mail account. I will post all important e-mail messages on the announcements page as a back-up should your e-mail not work. You are responsible for all information contained in the announcements, even if you are not receiving e-mails.

Late Assignments/Quizzes/Discussions, etc.

As you probably noted, NO requirements in the course will be accepted late. Any student failing to completed a course requirement on time will receive a grade of “0” for that requirement. It is your responsibility to maintain reliable access to the Internet and to a computer. I suggest having a back-up plan should something happen to your connection/computer or should you go out of town. The FSC library and local libraries are good resources to consider for this purpose.

Blackboard/Technology Questions.

If you are having trouble with your Blackboard account or have questions about using Blackboard, first click on the green “Student Tutorial” button on Blackboard to see if your question is addressed there. If the online tutorial does not address your specific questions, contact Presidium Learning at **1-866-361-8970** or by going on-line to <http://supportcenteronline.com/ics/support/default.asp?deptID=850>. FSC has contracted with Presidium to provide **24 hours/7 day** a week support for Blackboard.

Student-Generated Suggestions for Success in this Class

The following are suggestions from some of my former on-line students. They contain candid advice for success in this course.

“To make the class go smoothly I would recommend the schedule I put myself in, which helped me get a good grade (I hope). I made sure that I read the chapter on Monday morning, then when the chapter was still fresh in my mind I would first take the practice quiz, then print it out so that I could use it during the test. If you are lucky one question may be on the test...Then when you take the test bookmark both the subject and name index so you can quickly flip to them when you need to lookup either a name or a definition.”

“I would recommend that students take the time and read all the instructions fully before doing anything else. It's not that the instructions were confusing but it's easy to miss a reply to a classmate for instance. Also, to begin reading the chapter as soon as possible and not wait until the weekend. It's easy to skim the chapter, or focus on one or two aspects of the chapter during the week to do the assignment, but when it comes time to do the quiz on Sunday a lot can be lost. I found it helpful to do as much of the work possible before the weekend because once the weekend comes it's much harder to motivate to study.”

“Be careful with the assignments. They often take more time than they seem at first that they would.”

“Read the chapters completely, thoroughly and take notes for yourself so that you can look back upon them while participating in the discussion board postings and taking the exams. Most importantly, find a quiet place to take the exams and take the phone off the hook!!”

“If you use a laptop with a wireless Internet connection, I would recommend that you take your laptop as close to the receptor as possible during a quiz. You don't want to lose your connection while you are taking the quiz, since you will not be able to finish the quiz...I would (also) suggest that you type your discussion into Word where you can save it. Then cut and paste your discussion into the discussion box to post it. That way if you lose your connection or something happens to your computer, you don't lose everything that you've done and have to start all over again.”

“The biggest piece of advice I can offer is to set a schedule for yourself. For instance I would read the chapter of Monday. On Tuesday I would start reading discussion board responses. Then on Wednesday I would be sure to have my response to the board(s) in. On Saturday I would re-read the chapter and respond back to the discussion board(s). Finally on Sunday I would take the quiz. It does make life easier if you set a routine to use throughout the semester. I would also suggest highlighting the names of the researchers mentioned in the chapter so you can easily find them whether you are looking through the chapter or using the name index and looking on a particular page. Finally I would suggest that you either print out the discussion board directions and responses or open up a second blackboard session so you can switch between two screens. This allows you to easily refer back to the directions as well as have other students responses available to look at. That is especially helpful when trying to respond back to people.”

Course Outline

(Subject to revisions. All deadlines are in the Eastern Time Zone.)

Unit, Dates, & Module Readings	Discussion Board Due Dates	Assignment Due Dates	Quiz Due Dates
<p>Unit 1: Introducing Social Psychology, Self-Perception</p> <p>Dates: June 1 - 5</p> <p>Modules: 1, 2, 4, & 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for posting comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Student & Teacher Intro Boards- by midnight on Thurs., 6/2 ➤ “Self” Surveys Board- by midnight on Fri., 6/3 • Due date for posting responses to all boards: midnight on Sat., 6/4 	<p>Assign. #1: due by midnight on Sat., 6/4</p>	<p>Quiz #1: due by midnight on Sun., 6/5</p>
<p>Unit 2: Social Beliefs & Perceptions; Attitudes & Behavior</p> <p>Dates: June 6-12</p> <p>Modules: 6, 8, 9, & 11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for posting comments: midnight on Thurs., 6/9 • Due date for posting responses: midnight on Sat., 6/11 	<p>Assign. #2: due by midnight on Sat., 6/11</p>	<p>Quiz #2: due by midnight on Sun., 6/12</p>
<p>Unit 3: Conformity & Groups</p> <p>Dates: June 13-19</p> <p>Modules: 14, 17-21</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for posting comments: midnight on Thurs., 6/16 • Due date for posting responses: midnight on Sat., 6/18 		<p>Quiz #3: due by midnight on Sun., 6/19</p>
<p>Unit 4: Prejudice & Attraction</p> <p>Dates: June 20-26</p> <p>Modules: 22-23, 26-27</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for posting comments: midnight on Thurs., 6/23 • Due date for posting responses: midnight on Sat., 6/25 	<p>Assign. #3: due by midnight on Sat., 6/25</p>	<p>Quiz #4: due by midnight on Sun., 6/26</p>
<p>Unit 5: Aggression & Altruism</p> <p>Dates: June 27-30</p> <p>Modules: 24, 25, & 30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for posting comments: midnight on Thurs., 6/30 • Due date for posting responses: midnight on Fri., 7/1* <p><i>* Though the course technically ends on Thursday, 6/30, I am extending the deadlines for the discussion replies and quiz to Friday, 7/1, if you need it.</i></p>	<p>Assign. #4: due by midnight on Thurs., 6/30</p>	<p>Quiz #5: due by midnight on Fri., 7/1*</p> <p><i>* Though the course technically ends on Thursday, 6/30, I am extending the deadlines for the discussion replies and quiz to Fri., 7/1 if you need it.</i></p>

