

## PSY326F: Social Cognition

### Fall 2022

#### Contact Info

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#### Course Info

<b>Classes Meet:</b> Thursdays, 9am-12pm	<b>Room:</b> RW 143
<b>Course Website:</b> <a href="https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/280350">https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/280350</a>	
<b>Reading(s):</b> Made available to you on Quercus.	

#### Course Overview & Goals

Social cognition is the study of how people make sense of other people and themselves. We will cover how basic cognitive functions (e.g., attention allocation, memory) are used to understand the social world, other people, and the self. We will explore how we attend to and remember information about others, how moral and personality judgments are made, the consequences of these processes, and how and when these consequences change over time.

#### Intended Learning Outcomes

1. To increase your understanding of the core concepts in social cognition
2. To enhance your ability to think critically about research and psychological theory in social cognition
3. To apply social cognitive principles to “real world” situations

4. To develop your ability to converse thoughtfully with your peers about psychological science

### **Prerequisites**

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met all prerequisites listed in the Psychology section of the A&S Calendar for this course. If you lack any prerequisites, you will be removed. No waivers will be granted.

## **Course Structure & Requirements**

### **Course Webpage: Quercus**

This course will use the University's learning management system, Quercus, to post course information including readings, assignments, grades, and important announcements. You will also be submitting assignments and participating in out-of-class discussions on Quercus. I will rely on this resource heavily throughout the semester so make sure you check it regularly and/or your email is set up correctly.

### **Preparation**

You will be required to read assigned material weekly *before* we meet for class. Lectures and in-class activities will typically draw from material in the readings so make sure you have read them in advance. There will be a group discussion or activity almost every class meeting (more info below) so getting used to coming prepared will greatly help you.

### **Engagement and Participation**

Your active engagement with the course material by participating in discussions and activities, taking notes, and thinking deeply about the questions that are posed helps us build a positive learning environment and enhances your understanding of the course concepts. There will also be several opportunities to participate outside the classroom such as discussion boards and journals. Your participation will be evaluated for effort (i.e., reading material before class, contributing to discussions) and quality (i.e., insightfulness, respectfulness).

Although attendance does not directly contribute to your grade, you will miss out on important lectures and class discussions and activities if you do not attend regularly or if you do not keep up with out-of-classroom discussions. Please let me know if you will be unable to participate in class discussions for any reason.

## **Lectures**

Almost every class meeting will involve some time for lecture. Lectures will review and synthesize material from the readings and other assigned material. I will also present material that is *not* covered in the readings and expand on important points. Slides will be provided as a PDF *after* each class period. This way you can synthesize and supplement your notes with the slides to review. Keep in mind that the slides will not include all the information covered in class so reading them is not a substitute for attending class.

## **Discussions & In-Class Activities (10%)**

To keep you engaged with the readings and other course material, you will participate in small group discussions and in-class activities throughout in this course. Groups will vary throughout the semester. For each discussion or activity, you will complete a discussion guide or handout with your group. These will comprise 7% of your final grade. You will also facilitate one discussion during the semester (3% of final grade). More details on these will be posted on Quercus and reviewed in class. There will also be chances for larger group discussions as a class and out-of-class discussions on Quercus to keep you engaged throughout the semester.

## **Reflection Paper Assignments (15%)**

You will complete 2 reflection paper assignments, each of which is worth 7.5% of your final grade. For these papers, I will present you a prompt relevant to what we've been discussing in class so far. You will submit a formal 2-3 page, APA formatted paper that thoughtfully responds to the prompt by citing material covered in the course and integrating key ideas from the course. Although no additional research is required to complete these assignments, you are free to include as many additional references as you would like. More details on these assignments will be posted on Quercus and reviewed during class. Each reflection paper is due by **11:59pm EST** on their due date (see *Course Schedule* below).

## **Social Cognition Science Communication Project (25%)**

To help you gain practice in dissecting empirical journal articles, dive deeper into one topic of interest, and become comfortable integrating and communicating scientific findings to a general audience, you will complete a 8-10 page science journalism assignment. You will use peer-reviewed research to explain a topic in social cognition and how it relates to some social issue of interest. Importantly, this paper will be written for a nonscientific, nonexpert audience. Thus, you will need to be able to anticipate the reader's need for

information while also limiting scientific language and jargon. More details on this assignment will be posted on Quercus and covered in class.

	Description	Due Date
<b>Part 1</b>	<u>Project Topic (2%)</u> A summary of at least one topic that you are interested in covering for your project. This should include which social cognition concept will be focused on, and what social issue it applies to.	Oct. 6
<b>Part 2</b>	<u>Project Outline (5%)</u> A brief description (2-4 pages) of your paper topic, a list of 5 references you plan to include, and a general explanation of how you will communicate your findings to a general audience.	Oct. 27
<b>Part 3</b>	<u>Final Paper (15%) &amp; Presentation Slides (3%)</u> A formal paper (8-10 pages) where you review social cognition research in relation to a social issue. You will present a brief snapshot of your social issue (3-5 mins max) for the class.	Dec. 1

### Midterm & Final Assessments (50%)

Both assessments will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions. These questions will ask you to think critically about course themes, synthesize course content, and apply what you've learned to real-world situations. Both assessments will be online. You will be allowed to refer to your book and notes for these assessments, however, you are not allowed to take the assessments with other classmates nor consult outside resources (e.g., Google, Wikipedia). All writing must be in your own words. See *Course Policies* below for more on academic integrity.

You will have two days to complete these assessments. They will be posted on 9am EST on Wednesday and due Friday by 11:59pm EST. This will allow you to use scheduled class time to complete the assessments, but does not require you to. We will leave some time for review prior to each assessment using a Q&A format. This means that you will need to come prepared with questions to aid your studying.

## Grading/Marking Scheme

Your final grade in this course will be calculated based on the breakdown below:

	<b>Weight (%)</b>
Discussion Groups & In-Class Activities	10%
Reflection Assignments	15%
Social Cognition Project	25%
Midterm Assessment	25%
Final Assessment	25%

Note: Any grades posted in the Quercus gradebook are posted for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, included any posted in Quercus at any point in the term, until they have been formally approved by me at the end of the course.

## **Course Policies**

### **Late Assignments**

Each student gets one “free pass” for late assignments. This free pass is only good for 48 hours beyond the due date. You do not need to ask permission to use this free pass. Late assignments after your free pass has been used will incur a 5% penalty for each day it is late up to 25% (5 days after the due date). Work will not be accepted more than 5 days after the due date. If you anticipate turning in an assignment late and have already used your free pass, please contact me *before* the due date. Free passes may not be used for the midterm or final assessments.

### **Missed Assessments**

Makeup assessments will not be issued except in cases of extenuating circumstances with appropriate documentation. If you miss the midterm assessment, you must submit documentation that demonstrates your inability to complete that assessment (i.e., the ACORN illness self-declaration tool) and let me know within 7 days of the missed midterm’s due date. In these cases, the weight of the midterm assessment will be added to the final assessment. If you miss the final assessment, you must get in touch with the College Registrar to work out an extension plan.

### **Regrade Requests**

If you think an assignment has been incorrectly marked or if you believe you should have received more points on a specific assignment or question, you can request a regrade 24 hours after the feedback is returned. Please email me with a short paragraph identifying the distinct element of the assignment of concern and with clear reasoning for why the work deserves a regrade. I will only consider regrade requests submitted to me within 2 weeks of getting the grade. Submitting a regrade request does not guarantee a grade change. Keep in mind that regrading your assignment may result in a lower grade.

### **Specific Medical Circumstances**

If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, please email me to let me know and complete the ACORN self-declaration of illness tool as soon as possible.

### **Religious Accommodation**

As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of backgrounds, cultural traditions, and spiritual beliefs. I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling assessments or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you cannot complete a component of the course or meet a course deadline due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

### **Accommodation for Personal Reasons**

There may be times when you are unable to complete course work on time due to non-medical or non-religious reasons. If you have concerns about your ability to complete an assignment, please reach out to me. You do not need to tell me any details about your situation that you are not comfortable sharing, but I need to know about the issue to appropriately accommodate you. It may also be a good idea to speak with an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can support you in requesting extensions or accommodations, and importantly, connect you with other resources on campus for help with many situations and concerns.

### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

All students are expected to follow the University's guidelines and policies on academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement.

As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism (i.e., representing someone else's work as your own or submitting work that you have previously submitted for marks in another course) very seriously. All writing assignments will be submitted to the University's plagiarism detection tool. If you have any questions about this policy, the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty (<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity>).

### **Use of Course Material**

Students are free to use all lecture slides and lecture material for their own use. Students are, however, not permitted to share lecture slides or materials with others not enrolled in this course without my approval. Uploading course materials to the Internet or shared server is expressly prohibited. Lectures are the intellectual property of the instructor, and the slides and related materials should be respected thus. Specifically, I do not want to discover that a student has put any of my materials into the public domain, has sold my materials, or has given my materials to a person or company that is using them to earn money. The University will support me in asserting and pursuing my rights, and my copyrights, in such matters.

### **Instructor Policy Statement**

I intend to treat you with respect, to have empathy for your struggles (in and outside of this course), to assess your progress in a reasonable and thoughtful manner, and to offer you constructive feedback. I am available to discuss any concerns you have. I strongly encourage you to ask questions in class, book a visit with me during office hours, and/or email me to discuss any concerns or questions. You may email me at any time, and I will do my best to respond within 1 business day. Emails received on the weekends or holidays may need extra time. I will also do my best to refrain from sending out course announcements or emails on the weekends. I value work-life balance and believe in rest! With all issues, I encourage you to contact me as early as possible so we can work together on a solution.

## **Student Resources and Support**

### **Accessibility Services (AS)**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should

register with Accessibility Services (AS)(<http://accessibility.utoronto.ca>) at the beginning of the academic year. Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will then assess your medical situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

### **Mental Health & Well-Being**

As a student, you may experience challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation, financial concerns, family worries, and so forth. These factors may affect your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate fully in daily activities. There are many helpful resources available through Student Life

([www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed)) and Counselling and Psychological Services (<http://www.caps.utoronto.ca/main.htm>).

An important part of the University experience is learning how and when to ask for help. There are many resources available to you here at the University. Feel free to visit the Academic Success Centre

(<https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/asc/about-us>) for more information on navigating through the university experience.

### **Writing**

As a student here at the University of Toronto, you are expected to write well. The university provides its students with several resources to help them achieve this. For more information on campus writing centres and writing courses, please visit <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>.

### **English Language Resources**

For anyone who would like to advance their understanding and command of English, there are many supports available at UofT:

<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell/resources-for-students>



## Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change and adjustments. Students will be advised of all updates promptly on Quercus.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
1	9/8	Introduction to Social Cognition	Syllabus	
2	9/15	Attention, Encoding, Memory	Bargh et al., (2012)	
3	9/22	The "Self" in Social Cognition	Brewer (1991) McConnell (2010)	
4	9/29	Affect, Behaviour, and Social Cognition	Isbell et al (2013)	Reflection Paper Assignment #1
5	10/6	Heuristics, Accuracy, & Efficiency in Social Inference Review Session for Midterm	Alter & Oppenheimer (2008) Jussim et al (2015)	Science Communication Project Topic Due
6	10/13	<b>MIDTERM ASSESSMENT</b> Available at 9:00am EST Wednesday, Oct. 12 Due 11:59pm EST Friday, Oct. 14		
7	10/20	Attitudes: Formation and Change	Gawronski (2012)* Schwarz (2007) Rydell et al (2006)	
8	10/27	Attribution Processes	Plaks (2017) pgs. 265-274	Science Communication Project Outline Due
9	11/3	Implicit Theories & Impression Formation	Fiske et al (2007)	Reflection Paper Assignment #2
10	11/10	<b>READING WEEK</b>		
11	11/17	Stereotyping & Prejudice	Bodenhausen et al (2012) Correll et al (2002)	
12	11/24	Relationships & Attraction Review Session for Final	Luo & Zhang (2009)	

13	12/1	Science Communication Project Presentations		Science Communication Project Paper and Slides Due
<b>FINAL ASSESSMENT</b> <b>TBD</b>				

All assignments are due at 11:59pm EST on their scheduled due date unless otherwise stated.