



**Department of Psychology
University of Toronto
Course Outline**

**PSY420H1S – LEC0101
Social Psychology Seminar:
The Social Psychology of Language
Winter 2024**

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Office Hours: By appointment
Office: SS 4031

Course Meeting Time: Thursday 1:00–3:00pm
Classroom: WE 74

Calendar Course Description

Examination in depth of a limited topic within social psychology. Content in any given year depends on instructor. Course capacity is limited to 20 students and enrolment priority is given to PSY Specialists and Research Specialists.

Prerequisite: PSY202H1/ ECO220Y1/ SOC252H1/ STA221H1/ PSY202H5/ STA221H5/ PSYC08H3/ STAB27H3/ STAC32H3, and PSY220H1/ PSY220H5/ PSYB10H3/ SOC213H1

Exclusion: PSY420H5/ PSYD12H3/ PSYD15H3/ PSYD16H3

Note about 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.

Intellectual Property Notice:

Dr. Odilia Yim holds the copyright in the works of all original materials used in this course, including this Course Outline. Please do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials. Students registered in this course can only use the materials for the purposes of this course. No other use by them or others is permitted, and there can be no sale or transfer or use of the work for any other purpose without the explicit written permission of Dr. Odilia Yim.

Course Synopsis

Language is a social activity and it permeates every dimension of one's social world. Although it has garnered much attention in cognitive psychology, it has been largely overlooked in mainstream social psychology. This course focuses on the social psychology of language and communication and we will examine the role of language in social psychological processes. Topics will include identity, intergroup relations, person perception, bias, prejudice, and discrimination. The course will include a review of prevalent theories and current trends in the field. Students will learn how language intersects with social psychological variables and gain a greater understanding of the social psychological antecedents and consequences of language as well as its contribution to social meaning and social construction in their daily lives.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able:

- To name and apply theories and key concepts in the area of the social psychology of language
- To understand research methods used to study topics related to language and psychology
- To apply findings in the social psychology of language and communication to your life and current events
- To critically evaluate research ideas and information and provide constructive feedback
- To work collaboratively and develop successful professional relationships with peers
- To retrieve and critically evaluate information from scholarly and non-scholarly sources
- To improve your ability to construct arguments and to share your thoughts clearly and efficiently in oral and written communication

Text: There is no required textbook for this course.

Readings and/or other course content will be placed on the Quercus course page throughout the semester. You will be responsible for any additional materials that are labeled as required course material. To be prepared for this course, you should already have basic knowledge of social psychological concepts and research methods used to conduct social psychological research. It is strongly recommended that you have a social psychology textbook that you can refer to as needed throughout the semester.

Course Assignments and Evaluation

1.) Thought Papers	18%
2.) Article Presentation and Group Discussion	15%
3.) Discussion Participation and Questions	12%
4.) Class Presentation	20%
5.) Final Research Paper	35%

1.) Thought Papers (18%)

Students will submit thought papers throughout the semester. Thought papers will be approximately 1-2 pages (250-500 words) and be a deeper exploration of the discussions held in class. Topics for the thought papers can be critiques, related ideas, thoughts about potential new research, or practical extensions of the findings to real-world contexts or applications. However, they should not be summaries of the readings nor a recap of what was discussed in class. The papers should address a given week's topic as a whole and preferably integrate multiple readings or perspectives from the week. Thought papers must be submitted online (in Quercus) and follow APA style.

2.) Article Presentation and Group Discussion (15%)

Students will select a reading and lead a class discussion based on the reading. The presenter will review the selected reading by summarizing the main points and findings, including any important background and methods, followed by a brief discussion. The presenters in the same week will also work together to lead the week's class discussion.

The presenters of a given week will formulate 3-4 discussion questions, which address all the readings. Discussion questions should connect the readings; for example, common issues, how they relate to one other, possible other factors to consider, how it may connect to topics from other weeks, etc. Presenters are encouraged to meet as a group with me at least one week before their presentation date to discuss their presentations/questions. Group discussion questions must be submitted online (in Quercus) prior to the class in which the presentation takes place.

3.) Discussion Participation and Questions (12%)

Students will be encouraged to be active participants in their own learning throughout the course. Therefore, students will have opportunities to engage in critical reflection about different research topics discussed each class. It is expected students attend class with a readiness and willingness for discussion. Students should critically consider the readings and be ready to discuss them with their peers. Good classroom participation consists of reading assigned articles, sharing opinions and comments, being attentive, and listening and constructively responding to comments made by peers.

Another component of participation includes submitting 1-2 discussion points/questions based on the readings of a given week. Questions are to be submitted on Quercus the day before the class in which the readings will be discussed (i.e. Wednesday at 11:59pm). Questions may be related to points from the readings that students found interesting, thought-provoking, confusing, misleading, etc. They can also be questions about the content, or perhaps agreement or disagreement with the authors' perspectives and/or techniques. Questions may be selected and discussed in class.

4.) Class Presentation (20%)

During the last three weeks of the semester, students will present their research to the class. Each student will share their proposed research question and expected research findings from their research proposal, engaging their peers in a critical discussion about their research. The Presentation must address all key aspects of the research process and communicate potential next steps for future research.

Students will be required to be present and actively participate in their peers' presentations as well in order to receive a mark. Due to the difficulty of rescheduling presentations, failure to be present for the presentation may result in a penalty. Signing up for a presentation time will be discussed in class. Presentation slides in PowerPoint and/or PDF format must be submitted online (in Quercus) prior to the class in which the presentation takes place.

5.) Final Research Paper (35%)

The Final Research Paper is comprised of a literature review on a topic relevant to the social psychology of language and communication. It will consist of a literature review and proposal of a research project, including methods, hypothesized results, and discussion. The Final Research Report must be at least 10 double-spaced pages in length (approximately 2500-3000 words). All written submissions must follow APA style and citation practices. The Final Research Report must include the following sections:

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion

The Final Research Paper must be submitted online (in Quercus) in Word and/or PDF format by Week 13. Further guidelines will be provided in class and on Quercus.

Quercus

This course uses the University's learning management system, Quercus, to post information about the course. This includes posting readings and other materials required to complete class activities and course assignments, as well as sharing important announcements and updates. The site is dynamic and new information and resources will be posted regularly as we move through the term, so please make it a habit to log in to the site on a regular, even daily, basis. Important announcements will be made here.

To access the course website, go to the U of T Quercus log-in page at <https://q.utoronto.ca>.

Note about grades posted online: Please also note that any grades posted are for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, including any posted in Quercus at any point in the term, until they have been formally approved and posted on ACORN at the end of the course. Please contact me as soon as possible if you think there is an error in any grade posted on Quercus.

Use of E-Mail

Student communications via e-mail must be sent from a University of Toronto e-mail account. Occasionally, important class announcements may be distributed via e-mail to students' e-mail accounts. Students are required to have a functional e-mail account which can receive these messages and to check for them regularly. Only emails with legitimate inquiries that are sent from University of Toronto accounts and containing "PSY420" in the subject line will receive a response. It is important to include the course code when sending emails as the instructor and TAs may be administering multiple courses this semester.

Classroom Environment

In class, we will strive to create a positive climate of mutual respect in which we can work together as a community of learners and teachers. It is expected that students attend all classes for the full time period.

Arriving late, leaving early, failing to turn off or mute cell phones, and using laptops or other electronic devices for non-course-related purposes all show disrespect for the instructor and classmates. Full attention, diligent preparation, and active participation are all signs of respect and are key to successful learning. Please be careful to avoid remarks that may be offensive to others based on their race, class, gender, faith, age, ability, appearance, or sexual orientation.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

Submitting Work

Please ensure that name(s), student number(s), instructor's name, course code and title, and submission date are on the front page of any work submitted. Students are recommended to keep photocopies or electronic copies of all assignments.

Penalties for Lateness

All course assignments must be submitted as specified by the due date. Failure to do so will result in a late penalty of five points per calendar day, up to seven calendar days. After seven days, the work will no longer be accepted and a grade of "0" will be given.

Plagiarism Detection Tools

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Students who wish to opt-out of using the University's plagiarism detection tool for the final paper must notify the instructor no later than Thursday, February 1, 2024. Upon receipt of notification, the instructor will request that the student provide all rough work (including, but not limited to, call numbers and/or URLs for all cited sources) when submitting their final paper.

Re-marking Policy

Please consider carefully before contesting your grade for an assignment or test. Course instructors and TAs work very hard to mark course assignments and tests as fairly as possible. If you have concerns about how an assignment was graded, please first meet with the TA who graded your term work. If after your meeting you still would like to have your term work re-graded, please submit the request to the instructor. If your request is granted, the instructor will then re-grade an item of term work once and re-grading may result in: an increase in grade, a decrease in grade, or no change in grade. Students have a maximum of two weeks from when the work was returned (or receive any term work grades) to make such a request to the instructor regarding re-marking, review, or ask about grading.

Missed Test/Exam Policy

If you miss a test, you must contact the instructor as soon as possible (along with proof of the ACORN Absence Declaration) and no later than one week after the missed test date to request special consideration.

Students who miss a test for any reason (e.g., COVID, cold, flu and other illness or injury, family situation) and request special consideration must report their absence through the online absence declaration tool. The declaration tool is available on ACORN under the Profile and Settings menu. Students can use a screenshot of the confirmation number from the declaration tool to accompany their request.

Effective September 2023, the University has updated the guidelines for declaring absences in ACORN. Students are limited to only one ACORN absence declaration per semester, per course. Note that there are other forms of documentation other than ACORN.

Specific Medical Circumstances

If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, please consult the instructor immediately. You will be asked for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. You can submit a different form (e.g., a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI. For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>.

If an absence extends beyond 7 consecutive days, or if you have a non-medical personal situation preventing you from completing your academic work, you should connect with your College Registrar. They can provide advice and assistance reaching out to instructors on your behalf. For more information on Absence Declaration Tool for Arts & Science students, please refer to <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

If your request is approved the weight of the missed test will be redistributed equally between the Research Paper and the Final Exam (i.e., one-half of the weight of the missed midterm test will be redistributed to the final paper and the remaining half to the final assessment). There are no make-up tests.

Students who miss the final assessment should file a petition for a deferred exam with their College Registrar's Office.

Accommodations

Religious Accommodations

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 cultural and religious traditions. For my part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (such as a test or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Students with Disabilities or Accommodation Requirements

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an acute or ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) at the beginning of the academic year by visiting <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/new-registration>.

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 assess your 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 needs or condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

Accommodation for Personal Reasons

There may be times when you are unable to complete course work on time due to non- medical reasons. If you have concerns, speak to me or to an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can help you to decide if you want to request an extension or accommodation. They may be able to provide you with a College Registrar's letter of support to give to your instructors, and importantly, connect you with other resources on campus for help with your situation

Academic Integrity

All students, faculty and staff are expected to follow the University's guidelines and policies on academic integrity. For students, this means following the standards of academic honesty when writing assignments, collaborating with fellow students, and writing tests and exams. Ensure that the work you submit for grading represents your own honest efforts.

Plagiarism—representing someone else's work as your own or submitting work that you have previously submitted for marks in another class or program—is a serious offence that can result in sanctions.

The knowing use of generative artificial intelligence tools, including but not limited to, ChatGPT and other AI writing and coding assistants, for the completion of, or to support the completion of, an assignment, test, examination, or any other form of academic assessment, is considered an academic offense in this course. Students may not copy or paraphrase from any generative artificial intelligence applications and the use of generative artificial intelligence tools/apps is strictly prohibited, unless explicitly stated otherwise by the instructor. Any use of generative AI in this course will be considered use of an unauthorized aid, which is a form of academic misconduct. This course policy is designed to assist students in achieving course learning outcomes by promoting critical analysis, experiential learning, and intellectual development.

The penalties for academic misconduct are severe. If you are in any doubt as to whether something you are considering constitutes academic misconduct, please feel free to ask the instructor or your TA for advice on anything that you find unclear. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more info, please see <http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca> and <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity>.

Resources

Writing

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

Mental Health and 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. Everyone feels stressed now and then – it is a normal part of university life. Some days are better than others, and there is no wrong time to reach out. There are resources for every situation and every level of stress.

An important part of the University experience is learning how and when to ask for help. Please take the time to inform yourself of available resources. Here are some ways to access the many helpful resources available:

Student Life Programs and Services (<http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/>)

Academic Success Services (<http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/asc>)

Counselling and Psychological Services (<http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>)

PSY420 – Weekly Schedule

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1	Jan. 11	Course Introduction Review course syllabus, assignments, expectations	
2	Jan. 18	Language in Social Psychology ❖ Guest presentation by Writing Support	
3	Jan. 25	Identity	
4	Feb. 1	Attitudes	
5	Feb. 8	Person Perception	
6	Feb. 15	Intergroup Relations	DUE: Thought Paper #1
7	Feb. 22	READING WEEK	
8	Feb. 29	Bias and Prejudice	DUE: Research Paper topic
9	Mar. 7	Discrimination	DUE: Thought Paper #2
10	Mar. 14	Real-world Applications	
11	Mar. 21	Presentations	DUE: Peer Participation and Feedback DUE: Thought Paper #3
12	Mar. 28	Presentations	DUE: Peer Participation and Feedback
13	Apr. 4	Presentations	DUE: Peer Participation and Feedback DUE: Final Research Paper

Note: The Weekly Schedule is a tentative guide on the topics covered in each class. Some topics may last longer and run into the following week, while some may be more brief, due to students' prior knowledge and understanding. The instructor will do their best to coordinate accordingly and any adjustments (if needed) to lecture presentations and/or discussions will be communicated and shared with the class.