# C8307 Social Psychology

# 20 credits

***Class leader:*** Dr Mark Elliott

***Lecturers:*** Dr Mark Elliott, Dr Allan McGroarty, Dr Kieran O’Shea

***Aims:***

This class aims to enable students to critically engage with classic and contemporary perspectives and debates within social psychology. This class is aligned to the British Psychological Society’s QE syllabus and covers key areas within social psychology required for gaining Graduate Basis for Registration. The class builds on the level 2 class ***C8202 Social & Health Psychology***, therefore prior knowledge of the content of the level 2 class is a requisite for ***C8307.***

Students will be required to work with challenging theories and to develop their independent learning skills through group work and individual study activities. Self-directed learning activities and tutorials will be used to encourage students to take responsibility over their learning. Critical thinking will be encouraged and developed through these activities and through discussions and informal feedback with peers and tutors.

The class prepares students with the academic skills needed for moving into Honours year as well as providing a comprehensive understanding of key areas in social psychology.

***Content:***

The class focuses on the following topics, which represent major themes within the discipline:

* Methods in social psychology
* Attitude formation and functions
* Attitude-behaviour relations
* Attitude change
* Social Cognition Models
* Interpersonal Relationships
* Social schemas and representations
* Self and social Identity
* Group behaviour
* Prejudice
* Leadership

Specific content for each lecture is provided in the lecture notes, which are made available prior to each lecture on the class myPlace site. Students are advised to consult the lecture notes prior to each lecture in order to familiarise themselves with the lecture content in advance. During each lecture, applications (concrete examples) of theoretical constructs and processes are provided to aid students’ understanding. Such examples are wide ranging and include potentially sensitive issues such as racism, sexism, alcoholism, road traffic crashes, victim blaming and so on. The aim is to illustrate the relevant psychological phenomena using real world issues that are readily found in the literature, which is, in turn, designed to better understand these issues (e.g., why are people racist? how do such people think and behave?) and how to alleviate them.

***Learning outcomes:***

Cognitive skills

i. an ability to critically evaluate knowledge and theoretical research within social psychology (relevant assessment: class practical & exam).

Knowledge and understanding

ii. an understanding of a range of issues and topics areas within social psychology (relevant assessment: class practical & exam).

iii. knowledge of the different methodologies used within different topic areas in social psychology (relevant assessment: class practical & exam).

Practical skills

iv. independent reading and self-guided study (relevant assessment: class practical & exam).

v. practical experience in designing and/or conducting research (relevant assessment: class practical).

vi. practical experience in hypothesis generation and testing (relevant assessment: class practical).

vii. practical experience of collecting, analysing and reporting social psychological data (relevant assessment: class practical)

***Employability***

C8307 provides students with a number of skills which are valued by employers. These include: the ability to develop an argument based on empirical evidence; critical analysis, logical thinking and problem solving, independent working, professional writing skills, time management and organisation.

***Place in course:***

This is a level 3 psychology class. It will build upon the content provided in the level 2 ***C8202 Social & Health Psychology*** and provides the basis for 4th year options in social psychology. All second year classes are prerequisites for this class.

***Methods of teaching:***

The class is taught by means of **lectures** and **tutorials**. Students’ job is to critically engage with the literature within these areas. The lectures and tutorials provide a framework to help students read around the topics cited above (see class content section) and critically engage with them. We aim to provide lecture slides at least 24 hours in advance of lectures so students can familiarise themselves with the content of the lectures. Tutorial materials will also be provided in advance. Students should undertake the required preparatory work for each tutorial. This will be stated in the tutorial handouts.

***Teaching Hours:*** Three hours per week, during semester 2 (Tuesdays 12-1pm and Thursdays 1-3pm). See class timetable for the locations of the lectures and tutorials.

***Assessment:***

The class is assessed by one class practical and one final assessment (examination). The class practical counts for 40% and the final exam counts for 60% of the overall class mark.

The practical will be set up and explained as part of the first lecture (see class timetable). It will require students to generate their own theoretically-derived hypotheses, and test those hypotheses using statistical techniques covered in the second and third year research methods classes. Prior learning in statistical analyses (see class statements for the second and third year research methods classes) and SPSS, or an equivalent software package, is therefore required.

The final exam will be split into two sections: Section A and Section B. Each section will contribute 50% towards the final examination mark. There will be three exam essay-style questions in section A of the paper. These questions could focus on any of the class topics. Students will be asked to write an essay to answer one question from section A. Section B will comprise approximately 50 multiple choice questions. These questions will cover all the class topics. Each question will have four possible answers. You will be asked to answer all multiple choice questions by indicating the correct answer for each question. The examination will be held in the University’s Semester 2 exam diet (April/May). There will be an opportunity to take the resit in the University’s resit exam diet (July/August) for students who need it. The examination will be 2 hours.

***Reading:***

There is no one recommended text for this class. Lecturers will recommend reading on a topic-by-topic basis. Students should be prepared to read multiple journal papers and advanced book chapters for each class topic. If students would like to consult a general social psychology textbook, the text that you used at second year level would be appropriate (Hogg and Vaughan) as would many others in the Andersonian library. Another textbook that students might find useful as a starting point for several of the class topics is:

Myers, D., Abell, J., & Sani, F. (2020) Social Psychology. Berkshire, England: McGraw-Hill*.*

Any edition of this text will suffice.