

**Psychology 596a**  
**Graduate Seminar In Social Psychology**  
**Topic: Attitudes And Persuasion**

Spring, 2010; Thurs 10:00a-12:30p, Psychology Building Rm 323

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### **Course Overview**

This course is designed to familiarize graduate students with social psychological theory and research on attitudes and persuasion. The course will explore issues such as the structure and function of attitudes, the relationship between attitudes and behavior, the cognitive and motivational antecedents of attitude change, classic and contemporary models of persuasion, interpersonal influence, the influence of behavior on attitudes and subsequent behavior, and some of the current issues that guide research on attitudes, such as the topic of implicit vs. explicit processing.

We will meet once a week and conduct class in a seminar format. I will lead most of the discussion but each week 2 students will lead the group in a discussion of a specific research proposal. All will be expected to complete all of the assigned readings in advance of each class meeting and be prepared to participate actively in the discussion. You are required to submit a one-page hypothesis paper most weeks (discussed below). You will write a final research proposal paper, and you will present the topic of your final paper to the class during the final weeks of the semester.

### **Course Goals**

The primary goals in this graduate seminar are for you to 1) Gain exposure to classic and contemporary theories of attitudes and persuasion, 2) Develop a better understanding of the methodologies employed by social psychologists who study attitudes and persuasion, 3) Explore in depth several topics relevant to the study of the attitudes and persuasion, and 4) Improve your writing, presentation, and discussion skills.

### **Weekly Readings**

The primary readings for each week will come from book chapters and journal articles. The required text for the course is: *Attitude and attitude change by Crano & Prislin (2008). 1<sup>st</sup> edition*. It is available online at around \$50 for a used copy. In addition, there will be 2-3 target articles posted on D2L to read each week.

**Course D2L Website:** The course D2L website provides electronic copies of the readings. For those unfamiliar with D2L:

*How do I log in to D2L?*

1. Open up an Internet browser (i.e., Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari) and go to <http://d2l.arizona.edu>
2. Click on the NetID button in the upper left corner of the screen
3. Log in using the same information you use for UA Webmail

*How do I see my courses in D2L?*

1. Once you successfully accessed the D2L MyHome page by logging in with your NetID, look for the box labeled My Academic Courses at the bottom of the screen.
2. Click on the plus sign (+) beside the current semester.
3. Click on the plus sign (+) beside the department name, and then
4. Click on our course name: PSYC596A SP10 001 Stone
5. You should now be at your D2L Course Home page.
6. Click on the "Content" tab to access the readings

*What if I can't log into D2L?*

Click on the Report a Problem tab on <http://help.d2l.arizona.edu> and complete the form with as much detail as possible, explaining the problem you are having.

**Grading: In order to assure fairness and provide you with feedback, I will evaluate your performance on the various assignments using the following point system. The points for each assignment break down like this:**

Class Participation (10)	50 points
Hypotheses Papers (10)	50 points
Hypotheses Presentation (2)	30 points
Final Project Presentation	30 points
Final Project Proposal Paper	40 points

The total points possible are 200. I will distribute grades based on the percentage of total points earned:

A => 90% of the total pts  
B => 80% of the total pts

C => 70% of the total pts  
D => 60% of the total pts

E =< 59% of the total pts

**Absences and makeups: \*\* Please note that there will be no extra credit or paper extensions offered in this course. Be sure you can make the date for each class, presentation, and paper assignment before you decide to take this course.**

**Course Requirements: Here are the details of what you can expect in terms of the weekly workload.**

Class Participation. There are two components to your participation grade. First, each student is expected to participate actively in the weekly discussion of the readings. Second, I require that you submit weekly discussion questions about the target articles. Each student will submit 2 thought questions, each drawn from a different reading, to me via email by 12pm on the Wednesday before the Thursday morning class meeting. I will use the thought questions to organize the discussion of the material. Together, your thought questions and participation during class is worth five (5) points and will be applied to 10 content classes for a total of 50 points.

Hypothesis Papers. Ten times during the semester each student will turn in a hypothesis paper based on that day's readings. A hypothesis paper is a brief description of a potential study (see an example on the course D2L site). It has four sections: (1) Hypothesis: Your hypothesis should be typed at the top of your paper, and should not be more than 2 sentences in length; (2) Theoretical background: briefly and generally describe the theoretical background for your idea; (3) Methods: briefly describe how you could go about collecting the data necessary for testing your hypothesis; and (4) Results: a brief description of what the results will look like and what statistical analyses would be used to test the hypothesis. Each of these sections should not exceed 1 paragraph and your hypothesis paper should not exceed 1 page.

Your hypothesis papers serve two purposes for class. First, we'll discuss your hypothesis in class, and generate ways of testing hypotheses as a group. Therefore, on days when we are discussing your hypothesis you should be prepared to "present" and "defend" your ideas (i.e., explain the logic behind your idea, and answer any questions regarding your predictions, etc). Second, your final paper for this class is a research proposal, in which you will design a study that you could conduct. By the time you begin work on this paper, you should have many ideas for studies, based on the hypotheses you generated throughout the semester. You may wish to elaborate on one of your hypotheses for your research proposal (although you don't have to).

You will turn in your hypothesis paper at the start of each class. On days you present a hypothesis, please bring 2 copies of your hypothesis to class (I will collect one, and you will have one to read from). Discussion of hypotheses will begin the second week of class (so there is no need to write one for Week 1).

An excellent hypothesis paper (that receives full credit) will (1) succinctly state a testable prediction, (2) demonstrate knowledge of the relevant topic (i.e., show how your hypothesis is related to the readings), (3) generally and briefly describe a reasonable means of testing the hypothesis, (4) present a clear and accurate plan for analyzing the data, and (5) not exceed 1 page. The paper must be word-processed using at least 12pt font and 1.00 inch margins on each side and single spacing is ok. Each hypothesis paper is worth five (5) points and will be applied to 10 content classes for a total of 50 points. I will provide comments on your writing, thinking, punctuation, etc. **Please note, you cannot submit a hypothesis for a day you are not in class, and you cannot submit a hypothesis after the class is over.**

**Hypothesis presentation.** Each student will present a hypothesis to the class twice during the semester. The purpose of this exercise is for you to gain experience presenting and defending your research ideas. When you are not presenting, you will gain valuable experience practicing the art of delivering “constructive criticism” to those who do present. Each presentation is worth 15 points.

**Final Research Proposal and Presentation.** A final research proposal is due at the end of the semester. The purpose of the proposal is for you to present the rationale and design of a study to test a novel hypothesis relevant to the study of attitudes and persuasion. The paper will follow the format of an introduction, method, and results section of a journal article. The final paper is worth 40 points.

To help you prepare, I encourage you to meet individually with me to discuss your project. Then, during the final class meeting, each student will make a brief 10-minute oral presentation of their final paper to the class, plus time to answer questions about the topic. Your goal is to give a clear and concise overview of the topic and be prepared to answer questions about it. PowerPoint and/or handouts are recommended. The presentation is worth 30 points.

**Attendance:** I expect everyone to attend class regularly and to complete every assignment. Please contact me if you are going to miss class.

**Summary for each week:** Read the assigned readings, send me two questions from two different readings, write a one-page hypothesis paper and bring it to class.

#### Quick Schedule And Agenda For Each Class Meeting

Date	Topic
Jan 14	Overview And Administrative Issues
Jan 21	Attitude Structure And Function
<b>Jan 28</b>	<b>SPSP conference—No Class Meeting</b>
Feb 4	Attitudes Measurement I: Explicit Vs. Implicit Methods
Feb 11	Attitude Measurement II: Questions About Implicit Measures
Feb 18	Attitudes Influencing Behavior: Planned vs. Spontaneous Processes
Feb 25	Behavior Influencing Attitudes: Cognitive Dissonance Theory
Mar 4	Behavior Influencing Attitudes: Contemporary Approaches
Mar 11	Behavior Change Processes: Initiation Vs. Maintenance
<b>Mar 18</b>	<b>Spring Break—No Class Meeting</b>
Mar 25	Attitude Change: Process Models
April 1	Attitude Change: Resistance Models
Apr 8	Attitude Change: Implicit Processes
Apr 15	Social Influence Processes
<b>Apr 22</b>	<b>Research proposal preparation--No Class Meeting</b>
<b>Apr 29</b>	<b>Last class: Research Proposal Presentations</b>
<b>May 11</b>	<b>Final Papers Due By 12pm</b>

### Schedule Of Readings And Assignments

#### Jan 21: Attitude structure and function (no hypotheses papers for this week)

Crano & Prislin text: Chapters 1 (Introduction), 6 (Origins), & 11 (Strength)

#### Jan 28: SPSP conference—NO CLASS MEETING

#### Feb 4: Attitude measurement I

Crano & Prislin text: Chapters 3 (Attitude Measurement) & 4 (Implicit attitudes)

Target article I: Lane, K. A., Banaji, M. R., Nosek, B. A., & Greenwald, A. G. (2007). Understanding and using the Implicit Association Test IV: What we know so far about the method. In B. Wittenbrink & N. Schwartz (Eds). *Implicit measures of attitudes: Progress and controversies* (pp. 59-102). New York: Guilford

#### Feb 11: Attitude measurement II

Target article I: Fazio, R. H., & Olson, M. A. (2003). Implicit measures in social cognition research: Their meaning and use. In *Annual Review of Psychology* (Vol. 54, pp. 297-328): Annual Reviews.

Target article II: Payne, B. K. (2001). Prejudice and perception: The role of automatic and controlled processes in misperceiving a weapon. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81, 181-192.

Target article III: Conrey et al. (2005). Separating multiple processes in implicit social cognition: The quad model of implicit task performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89, 469-487.

#### Feb 18: Attitudes influencing behavior

Crano & Prislin text: Chapter 13 (Attitudes predict behavior)

Target article I: Sheeran, P., & Abraham, C. (2003). Mediator of Moderators: Temporal Stability of Intention and the Intention-Behavior Relation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29, 205-215.

#### Feb 25: Behavior influencing attitudes: Cognitive Dissonance and Self-perception Theory

Crano & Prislin text: Chapter 14 (Behavior shapes attitudes)

Target paper I: Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance* (pp. 1-30). Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Target paper II: Brehm, J. (1956). Postdecision changes in the desirability of alternatives. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 52, 384-389.

#### Mar 4: Behavior influencing attitudes: Contemporary revisions and updates

Target article I: Stone, J., & Cooper, J. (2003). The effect of self-attribute relevance on how self-esteem moderates attitude change in dissonance processes. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 39, 508-515.

Target article II: Norton, M. I., Monin, B., Cooper, J., & Hogg, M. A. (2003). Vicarious dissonance: Attitude change from the inconsistency of others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85, 47-62.

Target article II: Harmon-Jones, E., Harmon-Jones, C., Fearn, M., Sigelman, J. D., & Johnson, P. (2008). Left frontal cortical activation and spreading of alternatives: Tests of the action-based model of dissonance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94, 1-15.

**Mar 11: Behavior Change: Initiation versus maintenance**

Target article I: Rothman, A. (2000). Toward a theory-based analysis of behavioral maintenance. *Health Psychology, 133*, pp. 64-69

Target article II: Stone, J., & Fernandez, N. C. (2008). To practice what we preach: The use of hypocrisy and cognitive dissonance to motivate behavior change. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 2(2)*, 1024–1051

**Mar 18: Spring Break—NO CLASS MEETING****Mar 25: Attitude change: Basic process theories**

Prislin & Crano text: Chapter 8 (Information processing approaches)

Target article I: Petty, R. E., Cacioppo, J. T., Strathman, A. J., & Priester, J. R. (2005). To think or not to think: Exploring two routes to persuasion. In T. Brock & M. Green (Eds). *Persuasion: Psychological insights and perspectives*. (pp 81-116). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Target article II: Klein, W. M. P., & Harris, P. R. (2009). Self-affirmation enhances attentional bias toward threatening components of a persuasive message. *Psychological Science*,

**Apr 1: Attitude change: Resistance processes**

Crano & Prislin text: Chapter 10 (New framework for resistance)

Target article I: Firestad, M. & Wright, P. (1994). The persuasion knowledge model: How people cope with persuasion attempts. *Journal of Consumer Research, 21*, 1-31.

**Apr 8: Attitude change: Implicit processes**

Target article I: Dijksterhuis et al. (2005). The Unconscious Consumer: Effects of Environment on Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 15(3)*, 193-202

Target article II: Gawronski, B., & LeBel, E. P. (2008). Understanding patterns of attitude change: When implicit measures show change, but explicit measures do not. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44*, 1355-1361.

**Apr 15: Social influence processes**

Crano & Prislin text: Chapter 17 (Normative beliefs)

Target article I: Pratkanis, A. R. (2007). Social influence analysis: An index of tactics. In A. R. Pratkanis (Ed.) *The science of social influence: Advances and future progress*. (pp. 17-82). New York: Psychology Press

**Apr 22: Prepare final presentation—NO CLASS MEETING****Apr 29: Final Paper Presentations****May 11: Final Papers Due by 12pm**