

The Psychology of Social Influence (PSYC 342)

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Wednesday (2:00 PM - 3:20 PM) or by Appointment

Required Text:

Cialdini, R. B. (2009). *Influence: Science and Practice* (Fifth Edition). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Course Objectives and Format:

This lecture course is designed to provide students with an introduction to research on social influence. Particular attention will be given to reviewing theory and empirical research on conformity, compliance, and obedience. The first 9 weeks of the course will focus on covering basic research in these areas. The final 3 weeks will concentrate on applying findings from the social influence literature to understanding influence processes in three social contexts (i.e., political contexts, “brainwashing” contexts, and psychological warfare contexts).

Exams:

There will be two exams. These exams will be a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The midterm exam will include material covered in approximately the first half of the term. The final exam will primarily concentrate on material covered in the second half of the term. However, the final exam will include some questions that will require integration of material across the entire term. The emphasis of exam questions will be on material covered in lecture, but some questions will be drawn exclusively from the text or in-class videos. The midterm and final exams will be weighted such that your best exam mark will be 60% of the total course mark and your lowest exam mark will be 40% of the total course mark. It is expected that students will write both exams. If there is a valid medical reason or other important life circumstance that requires a student to miss an exam, the general policy will be to prorata that exam (if supporting documentation of the problem is provided). However, in very special circumstances (e.g., non-attendance as part of an officially sponsored Queen’s activity), an alternative exam date will be arranged.

Grading: Midterm Exam (40% or 60%)
Final Exam (60% or 40%)

Course Outline

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Week 1: (Jan. 8, 10) Introduction To Social Influence/Conformity Types of Social Influence Nondeliberative/Deliberative Processes Social Norms Classic Conformity Studies	Ch. 1
Week 2: (Jan. 15, 17) Conformity Sources of Influence in Conformity Types of Conformity Factors Regulating Conformity Behavioural Mimicry	
Week 3: (Jan. 22, 24) Compliance Introduction to Compliance Social Relationship Based Compliance - Liking - Reciprocity	Ch. 2, 5
Week 4: (Jan. 29, 31) Compliance Self-Concept/Belief Based Compliance - Consistency	Ch. 3
Week 5: (Feb. 5, 7) Compliance Self-Concept/Belief Based Compliance (continued) - Consistency	
Week 6: (Feb. 12, 14) Compliance MIDTERM (February 12) NO CLASS (February 14)	
Reading Week (February 17-21)	
Week 7: (Feb. 26, 28) Compliance Information Based Compliance (Continued) - Authority - Social Proof - Scarcity	Ch. 4, 6, 7, 8

	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Week 8: (March 5, 7)	Obedience - Overview of the Milgram Procedure - Variations of the Milgram Procedure - Contemporary Obedience Research	None
Week 9: (March 12, 14)	Obedience - Evaluating the Milgram Studies - Zimbardo's Prison Study	None
Week 10: (March 19, 21)	Social Influence in Politics - Media and Public Opinion - Political Campaign Tactics	None
Week 11: (March 26, 28)	"Brainwashing": Prisoners of War and Cults - Definitions - Tactics - Assessing Research on "Brainwashing"	None
Week 12: (April 2, 4)	Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) - Definitions and Objectives - Tactics and Principles - Case Studies of PSYOPS - Assessing Research on PSYOPS	None
Final Exam (April 10-26)		