

Course Code	HP4242
Course Title	Advanced Topics in Social Cognition
Pre-requisites	HP1000 Introduction to Psychology, HP1100 Fundamentals of Social Science Research HP2400 Social Psychology
No of AUs	4

Course Aims

Research on social cognitive processes and the associated research methods have contributed much to social psychology's advancement as a field. This seminar aims to identify some major recent developments in social cognition research. Some of such developments address old questions with new perspectives, whereas other developments ask new questions that provide new understanding to social cognition. This course is designed for advanced undergraduate students who would like a critical reading of the latest empirical research in social cognition. As a student of this course, you will learn how to critically read the empirical literature and gain more in-depth understanding of the latest research in social cognition.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

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

1. Critically evaluate the incremental value, the strengths and weaknesses of empirical research in social cognition
2. Articulate and justify your critical evaluation of empirical research with clarity
3. Develop well-informed research question and hypotheses in social cognition
4. Design methodologically sound empirical studies in social cognition

Course Content

- The self
- Social perception
- Social explanation
- Goals
- Automaticity and control
- Construal level
- Motivated cognition
- Embodied cognition
- Shared cognition

Assessment (includes both continuous and summative assessment)

Component	ILO Tested	Related Programme LO or Graduate Attributes	Weighting	Team/Individual

1. Class Participation	1, 2	Oral communication, competence, critical thinking	15%	Individual
2. Thought papers	1, 2	Written communication, competence, critical thinking	30%	Individual
3. Project Presentations	3, 4	Oral communication, competence	20%	Individual
4. Project Paper	1, 2, 3, 4	Written communication, creativity, competence, critical thinking	35%	Individual
Total			100%	

1. Class Participation (15%): During each class, specific students will be chosen to provide a verbal summary of the assigned readings in class. The summaries will provide the starting point for further in-depth discussion of the class. Depending on the number of students in the class, you can expect to be asked to summarize 2-3 articles throughout the semester. You are also expected to participate actively in the class discussion by raising meaningful questions and expressing your thoughts on the issues being discussed.

2. Thought Papers (30%): You are required to submit 6 thought papers throughout the semester. In other words, you will need to submit a thought paper for any 6 weeks of assigned readings. Each thought paper should be no longer than 2 double-spaced pages. A thought paper includes your critical thoughts on the assigned articles for a given week. Note that a thought paper is not a summary. You do not need to summarize the articles. Instead, you should use the space to focus on questions/critiques/insights that you have in response to the articles.

3. Project Presentations (20%): You will work on an individual project where you will propose an empirical study in social cognition. Based on inspirations that you have from one of the assigned readings from this class, identify a research question of interest to you, derive a testable hypothesis, review the relevant literature, and design an empirical study to test the hypothesis. You will present this proposal in two class presentations. The first one will focus on the literature and hypothesis. The second one will focus on the research design.

4. Project Paper (35%): You will write a research proposal based on your project presentations. The proposal should be no longer than 20 double-spaced pages of main text. It must follow the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition, for formatting and style. The proposal should include:

- a) Comprehensive but succinct review of the relevant literature
- b) The theoretical contribution of the proposed research to the advancement of social cognition research
- c) Clear description of the hypothesis and elaboration of the rationale for the hypothesis
- d) Detailed description of the proposed method
- e) Clear presentation of the expected results
- f) Discussion of the implications of the proposed research

Formative feedback

You will receive written formative feedback to your thought paper submission. You will also receive verbal and written feedback on your project during and after your presentations.

Learning and Teaching approach

Approach	How does this approach support you in achieving the learning outcomes?
Critical reading	Critical reading of the assigned articles before class and the development of thoughts in the thought papers will deepen your understanding of the readings in preparation for the class discussion.
Interactive class discussion	Classes will be mostly discussion-based. You are expected to engage in extensive discussion of the readings, from theory to empirical approaches. Learning in such a discussion format depends largely on your active involvement in the discussion by openly sharing your thoughts and responding to others.
Individual project	The individual project encourages you to apply the knowledge and skills that you have developed throughout the semester to advance a research topic in social cognition. The presentations and written proposal will get you to articulate and justify the incremental value of your own proposed study and critically evaluate all aspects of the proposed study.

Reading and References

Each week, there will be assigned readings taken mostly from academic journals. To facilitate class discussion, you are expected to complete the readings BEFORE class. You will also be asked to provide verbal summaries of selected articles.

Course Policies and Student Responsibilities

(1) General

You are expected to complete all assigned class readings, attend all classes punctually and complete all scheduled assignments by the due dates. You are expected to take responsibility to follow up with course notes, assignments and course-related announcements for sessions that you have missed. You are expected to participate in all class discussions and activities.

(2) Assignment submission

Late submission of assignment without a valid reason will affect your overall course grade. Valid reasons include falling sick supported by a medical certificate and participation in NTU’s approved activities supported by an excuse letter from the relevant bodies. Penalty for late submission is a deduction of 25% of the assignment grade for every 12 hours after the due time.

Academic Integrity

Good academic work depends on honesty and ethical behaviour. The quality of your work as a student relies on adhering to the principles of academic integrity and to the NTU Honour Code, a set of values shared by the whole university community. Truth, Trust and Justice are at the core of NTU’s shared values.

As a student, it is important that you recognize your responsibilities in understanding and applying the principles of academic integrity in all the work you do at NTU. Not knowing what is involved in maintaining academic integrity does not excuse academic dishonesty. You need to actively equip yourself with strategies to avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, academic fraud, collusion and cheating. If you are uncertain of the definitions of any of these terms, you should go to the [academic integrity website](#) for more information. Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course.

Planned Weekly Schedule

Week	Topic	ILO	Readings/ Activities
Week 1	Introduction	1	No reading
Week 2	The Self	1, 2, 3	<p>Davidai, S., & Gilovich, T. (2016). The headwinds/tailwinds asymmetry: An availability bias in assessments of barriers and blessings. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 111(6), 835-851.</p> <p>Sanchez, C., & Dunning, D. (2018). Overconfidence among beginners: Is a little learning a dangerous thing? <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 114(1), 10–28.</p> <p>Madon, S., Jussim, L., Gyll, M., Nofziger, H., Salib, E. R., Willard, J., & Scherr, K. C. (2018). The accumulation of stereotype-based self-fulfilling prophecies. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 116(1), 1–12.</p>

			<i>Psychology</i> , 115(5), 825–844.
Week 3	Social Perception	1, 2, 3	<p>Wilson, J. P., Hugenberg, K., & Rule, N. O. (2017). Racial bias in judgments of physical size and formidability: From size to threat. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 113(1), 59-80.</p> <p>Chanes, L., Wormwood, J. B., Betz, N., & Barrett, L. F. (2018). Facial expression predictions as drivers of social perception. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 114(3), 380–396.</p> <p>Stellar, J. E., & Willer, R. (2018). Unethical and inept? The influence of moral information on perceptions of competence. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 114(2), 195–210.</p>
Week 4	Social Explanation	1, 2, 3	<p>Malle, B. F., & Holbrook, J. (2012). Is there a hierarchy of social inferences? The likelihood and speed of inferring intentionality, mind, and personality. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 102(4), 661-684.</p> <p>Olcaysoy Okten, I., & Moskowitz, G. B. (2018). Goal versus trait explanations: Causal attributions beyond the trait-situation dichotomy. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 114(2), 211–229.</p> <p>Gill, M. J., & Cerce, S. C. (2017). He never willed to have the will he has: Historicist narratives, ‘civilized’ blame, and the need to distinguish two notions of free will. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 112(3), 361-382.</p>
Week 5	Goals	1, 2, 3	<p>Xu, Q., Jin, L., & Zhang, Y. (2019). The shifting preference for contingent rewards in goal pursuit. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 116(1), 33–45.</p> <p>Shaddy, F., & Fishbach, A. (2018). Eyes on the prize: The preference to invest resources in goals over means. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 115(4), 624–637.</p> <p>Tamir, M., Halperin, E., Porat, R., Bigman, Y. E., & Hasson, Y. (2019). When there’s a will, there’s a way: Disentangling the effects of goals and means in</p>

			emotion regulation. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> .
Week 6	Automaticity and Control	1, 2, 3	<p>Ito, T. A., Friedman, N. P., Bartholow, B. D., Correll, J., Loersch, C., Altamirano, L. J., & Miyake, A. (2015). Toward a comprehensive understanding of executive cognitive function in implicit racial bias. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 108(2), 187-218.</p> <p>Amodio, D. M., & Swencionis, J. K. (2018). Proactive control of implicit bias: A theoretical model and implications for behavior change. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 115(2), 255–275.</p> <p>Cone, J., & Ferguson, M. J. (2015). He did what? The role of diagnosticity in revising implicit evaluations. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 108(1), 37-57.</p>
Week 7	Construal Level	1, 2, 3	<p>Kalkstein, D. A., Kleiman, T., Wakslak, C. J., Liberman, N., & Trope, Y. (2016). Social learning across psychological distance. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 110(1), 1-19.</p> <p>Slepian, M. L., Masicampo, E. J., & Ambady, N. (2015). Cognition from on high and down low: Verticality and construal level. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 108(1), 1–17.</p> <p>Wong, V. C., & Wyer, R. S., Jr. (2016). Mental traveling along psychological distances: The effects of cultural syndromes, perspective flexibility, and construal level. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 111(1), 17–33.</p>
Week 8	Motivated Cognition	1, 2, 3	<p>Otto, A. S., Clarkson, J. J., & Kardes, F. R. (2016). Decision sidestepping: How the motivation for closure prompts individuals to bypass decision making. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 111(1), 1-16.</p> <p>Webber, D., Babush, M., Schori-Eyal, N., Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis, A., Hettiarachchi, M., Bélanger, J. J., ... Gelfand, M. J. (2018). The road to extremism: Field and experimental evidence that significance loss-induced need for closure fosters</p>

			<p>radicalization. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 114(2), 270–285.</p> <p>Tepe, B., & Aydinli-Karakulak, A. (2019). Beyond harmfulness and impurity: Moral wrongness as a violation of relational motivations. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>.</p>
Week 9	Embodied Cognition	1, 2, 3	<p>Lee, S. S., & Schwarz, N. (2012). Bidirectionality, mediation, and moderation of metaphorical effects: The embodiment of social suspicion and fishy smells. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 103(5), 737-749.</p> <p>Risen, J. L., & Critcher, C. R. (2011). Visceral fit: While in a visceral state, associated states of the world seem more likely. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 100(5), 777-793.</p> <p>Tracy, J. L., Steckler, C. M., & Heltzel, G. (2019). The physiological basis of psychological disgust and moral judgments. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 116(1), 15–32.</p>
Week 10	Shared Cognition	1, 2, 3	<p>Dong, P., Dai, X., & Wyer, R. S., Jr. (2015). Actors conform, observers react: The effects of behavioral synchrony on conformity. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 108(1), 60–75.</p> <p>Shteynberg, G., Bramlett, J. M., Fles, E. H., & Cameron, J. (2016). The broadcast of shared attention and its impact on political persuasion. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 111(5), 665–673.</p> <p>Bhargave, R. P., Montgomery, N. V., & Redden, J. P. (2018). Collective satiation: How coexperience accelerates a decline in hedonic judgments. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 114(4), 529–546.</p>
Week 11	Replicability in Psychological Science	1, 2, 3	<p>Open Science Collaboration. (2015). Estimating the reproducibility of psychological science. <i>Science</i>, 349(6251), 1–8.</p> <p>New Policy for the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. (2019). <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>.</p>

			<p><i>Psychology</i>, 116(1), 14.</p> <p>Greenfield, P. M. (2017). Cultural change over time: Why replicability should not be the gold standard in psychological science. <i>Perspectives on Psychological Science</i>, 12(5), 762–771.</p> <p>Noah, T., Schul, Y., & Mayo, R. (2018). When both the original study and its failed replication are correct: Feeling observed eliminates the facial-feedback effect. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 114(5), 657–664.</p>
Week 12	Individual presentation 1	3, 4	No reading
Week 13	Individual presentation 2	3, 4	No reading