National research university “Higher School of Economics”

Department of Psychology

Course syllabus for the discipline
“Theory and Methodology of Modern Psychology:
Advanced Social Psychology”

For the students of the MSc program “Applied social psychology”
(specialization 03300.68 “Psychology”)

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Scope of application and reference to regulatory documents

This syllabus establishes the requirements for the knowledge and skills of the students, and defines the content of the course and the forms of evaluation.

The syllabus is designed for the teachers, teaching assistants, and the students of the MSc program «Applied social psychology».

The program is designed in accordance with:

- Educational standard of HSE;
- Educational program for the specialization 030300.68 Master of Psychology;
- The curriculum of the University for the Program «Applied social psychology».

1. Course objectives

The **main objectives** of the course are:

1) Studying areas of social psychology, which are not included in standard bachelor course of Social Psychology;

2) Introducing students to the latest developments and data in the field of Social Psychology;

3) Getting deeper knowledge of applied areas of Social Psychology;

4) Studying methodological tools of Advanced Social Psychology;

5) Building project activities skills in the field of Applied Social Psychology.

2. Student’s competences after the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General competencies</th>
<th>Specific competencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student has profound knowledge in the field of modern theoretical and applied social psychology</td>
<td>Student is capable to define theoretical and applied aspects of advanced social psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student knows main theoretical approaches, fundamental research questions and concepts of advanced social psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student has systematic knowledge of main categories of social psychology and methods of research</td>
<td>Student is capable to give definitions of main categories and to estimate methods of social psychological research</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Student knows different theoretical approaches</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Student is capable to present the results of his/her research in English, both in public and individually | Student knows the international standards of presenting the results of the socio-psychological research in English in written and verbal forms  
Student has skills of presenting different tasks prepared at home in English |
|---|---|
| Student is able to use the specific concepts, models, and methods to solve complex problems in governmental, social and business organizations, administration bodies, and in the areas of research and consulting | Student knows criteria of good study in the field of social psychology  
Student can apply different statements of psychological theories to solve problems arising in the field of social psychology |
| Student is capable to organize by himself any project, scientific, research, consulting and applied work on the basis of legal and professional standards and responsibilities | Student is capable to use methods of carrying out socio-psychological research |

### 3. Place of the course in the structure of the educational program

The discipline is basic (obligatory) for all 1st year master students of the MSc program “Applied social psychology”

The discipline builds on the previously learned general theories within the courses:

- General psychology;
- Social psychology;
- Experimental psychology.

This course is oriented not only on socio-psychological theories, but also on applied aspects of social psychology. Students will prepare their own projects on applied socio-psychological work.

During the course there will be held group discussions on current researches in the field of social psychology.
4. Course schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Section title</th>
<th>Class hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lectures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Social cognition</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The social self</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Social psychology of emotion</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Attitudes and its measurement</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Theory of planned behavior and attitude change</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Prosocial behavior</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Attraction and rejection</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Group processes and intergroup relations</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Course content

1. Introduction

Social Psychology as a scientific field: social relevance, basic concepts. Brief history of Social Psychology – before and after World War II. Main concepts of the “person” in the Social Psychology: consistency seeker, self-esteem maximizer, information seeker, information processor, foolish mistake maker, situational responder.

Literature:

Basic:
2. Social Cognition

Concept of social cognition. Categorization process and schemes in social cognition. Content of social cognition. Social representations. Basic approaches to an individual as a subject of social cognition: rationalizing person, naive scientist, practicing data processing individual, cognitive miser, motivated tactician. Processes of social information processing: main stages and its characteristics. Error sources that occur in processing of social information.

Literature:

Basic:

Additional:

3. The Social Self


Literature:

Basic:
Additional:


4. **Social Psychology of emotion**


**Literature:**

**Basic:**

**Additional:**
5. **Attitudes and its measurement**


**Literature:**

**Basic:**

**Additional:**
6. Theory of planned behavior and Attitude change

Studying relationships between attitudes and behavior. Theory of reasoned action by M. Fishbein and I. Aizen. Theory of planned behavior by I. Aizen (TPB). Model of planned behavior: attitudes towards behavior, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control. Beliefs underlying 3 components of planned behavior. Studying relationships between intention and actual behavior according to the TPB. The concept of actual behavioral control, its function. Factors influencing beliefs about behavior, norms, and control. Studies conducted with the use of the TPB. Ways of changing behavior according to the TPB. Questionnaire constructing technique according to TPB for studying behavior. Context effect on attitudes. Stability of attitudes over time. The formation of social attitudes: classical conditioning, instrumental conditioning. Belief as a way of shaping and changing attitude. Attitude change with the help of using stimuli.

Literature:

Basic:

Additional:

7. Prosocial behavior

Literature:

Basic:

Additional:

8. Aggression

Literature:

Basic:

Additional:

9. Attraction and Rejection
Need for social contact, concept of affiliation. Situations impeding and promoting affiliation. Affiliation motives. Concept of attraction. Liking and disliking. Factors influencing expression of sympathy and antipathy. Attractive personality characteristics. Distinction between
attraction and sympathy. Friendship and close relations. Factors affecting the development of friendship and close relations.

Social exclusion and its causes. The psychological consequences of the ostracism. Somatic reactions to rejection. Loneliness and psychological methods of coping with it.

**Literature:**

**Basic:**

**Additional:**

**10. Group Processes and Intergroup Relations**

Differences between interpersonal and intergroup behavior. Sources of prejudice. Theories explaining the sources of prejudice and discrimination in intergroup relations. Discrimination as a product of personal characteristics. Discrimination and prejudice as a result of conflict of interest in intergroup relations. Minimal group paradigm. Group affiliation and social identity. Social comparison. Opportunities of leaving the group. Contact hypothesis.

**Literature:**

**Basic:**

**Additional:**
6. Education technologies

The interactive forms of teaching are used in the course: group discussion, case analysis (life stories, book or video materials). Recognized and well-known professors in the field of social psychology are invited to give «master classes».

7. Forms of evaluation for the current assessment and attestation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of the assessment</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quizzes</strong>&lt;br&gt;Each seminar and practical class will start with a short (15-20 minutes) quiz containing 2-3 open-ended questions. The questions are based on the lecture content and recommended literature (chapters and articles). Quizzes will be graded on a 10-point scale and contribute 20% to the final grade for the course.</td>
<td>1) Depth and comprehensiveness of the answer 2) Definitions are provided when needed 3) Examples are given when required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colloquium</strong>&lt;br&gt;We expect that all students read recommended</td>
<td>1) Depth and thoroughness of literature overview and analysis</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

literature prior to the seminar and/or practical class and are ready to give a talk on the topic of the seminar. The groups of presenters (3-4 people) and discussants (3-4 people) will be chosen randomly at the seminar and must give a presentation on the topic (10-20 minutes). Discussants have to prepare questions and critique on the topic for the presenters (10-20 minutes). Each group will have 30 minutes for preparation. The presentation is followed by the discussion and question session. Each student will be chosen as a presenter and discussant at least twice a module. Colloquia will be graded on a 10-point scale and contribute 20% to the final grade.

Course written assignment
Home assignment is a project proposal of an intervention activity aimed at social change (e.g. anti-smoking campaign, pro-environmental behavior, designing better financial decisions, programs aimed at minorities inclusion, etc.). The topic of the project and the chosen intervention should be agreed with the lecturers in advance.

1) Part 1 (1st module). Literature overview
It is the first part of your proposal. You should clearly state the problem and its significance, the goal of the project, and provide a brief, yet comprehensive, theoretical overview of academic social psychological literature (3000 – 5000 words).

2) Part 2 (2nd module). Design of the

2) Clear structure of report (critical parts of presentation: research problem, method, substantial results and conclusion)
3) Consistency and logical structure of the presentation
4) Consistency and clarity of the critique/questions
5) Quality of answers to the questions/critique (comprehensive and detailed answers)

1) Student wrote essay in full;
2) Content of essay corresponds to selected topic;
3) Results of the most recent research in the selected area are used in essay;
4) Student’s own analysis of material is presented in essay.

1) Goal and objectives of project are clear;
2) Project has a clear socio-psychological orientation;
3) Project is based on knowledge of social psychology;
4) Presentation contains all necessary descriptive elements of project;
5) Project has a clear and precise practical result.
Based on the literature overview, the students propose the design of the intervention. The design should contain the description of the target audience, a detailed plan of activities, and the description of the expected results. The projects should be uploaded to LMS in written and presented on the last class of research seminar. The project will contribute 30% to the final grade for the course.

**The final exam.**

The final exam is held in the form of a test. Students are given 20 single choice questions. Each question contains four answer options. 10-point scale will be used in assessment of the test results. The project will contribute 30% to the final grade.

Final grade is proportional to the number of correct answers to test questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Correct Answers</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
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<td>3-4</td>
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<td>19-20</td>
<td>10</td>
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Example of questions for final test:

1) Evaluation apprehension, matching to standard and output equity are terms relating to
   a. social facilitation
   b. explanations of why individual productivity can drop when working in a group
   c. group dynamics
   d. the distraction-conflict theory of social facilitation

2) In cases where the argument in a message is very different to what an individual believes, persuasion will be more likely if
   a. the argument is weak
b. the issue is ego-involving
c. the source is credible
d. none of the above

3) In the context of disadvantaged groups, which strategy can young people employ to maintain a positive self-esteem? They can

a. identify ethnic characteristics that they perceive in a positive way
b. congregate in specifically designated areas (ghettos)
c. keep to themselves
d. assimilate

4) The two major models of persuasion, the heuristic systematic model and the elaboration-likelihood model, have something in common. They both

a. draw on processes derived from developmental theories
b. deal with persuasion cues
c. postulate more than two processes involved in persuasion
d. use a stage model of attitude change

5) Sherif believed that intergroup harmony can turn to conflict, and then ethnocentrism, when

a. an authoritarian leader comes to power
b. the groups compete for scarce resources
c. temperatures rise
d. one group notices that another group exists

6) There is a paradox: the likelihood of helping someone in distress decreases as the number of potential helpers increases. This can be accounted for to some extent by

a. social loafing
b. lack of empathy
c. independence in western cultures
d. diffusion of responsibility

8. Forms of knowledge assessment and grading procedures

Knowledge should be assessed in 10-point scale. The final grade will consist of quizzes, colloquia, written assignment, and exam. It will be calculated using the following formula:

\[
\text{Final grade} = 0.2 \times \text{Quiz average} + 0.2 \times \text{Colloquium average} + 0.3 \times \text{Written assignment} + 0.3 \times \text{Final exam}
\]

9. Learning aids
Course book

Basic literature

Additional Literature


