National Research University
Higher School of Economics

School of Psychology

Syllabus for the course “Interpersonal Behavior”

English-taught Master’s programme “Applied Social Psychology”
(37.04.01 Psychological Sciences)

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I. Basic methodical principles

The course is aimed to introduce students to the international findings in the area of interpersonal behavior. Specific topics addressed are: social exclusion and the need to belong, conflict and cooperation, distributive and procedural justice, fairness and self-interest, negotiation, social exchange, and social influence.

The main objectives of the course are:

- To acquaint students with basic theories and investigations in the area of interpersonal behavior.
- To develop students’ abilities to analyze and compare different research approaches, and to identify its strengths and weaknesses.
- To develop students' abilities to present their ideas, analysis results, and to organize the scientific discussion.
- To develop students' abilities to participate in the scientific discussion.

Methodical novelty of the course:

- Combination of lecture sessions (which are aimed to provide theoretical and methodological basics) with discussions, analysis of video fragments, and group work (which develop students’ abilities to analyze and compare different approaches, justify their ideas, and participate in the scientific discussion) makes the course diverse and interesting for students.
- Concentrated approach to course material and studying process. Each meeting is devoted to a specific topic and includes both a lecture and a seminar session. This type of classes’ organization leads to several consequences. Foremost, students come at lecture having a background knowledge that provides in turn a base for lecture information learning. Further, there is no a time gap between lecture and seminar, that reduces time for introduction part of seminar and allows to study more in depth.
- Tasks, which increase student’s responsibility for the education process. For instance, students chose a particular topic, form a work group, read additional literature about this topic, and are responsible for discussion at seminar devoted to this topic.
- Tasks that are aimed to set a connection between course materials and students’ research projects. This gives students an opportunity to see an alternative to their research plan, compare and evaluate its strength and weaknesses.

Course prerequisites and formed competencies:

The course is designed for first year master students, and is based on the previously learned courses ("Social psychology", “Advanced social psychology”, “Qualitative and quantitative methods in psychology”).

Working language of the course is English (teaching and all communications). Duration of the course is 2 modules (152 academic hours, 4 credits).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>General competencies</th>
<th>Specific competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student is familiar with the core theoretical and methodological backgrounds of humanitarian knowledge (partly formed competency)</td>
<td>Student is familiar with the core theoretical and methodological backgrounds in the area of interpersonal behavior research.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student is familiar with the research methods of social psychology and their application in the particular research field (partly formed competency).</td>
<td>Student is familiar with the research methods application in the area of interpersonal behavior research.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student is able to analyze scientific literature, argue his or her point of view, and participate in a scientific discussion (partly formed competency).</td>
<td>Student is able to make a theoretical overview of a particular course topic and organize a part of seminar discussion.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
II. Course contents

Novelty of the course:
1. Scientific. Course materials combine both basic theoretical approaches and contemporary investigations (made in last three-five years) in the field.
2. In comparison with international standards. On the one hand this course is based on analogue delivering in Tilburg University (partner of the Master’s programme), hence it meets international standards and two degrees Master’s programme demands. On the other hand course materials were modified and adjusted to “Applied social psychology” Master’s programme needs and structure. Thus the course provides international standards for domestic Master’s programme.
3. In comparison with domestic syllabuses. This course has no full analogues and has party overlapping with different courses delivering at Higher School of Economics and Lomonosov Moscow State University (“Advanced Social Psychology”, “Conflict Management”, “World’s Business Cultures and International Business Negotiations”, “Psychology of Competition”, “Psychology of Altruism”, “Social Influence”, “Psychology of Risky Behavior and Decision Making”). However none of listed courses provides a deep and concentrated analysis of interpersonal motivation and behaviors.

Thematic plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Hours in total</th>
<th>Auditory classes, including:</th>
<th>Self-Studying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>Seminars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction: Overview of the course</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social exclusion and need to belong</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Need to belong</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Exclusion and ostracism</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conflict and cooperation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Coordination problems</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dilemmas</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Moral emotions</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social exchange</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reciprocal altruism</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Altruistic punishment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distributive and procedural justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Equity theory</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Voice effect</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
III. Program contents

**Topic 1. Introduction: Overview of the course**  
Thematic overview of the course and research area is presented as well as auditory classes’ process, homework structure, and methods of assessment are explained. Students choose topics they will responsible for and form workgroups. Students’ and teacher’s expectations are discussed.

*Core reading:*  

*For further reading:*  

**Part one. Social exclusion and need to belong**  
**Topic 2. Need to belong**  
The need to belong as a fundamental human motivation is stated and described. Different antecedents and consequences of this fundamental need are analyzed and discussed. Firstly, basics of intrinsic motivation, well-being, and Self-Determination Theory are presented. Then, assumption that people seek positive self-regard (motivation to possess, enhance, and maintain positive self-views) as far as cross-cultural generalizability of such motivation are discussed. Next and the last contemporary studies of the need to belong are presented and discussed.

*Core reading:*  

*For further reading:*  


**Topic 3. Exclusion and ostracism**

Conceptual background of ostracism understanding and theorizing is analyzed and discussed, namely: an evolutionary perspective of ostracism; paradigms and manipulations of ostracism, social exclusion, and rejection (ball tossing, cyberball, life alone prognosis paradigm, get acquainted techniques). Special attention is devoted to K.Williams’ temporal responses to ostracism viewpoint (reflexive painful response, a reflective stage, and resignation) and empirical findings on every stage. Effects of being ostracized from a death game (Cyberball paradigm) are discussed.

**Core reading:**


**For further reading:**


**Part two. Conflict and cooperation**

**Topic 4. Interdependence**

The notions of interdependence, interaction, and relationships are analyzed. The main focus is on interdependence, its structure and processes. Following phenomena are discussed as a parts of interdependence structure: (1) matrices and transition lists, (2) needs, preferences, and outcomes, (3) dimensions of situation structure (level of dependence, mutuality of dependence, basis of dependence,
covariation of interests, temporal structure, information about partners and future interaction possibilities). Different stages, components, and factors of interdependence processes are described and analyzed. Specific attention is devoted to development of social value orientation (SVO). Processes underlying this development are discussed.

Core reading:

For further reading:

**Topic 5. Coordination problems**

This topic is based on T.Schelling ideas about tacit bargaining and tacit co-ordination. Firstly, Schelling’s model is analyzed, namely: (1) the notion of “tacit co-ordination”, (2) tacit coordination possibility in cooperative and conflicts situations, (3) types of clues or keys for tacit coordination. Then social information as a cue for tacit coordination is discussed. A series of four empirical studies (experiments) provided by De Kwaadsteniet et al., (2011) are described and analyzed.

Core reading:

**For further reading:**


**Topic 6. Dilemmas**

Dilemmas is one of the key topic of the course. Firstly, different types and classifications (social traps and social fences, commons and public goods dilemmas, Prisoner’s dilemma, chicken dilemma, assurance dilemma) of dilemmas are presented and analyzed. Then theoretical approaches (Interdependence theory, Appropriateness framework, and evolutionary theory) are discussed. Special attention is devoted to developments structural, psychological, and dynamic interaction recent influences in dilemmas research. And lastly empirical study about tacit coordination possibility in social dilemmas is presented and thoroughly discussed.

**Core reading:**


**For further reading:**


**Topic 7. Moral emotions**

Firstly, emotions’ specificity in the decision making process is discussed. Special attention is devoted to difference between affects and emotions. Then feeling-is-for-doing approach is analyzed. And the last part is devoted to negative consequences of guilt experience for the third part. Three pilot studies and four experiments are analyzed and discussed.

**Core reading:**


**For further reading:**


Part three. Social exchange

Topic 8. Reciprocal altruism

This topic focuses on two issues. Firstly, the evolution of reciprocal altruism from simple symbioses through animal behavior to human conduct is discussed. R. Trivers’ model of reciprocal altruism is described as a basis for evolutional point of view. Secondly, the evolution of cooperation is discussed. Following R. Axelrod’s and W. Hamilton’s ideas cooperation is considered as a strategies of Prisoner’s Dilemma solving. Special attention is devoted to robustness, stability, and initial viability of such strategies.

Core reading:

For further reading:

Topic 9. Altruistic punishment

The problem of human cooperation as an evolutionary puzzle is discussed. The notion of “altruistic punishment” as an explanation of human cooperation is depicted and analyzed. Main focus is devoted to different factors influencing on altruistic punishment increasing or decreasing: (1) emotional condition of partners, (2) social norm of distributive justice, (3) empathy level, etc.

Core reading:

For further reading:
Making, 4, 543-553.

**Part four. Distributive and procedural justice**

**Topic 10.** Equity theory

J.Adams’ ideas about inequality in social exchange are presented and discussed. The notions of “relative deprivation”, “distributive justice”, “inequality” and its’ antecedents and consequences are depicted and thoroughly examined. New directions in equity research are presented and discussed.

**Core reading:**

**For further reading:**

**Topic 11.** Voice effect

**Core reading:**
enquiry concerning the principles of cultural norms and values: The impact of uncertainty and mortality salience on reactions to violations and bolstering of cultural worldviews. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 41*, 91-113.


*For further reading:*


**Part five. Negotiation, Self-interest and fairness**

**Topic 12. Deception**

Firstly, the phenomenon of deception in interpersonal relationships and different theoretical and research approaches to deception are described. Main focus of the topic is devoted to instrumental account of deception and reaction to deceit in bargaining. Then different empirical findings are discussed: (1) power and deception in bargaining, (2) suspicion-based rejections of high offers, (3) limited capacity to lie, (4) time limitations for honesty acts.

*Core reading:*


*For further reading:*


**Topic 13. Fairness: strength in weakness**

**Core reading:**


**For further reading:**


**Examples of test questions, home tasks**

(1) **Examples of test questions from seminar quiz**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IB, Q_6, Reciprocal altruism</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name ___________________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **What does “altruism” mean? List the main features of altruistic behavior:**
   - __________________
   - __________________
   - __________________
   - __________________

2. **According to Triver’s model there are three basic conditions that affect the possibility of reciprocal altruistic behavior. Check the correct answers:**
   - A. dispersal rate
   - B. the proportion of altruists and non-altruists in a population
   - C. kin selection
   - D. degree of mutual dependence
   - E. length of lifetime
   - F. type of interspecies relationship

3. **What strategy of interaction is robust, stable, and initial viable (in other words, is evolutionary stable) if the interactions between the individuals have a sufficiently large probability of continuing? Name this strategy, please:**
   __________________
(2) Structure for home tasks

See Appendix A.

(3) Questions for final exam test

Questions for final exam test can’t be posted in open access syllabus file. Nevertheless the final test is comprised of the same type of questions as in the seminar quizzes, and covers the material taught and discussed in class.

IV. Methods of assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of the assessment</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homework (2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Homework №1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article analysis. Students should analyze 1 scientific paper with the results of empirical research chosen from the further reading. Students make the presentation during the class and then provide a post-hoc analysis of the presentation process. For detailed assignment for HW 1 see Appendix A.</td>
<td>1. Student used all the necessary standards for the evaluation of academic paper. 2. Student understands those standards, and can see the strengths and weaknesses of the paper. 3. Student is able to differentiate and recognize a good quality from poor quality research. 4. Student is able to analyse the quality of performed presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Homework №2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ own proposal of an empirical study that is based on course materials (one of the studied articles). Performed in small teams of 3 or 4 people. Students write and present a proposal with a theoretical overview, formulated research question, aims and hypotheses and proposed methodology and study design.</td>
<td>1. Quality of the theoretical overview. 2. Adequacy of hypotheses. Connection of hypotheses with the theoretical overview. 3. Appropriateness of research methods chosen to test the hypotheses. 4. Usage of both course materials and student’s research topic details. 5. Quality of the presented proposal and written report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final examination</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 60 min, 45-55 questions.</td>
<td>Test grades are transformed into 10-point scale and are included into the formula for the final grade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formula for the final grade

The final grade consists of several parts:
- Final exam (exam) – 20%
- Accumulated mark (during the course process) – 80%, which includes:
  - Homeworks (hw) – 50%
  - Quizzes (q) – 25%
  - Class participation (class) – 25%

Formula for the final grade:

$$O_{\text{final grade}} = 0.2 \times O_{\text{exam}} + 0.8 \times (0.6 \times O_{\text{hw}} + 0.2 \times O_{q} + 0.2 \times O_{\text{class}})$$
Appendix A
Methodical recommendations for students

Homework (1) – Article analysis (presentation and post hoc analysis)

Deadline – presentation day + 3 days (example: if you present on Jan 24, deadline for homework is Jan 27, 23:59). You should send to the course instructor an e-mail with two attachments: presentation and post hoc analysis.

Homework description. Homework consists of two parts. The first part is your presentation at class as a result of article analysis. Presentation plan:

- short introduction (what problem the article is devoted to?);
- key notions and statements of the theoretical overview;
- hypotheses (and/or RQs), methods, and procedure of the empirical study/studies;
- results and conclusions;
- your critical comments, doubts, or compliments;
- tasks, open-ended questions for audience, and discussion topics are highly appreciated.

Second part is your post hoc analysis of your presentation’s success/quality. This should be a short written document (0.5-1 page is enough), which contains your reasoning on:

- What were the strengths of your presentation;
- What should be done in a different way and why.

Individual or group work
Both options are possible. When group work is chosen (or more than one student has chosen a particular topic):

- The number of articles you analyze should be equal to the number of members in the group, thus fair contribution and difficulty are implemented;
- You can work as entire group and present united analysis or work separately;
- Every student must present something so that a teacher has an opportunity to assess his or her work/contribution.

Please, note: before analyzing any article, check if it is not chosen by another student. Then add your name in the online table and specify your choice, so other students would be aware.
Appendix B

Homework (2) – Research project

Deadline – May 1st (Presentation + short written report)

**Homework description.** This homework is a result of creating your own research proposal that is based on course materials (one of the studied articles). The homework is carried out in small teams of 3 or 4 people.

**Homework plan:**

1. *Choosing a topic.*
   After you form a group, you can choose any topic you like based on both core reading papers and materials for individual presentations. It should be a topic that lets you construct a new study based on the study described in the article. It can be an enhanced study or a new design that challenges the findings in the article.

   You will have 2 to 3 weeks to prepare a study proposal for your topic (as a presentation). Proposal should include:
   - short description of the original study and additional theory you based on;
   - your problem statement and your study goal;
   - your own ideas of this study modification and sufficient rationale for this modification (or sufficient rationale for the critique arguments if you want to conduct a challenging study);
   - your hypothesis(es) that are based on theoretical background;
   - method section (participants, design, measures, proposed analysis method).

   The report is a full continuation of your project proposal (8-10 pages). It should include:
   - Introduction: consists of several paragraphs about the initial study you based on and the main changes you have made and why. Limitations of the initial study should be analyzed. The goal and hypotheses of your own study should be clearly reported here. Hypotheses have to be based on theoretical background that is described after.
   - Background is aimed to introduce theoretical basics of the study. Key ideas from every side, course material and your research topic are clearly described. Concise but complete evidence is provided for the hypotheses.
   - Method section should include information about participants, study design, measures, and results (take the initial study as an example for presenting this section).
   - Discussion and conclusion section should include your anticipated study results, tied in with your hypotheses; and discussion of how the proposed study enhances the knowledge of the initial study that you based it on. Try to think about the limitations of the proposed study.
The final mark is the combination of the written work and presentation (0.8*proposal + 0.2*presentation).

*Please, note:*
- be aware of timing and deadlines, we have no opportunity to change them. Keep in mind that theoretical research takes the most time.
- be aware of study feasibility: how many participants will you need? what statistics should you know? etc.
- do not suffer alone: ask help any time you need, there will be consultations organized.
- do not add words in order to make your proposals or report as long as possible. The length itself is not valued, the goal is to write a thoughtful and sufficient proposal that can actually be carried out in reality.

Timetable for the homework:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Time interval / Date*</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teams formation</td>
<td>till April 1</td>
<td>Form a team with 3 or 4 classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Choosing a topic</td>
<td>till April 1</td>
<td>Choose a topic based on course materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Making a presentation</td>
<td>till April 14</td>
<td>Presenting the preliminary version of the proposal, sending the presentation for later review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>April 20</td>
<td>Ask any questions you have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Written proposal</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Handing in the final written version of the proposal and the latest version of the presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: precise dates will be available before the end of the 3rd module. Dates in the timetable are approximate.*