

Psychology 3CB3: Attitudes and Beliefs

Course Outline, Jan. - Apr. 2010

Time: Tues., Wed., Fri. 12:30 - 1:20 pm
 Classroom: HSC 1A1
 Web site: <http://intropsych.mcmaster.ca/psych3cb3>

Instructor: **Dick Day**
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Course Objectives

This course focuses on the nature, development, and impact of attitudes and beliefs on our emotions, cognitions, and behaviors. We will discuss a number of theories and findings concerning attitude formation and change, and consider the relevance and application of those findings to advertising and to political and religious beliefs.

Required Text: TBA

Course Outline:

The table below lists the topics we will be covering, and the probable order in which we will be covering them. The dates when each topic will be discussed are **approximate**. The order and exact contents of each topic area may change even after the course begins in January.

| Week of: | Topic | Readings |
|------------------------------|---|----------|
| Jan. 4 Jan. 11 Jan. 18 | Introduction to Attitudes and Beliefs: The Nature, Measurement, and Structure of Attitudes | |
| Jan. 25 * Feb. 1 | Attitude Formation: Basic Mechanisms | |
| Feb. 8 | Attitude Change: The Yale group and Persuasion | TBA |
| Feb. 15 | Break Week | |
| Feb. 22 Mar. 1 Mar. 8 | Attitude Change: Affective and Cognitive Mechanisms of Persuasion | TBA |
| * Mar. 15 Mar. 22 | Attitude Change: Behavioral Approaches | TBA |
| Mar. 29 | Persuasion: Attitudes and Advertising | TBA |
| Apr. 5 | Religious and Political Beliefs | TBA |
| | Classes end Thursday, April 8 th | |
| Exam Period | Final Examination | |

Evaluation:

There will be two in-class tests, worth 30% each, and a final exam worth 40%. Each in-class test will consist of approximately 40 multiple-choice questions. You will have approximately 50 minutes to complete each test.

The final exam will consist of 80 multiple-choice questions. You will have two hours for this test, which will take place during the April examination period. The dates for the in-class tests are as follows (and are marked on the course outline with an asterisk next to the date):

In-class Test #1: Wednesday, February 3rd

In-class Test #2: Wednesday, March 17th

Missed Work:

If you miss one of the in-class tests for documented medical or compassionate reasons, you should complete a Missed Work form in the office of the Associate Dean (Studies) of your Faculty. Once your Associate Dean has accepted your reason for absence, the remaining in-class test and the final exam will be reweighted (40%, 60%, respectively) to cover the missed in-class test.

Final Grade Calculation and Adjustment:

The final mark in this course will be computed by applying the following formula to the percentage scores on Test1, Test2, and Final Exam:

$$(\text{Test1}\% \times .30) - (\text{Test2}\% \times .30) - (\text{Exam}\% \times .40) = \text{Final Course Mark}$$

Apart from excused absences from an in-class test, every student will be assessed using the weighting formula shown above - with one exception:

In assigning final letter grades for the course I look at the pattern of performance over the two in-class tests and the final exam. If the overall average, as calculated by the formula above, is on the borderline of the next higher letter grade (e.g. 49%, 66%, or 84%) and if the marks on both the final exam and one in-class test are at the next higher level (e.g., D-, C+, A), then I will assign the next higher letter grade.

Apart from this one final adjustment, final course grades in Psych 3CB3 are not raised unless they have been calculated incorrectly.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at

http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. **Copying or using unauthorized aids on tests and examinations.**
2. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
3. Improper collaboration in group work.

Grading in Psychology 3CB3

Your final percentage marks in the course will be translated into a letter grade according to the usual equivalences as listed on page 26 of the 2008/2009 Undergraduate Calendar.