



COURSE OUTLINE

Psychology 2430 - 001 Psychological Approaches to Social Issues September – December 2019

Instructor. Dr. J. Frimer
office: 4L02
email: j.frimer@uwinnipeg.ca
office hours: by appointment

Lectures. Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 1:30pm - 2:20pm in room 1L11

Course Description. This course investigates major social issues of our time, and how psychological science can shed light on them. These issues may include racism, climate change, terrorism, economic inequality, and artificial intelligence. Some of these topics may not be covered. To cultivate a *broad* understanding of the issues, we will examine multiple sides of the issues. To cultivate a *deep* understanding of the issues, the course will delve into the psychological processes that help explain the emergence, importance, and possible solutions to the issues. The course will be a success if students gain knowledge about the psychological processes underlying social issues, gain an appreciation for multiple perspectives on contentious issues, develop respect for adversarial views and intellectual humility, and develop the skills and habits necessary to engage in civil, productive dialogue on social issues.

Prerequisites. Psychology 1000

Required Materials. The course does not have a textbook. However, iClicker Reef software is required. Students will need to download the program/application onto a computer/tablet/smart phone from <https://www.iclicker.com/students> or an app store and purchase a subscription that lasts the full duration of the course. A 6-month subscription currently costs ~\$21. Students will need to bring their device (connected to the Internet) to each lecture. As UW's wireless Internet connection can sometimes be unreliable, students should have a cellular data plan as a back up. To earn credit, students must register on the iClicker website using their First and Last names as they appear on Webadvisor.

Evaluation. Grades will be determined by students' performance on five course requirements, with the following weighting. Students can earn Exam Weighting Points to adjust these weightings.

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| (a) iClicker Participation | worth 10% |
| (b) Podquizzes | worth 15% |
| (c) Midterm Examination 1 | worth 25% |
| (d) Midterm Examination 2 | worth 25% |
| (e) Final Examination | worth 25% |

Exam Weighting Points. Students can earn "Exam Weighting Points" (EWPs) in class. EWPs do not earn course credit directly. Rather, EWPs change the *weighting* of the three exam grades in a way that always favors the student. In this way, EWPs are like an insurance policy against the possibility of a low score on an exam. Here's how it works. Every 1000 EWPs that a student

earns will cause the student's highest exam score to be weighted 1% more and the other two exams to be weighted 0.5% less each. If, for example, a student earns 20,000 EWP's, the exam with the highest score will be worth 45% of the total grade (25% + 20%), with the lower two scores being worth 15% each (25% - 10%). Students can EWP's via iClicker only. Student who register their iClickers after September 18th need to email Dr. Frimer to let him know in order to receive EWP's.

iClicker is a response system that allows students to express their views without having to speak publicly, and will be a regular part of lecture activities. iClicker participation is determined by whether students click within the allotted time, not whether students get the correct answer. There will be 21 lectures in which students can earn participation credit, with the first opportunity being on second lecture in the course, which is on September 6. Grades will be determined by the percentage of polls to which a student responds within the allotted time.

Podquizzes. Students will listen to assigned podcasts (free of charge). Students may access the podcasts on any computer, tablet, or smart phone. Students will then take "podquizzes" that test the material on the podcasts. Quizzes will take place in class only, and via iClicker only. Podquizzes may happen at any time during any lecture on *or* after the assigned date (dates are assigned on the course website). The material in podcasts is examinable in the midterms and the final exam. Unlike midterm and final examinations, podquizzes are "open book": students may use notes, smart phones, tablets, or computers. However, they may not communicate with other students during podquizzes.

Examinations test students' knowledge of the course material, which includes everything covered in class and in the assigned podcasts since the last examination. That is, the exams are not cumulative. The professor will announce which specific material is testable on each exam before the exam takes place. Students must bring their UW student ID card, pens, pencils, and erasers to examinations. The instructor will not provide pencils. No additional equipment (such as notes, smart phones, tablets, or computers) is authorized in examinations. Examinations are 40 minutes in duration. Students who submit their examinations to the instructor within the allotted 40 minutes (and 0 seconds) will receive a 10% bonus on that examination. Note that there being a line-up of students to hand in the examination close to the 40-minute mark will not be considered a legitimate excuse for missing the deadline. To be confident that they will earn the bonus, students should submit their examinations at least 2 minutes early.

Letter Grade Cut-Offs

These cut-offs are tentative until approved by the Psychology Department and the UW Senate. If need be, these cut-offs can be adjusted by the Instructor, the departmental DRC, or Senate.

Letter	Minimum %
A+	90%
A	85%
A-	80%
B+	76%
B	68%
C+	64%
C	55%
D	50%
F	0%

Important Dates

Sept. 2	No Lectures (Labour Day)
Sept. 4	First lecture
Oct. 4	MIDTERM EXAMINATION 1
Oct. 14	No Lectures (Thanksgiving)
Oct. 14-18	No Lectures (Reading Week)
Nov. 8	MIDTERM EXAMINATION 2
Nov. 11	No Lectures (Remembrance Day)
Nov. 12	Voluntary withdrawal (VW) date
Dec. 3	Final lecture
Dec. 18 1:30pm	FINAL EXAM IN 1L13

Course Policies

- **Free Speech.** This course covers sensitive and controversial topics. For the sake of learning, the professor and students may share controversial opinions. Some students may find some ideas (for example, on the topic of race and gender) shared to be offensive, hurtful, or wrong. Students are encouraged to express their opinions, and to do so in a manner that is civil and sensitive to others' feelings. The goal of sharing opinions is to inform students about the diversity of thought on these issues. The professor defends individuals' right to free expression. Inciting violence and personal slander are unacceptable. However, all other forms of speech are acceptable. The professor endorses The Chicago Principles on Freedom of Expression, and will abide by them:
<https://provost.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/documents/reports/FOECommitteeReport.pdf>
- **Students' Questions.** The instructor encourages questions before, during, or after lectures, or during office visits. Email is also an acceptable means of asking questions only if the query can be answered in a few sentences. If questions require a longer response, the professor may encourage an office visit.
- **Emailing Policy.** Emails to the professor must be professional. That means they should...
 - ... have an informative subject line (e.g., "PSYC2430 missed test")
 - ... identify the author and how the author knows the professor (e.g., My name is *your name* and I am a PSYC2430 student).
 - ... be formal (e.g., Hello/Dear/Good afternoon Dr. Frimer; Sincerely, *your name*, *your student number*)

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- ... use correct spelling and grammar. Slang, abbreviations, emojis, and emoticons are inappropriate.
 - ... ask a question that is not clearly answered in the course outline.

Emails that do not follow the above criteria will receive the following response: “Dear *your name*, Please refer to the course outline regarding the email policy. Sincerely, Dr. Frimer”

The reason for this policy is to educate students about and prepare students for the professional world beyond university.

- **Late Assignments.** If a student fails to complete an assignment on time and fails to provide acceptable documentation from an appropriate authority within 7 days of the due date, the penalty to the student is receiving a 0.
 - **Concessions.** The instructor may grant concessions to students who have conflicting responsibilities (e.g., religious holidays, competitive sports) or unforeseen events (e.g., physical or emotional illness). If these circumstances befall you, please notify the instructor by email as soon as possible. If the instructor grants a concession, the test will be excused and the student’s grade will be determined by performance on all of the other assignments. If the student provides acceptable documentation from an appropriate authority within 7 days of the due date, the instructor will approve the concession. Otherwise, approval is at the instructor’s discretion. If a student fails to complete an assignment on time and does not receive a concession, the student will receive a 0 for that assignment.
 - **Examination Materials.** Students may not use books, calculators, electronic devices (including smart phones) or any other aids tests, except their UW student card, pens, pencils, and erasers. Drinking containers are also permitted. Students need to bring pens, pencils and erasers to examinations. The instructor will not provide pencils or erasers to students. Students must have their UW student card available during exams for identification. Examinations need not be text-processed.
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University Policies

- **Religious Holidays.** Students may choose not to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religion, but they must notify their instructors at least two weeks in advance. The instructor will then provide a concession. A list of religious holidays can be found at: <http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/important-notes.pdf> .
 - **Lecture Cancellation.** When it is necessary to cancel a class due to exceptional circumstances, instructors will make every effort to inform you via uwinnipeg email, as well as the departmental assistant and Chair/Dean so that class cancellation forms can be posted outside classrooms. Class make-up days are scheduled at the end of term for courses that conflict with holidays.
 - **Misconduct and Appeals.** Students should be familiar with the Regulations and Policies section of the Course Calendar dealing with academic regulations and policies, including Senate appeals and academic misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, cheating) <http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/regulationsandpolicies.pdf>.
 - **Avoiding Academic Misconduct.** Uploading essays and other assignments to essay vendor or trader sites (filesharing sites that are known providers of essays for use by others who submit them to instructors as their own work) involves “aiding and abetting” plagiarism. Students who do this can be charged with Academic Misconduct.
 - **Avoiding Copyright Violation.** Course materials are owned by the instructor who developed them. Examples of such materials are course outlines, assignment
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descriptions, lecture notes, test questions, and presentation slides. Students who upload these materials to filesharing sites, or in any other way share these materials with others outside the class without prior permission of the instructor/presenter, are in violation of copyright law and University policy. Students must also seek prior permission of the instructor /presenter before photographing or recording slides, presentations, lectures, and notes on the board.

- **Respect.** All students, faculty and staff have the right to participate, learn and work in an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. The UW Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy may be found online at www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect
 - **Disabilities.** Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 204-786-9771 or accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca to discuss appropriate options. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>
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