**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**PSYC 341: THE SELF**

**FALL 2021**

**TUESDAY 9:45-11:00 & THURSDAY 8:15-9:30 (Z1/Z2)**

**Instructor:** Erika Koch, Ph.D. **Phone:** 867-3950

**Email:** ekoch@stfx.ca **Office:** Nicholson Annex 108

**Office hours:** Mondays 11:15-12:00; 1:00-2:00; Tuesdays 11:15-12:00; 1:00-1:45; Wednesdays 9:45-12:00 (or by appointment)

**\*Masks are required** until further notice.

**Web site:** <http://people.stfx.ca/ekoch>

**Required readings:** Although the structure and some course content draw from the book *The Self* (Sedikides & Spencer, 2007), this course has **no required textbook.** Required **readings** are available on [Moodle](https://moodle.stfx.ca/login/index.php). (See p. 6.) The new book *The Self Explained* is on reserve at the library as an **optional** resource.

**Course prerequisites:** 6 credits of PSYC at the 200 level; PSYC 240/250 (Social Psychology) is

strongly **recommended.**

# COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to explore theory and research on the Self within social psychology. The overarching question that the course aims to address is “How do people view themselves, and how do those self-views relate to emotions and behavior?” We will address a variety of self-relevant questions that do not have “right” or “wrong” answers. Your goal in this course should be to evaluate critically the evidence for different perspectives. Course topics include the structure of the self, self-esteem, narcissism, social exclusion, relationships, and culture. Class will involve both lecture and discussion. Students will write brief thought papers designed to spark discussion of readings. The course will culminate in an APA-style research proposal.

# COURSE OBJECTIVES

* To engage in critical discussions of contemporary topics on the Self in psychology.
* To reflect upon existing research and propose future research on a Self topic of interest.
* To become proficient at thoroughly reading and critically evaluating psychological research.
* To enhance written and oral communication skills.
* To connect concepts learned across various subfields in psychology.

# COURSE FORMAT

Classes will include lecture, discussion, and activities. Class attendance is your responsibility, and you must attend class if you expect to succeed in this course. However, please do **not** attend class if you are ill or otherwise required to self-isolate. If you choose to provide documentation of an absence, all documentation of absences should go to Lianne Campbell in the Office of the Associate Dean, Academic Affairs ([ada@stfx.ca](mailto:ada@stfx.ca)). If you must miss class, please do not ask me for class notes. **I do not give out class notes.** I recommend that you obtain notes from a classmate. I will be happy to answer specific questions about class notes once you have obtained them. During class, I encourage you to ask questions about concepts that are unclear, or to share examples that you think are relevant. Outside of class, I encourage you to meet with me during office hours (or set an appointment) to discuss any questions or concerns. **Email** is the best way to contact me outside of class. \*Please refer to page 4 of this syllabus for information on appropriate email communication.

The course materials are designed for use in PSYC 341 at St. Francis Xavier University and are the property of the instructor, unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Copying this material for distribution, online posting, or selling of this material to third parties without permission is subject to Canadian Copyright Law and is strictly prohibited.

# CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

I expect that each of you will respect your classmates and me by arriving to class on time, ready to listen and participate. Please turn **off** your phones when you arrive to class, and be sure to put away all phones and other personal devices (e.g., tablets). Devoting class time to non-academic activities such as texting or listening to music is disruptive and creates a negative impression of the students engaging in such activities. In addition, please do not disrupt the class by carrying on private conversations during class time.

# DEPARTMENT LAPTOP POLICY

Students who wish to use a laptop during class time must seek permission from the instructor in advance. If permission is granted, please note that your laptop is to be used only for note-taking, not recreational purposes (e.g., Facebook, web-surfing). Non-academic use of laptops might distract some of your classmates. Inappropriate classroom laptop usage will result in laptop privileges being revoked.

# EXAM AND QUIZ POLICY

Check the course schedule on your syllabus **before** making travel plans (e.g., purchasing airline tickets); exams and quizzes will **not**be rescheduled in the event that they conflict with such travel plans or other personal events. Quizzes and exams will be rescheduled on the basis of valid and documented excuses (e.g., illness, personal emergency) only. I reserve the right to administer a unique quiz or exam for any make-up.

In cases where you miss a quiz, please inform me of the absence and the reason for your absence as soon as possible prior to the quiz. Make-up quizzes will be given only if the quiz was missed for medical or other legitimate reasons. In cases where a quiz has been missed, a make-up quiz must be written within **seven** **(7)** calendar days following the date of the missed quiz. If the quiz cannot be written within this period for medical or other legitimate reasons, the final cumulative grade will be pro-rated.

In cases where you miss a Registrar-scheduled Final exam, you must report the absence and the reason for the absence to the Dean’s Office. In these cases, the Dean’s Office will inform your professors of the absence. A make-up exam will be required within a time frame specified by the Dean’s Office.

## PAPERS

You will receive additional information in class and on Moodle.

Thought papers: You are required to submit a minimum of **three** brief (i.e., at least **one** full page but not more than **two** pages) Thought Papers. These short papers have several purposes: 1) to ensure that students complete the reading, 2) to stimulate critical thinking in preparation for discussion, and 3) to sharpen writing skills. You will have **four** opportunities to submit Thought Papers. Thus, you may write four papers (which I **highly** recommend!) and drop your lowest grade, or you may opt to skip one paper. Thought papers are due at the **beginning** of class; Moodle will not allow submissions after class begins.

Final paper: To apply what you learn about the social psychology of the Self while considering directions for future research on the Self, you will write a formal research proposal. The final paper is due **December 1 at 4:00pm**.

# UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

St. Francis Xavier values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of such academic offences as plagiarism, cheating, tampering, and falsification under the St. Francis Xavier University Policy on Academic Integrity. You are responsible for knowing and following this policy; please refer to the *Academic Calendar* (section 3.8) for details. You may find this site helpful: <https://www.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/academic-integrity>

**I WILL NOT TOLERATE PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING OF ANY SORT.** The University’s *Academic Calendar* (section 3.8) notes that “Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of another’s work—whether ideas or words… as one’s own,” and that cheating includes “sharing papers” and “collaboration… on an assignment which an instructor did not specify was to be completed collaboratively.” Any student found to have plagiarized or cheated will be reported to the Chair of the Psychology Department, the Registrar’s office, and—when appropriate—the Academic Discipline Committee.

# GRADING

Grades will be based on the scale presented below. You may wish to record your grades here. Your final grade will be based **ONLY** on these elements. Please do **NOT** contact me once the course is complete to ask for an “extra assignment” to boost your grade.

**Assignment Value Grade**

Midterm quiz 20%

Final paper 30%

Final exam 35%

Thought papers 15%

**DEPARTMENTAL POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Please submit all papers through the designated assignment portals in **Moodle** as **WORD** documents; other formats are not acceptable. Students will be penalized **5%** for each calendar day that a final paper is late. Once 10 days after the due date have passed, a mark of **zero** will be assigned. Only valid excuses, such as illness or personal emergency (for which you must provide documentation though the Dean’s office), can effect a renegotiation of the due date with the professor. Note that technical failures, computer crashes, etc. are not valid excuses for failing to turn assignments in on time, nor are they valid excuses for turning in substandard work. **Back up your work!**

**APPROPRIATE EMAIL COMMUNICATION**

You are expected to maintain a working St. FX email account; please check on that account regularly to ensure that it is not “full.” Important notices may be sent to these email addresses. Writing to a course instructor is not the same as writing to a friend. Although the communication is not on paper, email still means that you are communicating with others who deserve consideration and respect. In addition, you may be expected to use email in future employment situations, and it might be helpful to develop good habits now. The guidelines below are NOT listed in order of priority but in the order in which you would need the information while writing an email or other electronic message.

1. Please do not email questions about the course that could easily be answered by referring to the syllabus or other course materials.
2. Please do not email requests for your grades, as email is not secure.
3. When writing an email, please write something in the “subject” line. If your email is about a specific topic, write the name of it (e.g., “normal distribution question”). I am likely to assume that an email without a subject line is spam and consequently may delete it.
4. Begin the communication with a salutation such as “Dear Dr. Koch.”
5. Use proper English. Write complete sentences, which include the correct use of capital letters to begin a sentence and a period to end a sentence. Every email message should be properly spelled and punctuated, and it should be grammatically correct. A poorly written and misspelled message reflects poorly on the author.
6. Do **not** write in all capital letters or all lower-case letters.
7. Delineate separate ideas by using paragraphs.
8. RE-READ the message before sending and check for spelling errors, poor grammar, unclear sentences, or other organizational errors that happened during the first draft.
9. Sign the communication with **your first and last name** and the course in which you are enrolled. It is helpful (though optional) to have your email address and ID number underneath your name.
10. Politeness is important even in email. Demands such as “write back” are unnecessary and even rude. If your message requires a response, I will respond at my earliest convenience.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

*Note*: The following is a tentative schedule. Readings are due on the date assigned, and Thought Papers are due **at the beginning of class**. Class topics and order are subject to change. However, **quiz** and **exam** dates and **paper** due dates will not change, except under unusual circumstances such as class cancellations due to inclement weather.

Readings are listed by their authors. Please refer to the reading list (page 6 of this syllabus) for information on where to find these readings.

\* = Thought Paper due and class discussion

## DATE TOPIC READING/ASSIGNMENT

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tues., Sept. 6 Thurs., Sept. 8 | Introduction to the Self | *optional:* Jordan & Zanna, 2000 |
| Tues., Sept. 13 | Research Methods |  |
| \*Thurs., Sept. 15 | Conceptualization of the Self | Leary, 2004 |
| Tues., Sept. 20  \*Thurs., Sept. 22 | Implicit self-esteem | Lannoy et al., 2020 |
| Tues., Sept. 27 | Autobiographical memory |  |
| Thurs., Sept. 29 | Self and social comparison |  |
| Tues., Oct. 4  \*Thurs., Oct. 6 | Narcissism | Gu et al., 2021 |
| Tues., Oct. 11 | Self in non-human animals |  |
| **Thurs., Oct. 13** | **MIDTERM QUIZ** | **will cover all course material thus far** |
| Tues., Oct. 18  Thurs., Oct. 20 | Self-regulation |  |
| Tues., Oct. 25  Thurs., Oct. 27 | Self-conscious emotions |  |
| Tues., Nov. 1  Thurs., Nov. 3 | Self-esteem |  |
| **Tues., Nov. 8**  **Thurs., Nov. 10** | **FALL STUDY BREAK – NO CLASSES** |  |
| \*Tues., Nov. 15 | Self-esteem (continued) | Vonk et al., 2019 |
| Thurs., Nov. 17 | Self in relationships |  |
| Tues., Nov. 22  Thurs., Nov. 24 | Self and social exclusion |  |
| Tues., Nov. 29  **Thurs., Dec. 1** | Self and culture | **Final paper due 4:00pm** |
| Tues., Dec. 6 | Wrap-up/review |  |
| **TBA** | **FINAL EXAM** | **will cover all course material** |

**Readings List**

Readings are listed below in alphabetical order—not in the order in which we will cover them. Be sure to complete the correct reading assigned for class! All readings are available on the course Moodle site. As a backup, readings below are also available through other sources. Articles available through PsycINFO (via the library’s web site) are denoted with a “Ψ” next to their citation.

Ψ Gu, Z., He, Y., Liu, L., Liang, Y., Huang, L., Dang, J., Wei, C., Liu, Z., & Su, Q. (2021). How does narcissism influence corruption? The moderating role of boredom. *Personality and Individual Differences, 183*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2021.111149

Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (2000) How to read a journal article in social psychology. In C. Stangor (Ed.), *Stereotypes and prejudice: Essential readings* (pp. 457-466). Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

direct link: <http://www.uvm.edu/~dguber/POLS234/articles/read.htm>

\**Note*: This assigned article is an optional resource; please do not write a Thought Paper on this article.

Ψ Lannoy, S., Chatard, A., Selimbegovic, L., Tello, N., Van der Linden, M., Heeren, A., & Billieux, J. (2020). Too good to be cautious: High implicit self-esteem predicts self-reported dangerous mobile phone use. *Computers in Human Behavior, 103*, 208–213. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.09.018

*reserve* Leary, M. R. (2004). *The curse of the self: Self-awareness, egotism, and the quality of human life* (pp. 3-24). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

\**Note*: The above page numbers refer to Chapter 1; please read only this chapter.

Ψ Vonk, R., Radstaak, M., de Heus, P., & Jolij, J. (2019). Ironic effects of feedback on contingency of self-worth: Why self-reports of contingency are biased. *Self and Identity, 18*(2), 183–200. https://doi-org.libproxy.stfx.ca/10.1080/15298868.2017.1406400