

## PSYC 490: APPLIED SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Spring Semester 2023

### PROFESSOR INFORMATION

Name: Mark A. Ferguson, Ph.D.  
Email: [mark.ferguson@uwsp.edu](mailto:mark.ferguson@uwsp.edu)  
Office: SCI D331 (or via Zoom)  
Hours: MW 8-8:45am, M 10-11:30am,  
or by appointment

### COURSE INFORMATION

Section/Credits: 2/3  
Meetings/Location: Asynchronous online  
Prerequisites: PSYC 110, 200, 300  
(or SOC 351), & 22  
PSYC credits

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of theory and research in applied social psychology. Whereas social psychology is the systematic study of the causes and effects of social group membership, applied social psychology attempts to use this knowledge to help improve practical problems in the real world. In sum, applied social psychology is the use of social psychological research to design and implement psychological interventions for the betterment of society. This course will begin with an overview of the field of applied social psychology and the process of developing interventions to solve practical problems. It next focuses on research in three major subareas within the field: business (organizations, consumers, and the environment), healthcare (health, exercise/sports, and mental health), and policy (education, criminal justice, and diversity). The focus will be on thinking about how to use theory to solve problems in the world, as well as on examining published intervention studies whenever possible.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

After taking this course, students will be able to...

- Use social psychological concepts and theories to analyze practical problems
- Design social psychological interventions to help address practical problems
- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions for addressing practical problems

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Buunk, A. P., Dijkstra, P., & Van Vugt, M. (2021). *Applying social psychology: From problems to solutions* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Gruman, J. A., Schneider, F. W., & Coutts, L. (2017). *Applied social psychology: Understanding and addressing social and practical problems* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

### REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

This course is administered fully online through the [Canvas website](#). In Canvas, you will review course materials, participate in discussions, and submit assignments. To access Canvas, you will need a web browser or the Canvas Student mobile app for [Apple iOS](#) or [Google Android](#) devices. All options require your UWSP login and password. For Canvas operating system and browser requirements, [please review this website](#). If you would like to learn more about how to use Canvas features (such as quizzes), [please see this website](#). If you need technical support, contact Canvas Support directly by clicking on the Help button in Canvas.

**COURSE CALENDAR**

| <b>Section</b>           | <b>Module</b>          | <b>Readings</b>     | <b>Assignments</b>                           | <b>Due</b>     |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|----------------|
| <b><i>Overview</i></b>   | Introduction           | Gruman 1 & Buunk 1  | Discussion 1                                 | SU 1/29        |
|                          | Theory and Methods     | Gruman 2 & 3        | Discussion 2                                 | SU 2/5         |
|                          | Interventions          | Gruman 4 & Buunk 2  | Discussion 3                                 | SU 2/12        |
|                          | <b>Focus Week 1</b>    | <b>None</b>         | <b>Topic Summary</b>                         | <b>SU 2/19</b> |
| <b><i>Business</i></b>   | Organizations          | Gruman 10 & Buunk 3 | Discussion 4                                 | SU 2/26        |
|                          | Consumer Behavior      | Steg 5              | Discussion 5                                 | SU 3/5         |
|                          | Sustainability         | Gruman 13 & Buunk 4 | Discussion 6                                 | SU 3/12        |
|                          | <b>Focus Week 2</b>    | <b>None</b>         | <b>Midterm Exam &amp; Introduction Draft</b> | <b>SU 3/19</b> |
| <b><i>Healthcare</i></b> | Health                 | Gruman 8 & Buunk 5  | Discussion 7                                 | SU 4/2         |
|                          | Sports                 | Gruman 6            | Discussion 8                                 | SU 4/9         |
|                          | Mental Health          | Gruman 5 & Buunk 6  | Discussion 9                                 | SU 4/16        |
|                          | <b>Focus Week 3</b>    | <b>None</b>         | <b>Method &amp; Results Draft</b>            | <b>SU 4/23</b> |
| <b><i>Policy</i></b>     | Education              | Gruman 9 & 16       | Discussion 10                                | SU 4/30        |
|                          | Criminal Justice       | Gruman 11           | Discussion 11                                | SU 5/7         |
|                          | Diversity              | Gruman 14           | Discussion 12                                | SU 5/14        |
|                          | <b>Final Exam Week</b> | <b>None</b>         | <b>Final Exam &amp; Final Proposal</b>       | <b>SU 5/21</b> |

The first two week's readings are found on Canvas to give you time to get your books. The Gruman and Steg readings are in your books; the Steg reading is on Canvas. Assignments are due by the posted deadlines (Sundays at 11:59pm). There is a 24-hour grace period after due dates, which means late submissions in this window will be accepted without penalty. This calendar is subject to revision. Any changes will be announced on Canvas or via email.

## GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

### Online Discussion

There will be 12 graded discussion forums in this course. For each forum, you will be required to post twice—once with your response to the discussion prompt, and a second time in response to another student’s response (by Sundays at 11:59pm). You are welcome to post more than twice, but there is no extra credit for doing so. You will receive an overall score for your first two posts in a week. Although you are only required to post in 10 forums, you are encouraged to post in all 12 (any higher scores will replace lower scores in other forums). Discussions will be worth 30 points each for a total of 300 points (30% of your final grade).

### Intervention Proposal

There will be an intervention proposal project in this course. It will detail a social-psychological intervention to help improve a practical problem in society. Proposals will be completed in small groups and will include an introduction, planned method, and expected results section. There will be four interim deadlines and peer evaluations of all group members. Project submissions will be worth a total of 400 points (40% of your final grade).

### Essay Exams

This course will include two essay exams. For each exam, you will select four-of-the-six essay questions and type your responses to them on a computer. The questions generally consist of two parts and focus on analysis and/or application of course materials to everyday examples. Exams will be worth 150 points each for a total of 300 points (30% of your final grade).

## GRADING SCALE

| Components                     | Points     | %         |
|--------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| <b>Total for Intervention</b>  | <b>400</b> | <b>40</b> |
| – Introduction Draft           | 100        | 10        |
| – Method & Results Draft       | 100        | 10        |
| – Final Draft                  | 200        | 20        |
| <b>Total for Discussion</b>    | <b>300</b> | <b>30</b> |
| – Participation (Modules 1-12) | 300        | 30        |
| <b>Total for Exams</b>         | <b>300</b> | <b>30</b> |
| – Midterm (Covers Modules 1-6) | 150        | 15        |
| – Final (Covers Modules 7-12)  | 150        | 15        |

| Grade | Points   | %      |
|-------|----------|--------|
| A     | 930-1000 | 93-100 |
| A-    | 900-929  | 90-92  |
| B+    | 870-899  | 87-89  |
| B     | 830-869  | 83-86  |
| B-    | 800-829  | 80-82  |
| C+    | 770-799  | 77-79  |
| C     | 730-769  | 73-76  |
| C-    | 700-729  | 70-72  |
| D+    | 670-699  | 67-69  |
| D     | 600-669  | 60-66  |
| F     | 599-000  | 59-00  |

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Communication**

Our communication in this course will occur through digital methods. If you want to contact me with a private matter (such as your course grades), you can send an email. I generally respond to emails within 48 hours (excluding weekends or holidays). You can also visit in-person office hours or make an appointment (in-person or online). Conversely, if you need to contact me about a public matter (such as asking a question about the project), you can post in the Questions discussion forum on Canvas (see the Course Overview module). This allows everyone to ask questions, answer questions, and review answers.

### **Disabilities**

UWSP is committed to reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition where you need assistance, please contact the Disability Resource Center. [Check out their website](#) for more information.

### **Extensions**

Extensions will generally only be considered for students who cannot complete assignments on time due to academic, athletic, military, or religious obligations, major illnesses, and comparable reasons. Requests for extensions might require documentation, such as letters from coaches or physicians. In most cases, assignments will need to be completed within one week of the initial deadline to receive credit.

### **Incompletes**

Incomplete grades will only be considered for students in exceptional situations, such as serious medical and emergency situations. They are not for students who feel overwhelmed by routine academic or extracurricular commitments. Requests for incompletes must be accompanied by documentation. In most cases, all coursework must be completed within one regular semester (fall or spring) to avoid receiving an automatic F in the course.

### **Misconduct**

The professor takes all academic misconduct (such as cheating and plagiarism) seriously. The minimum penalty for each instance of misconduct will be a zero for the assignment. Additional penalties will be considered under university policy. Please do not put yourself or others through disciplinary hearings. To read about UWSP's policies, check out the [Dean of Students' website](#).

### **Netiquette**

In an online course, a majority of our communication takes place in the discussion forums. Our primary means of communication here is written. The written language has many advantages: more opportunity for reasoned thought, more ability to go in-depth, and more time to think about an issue before posting a comment. Still, written communication also has some disadvantages, such a lack of face-to-face signaling that occurs via body language, intonation, pausing, facial expressions, and gestures. Accordingly, please be aware of the possibility of miscommunication and compose your comments in a positive, supportive, and constructive manner. You can learn more at [this netiquette website](#).

## **Safety and Reporting**

UW-Stevens Point is committed to the promotion of safe, inclusive, and productive campuses—where people from all backgrounds and perspectives can actively and comfortably contribute to our learning communities. Thus, under federal and state laws, as well as university policies, the professor is required to report acts of an offensive or criminal nature that occur inside or outside of class. This includes acts of sexual harassment and assault, bias and hate crimes, illicit drug use, and violence. Disclosure or description of such incidents, past or current, may be reported to the [Dean of Students](#) and local authorities. If you would like to report incidents anonymously, please review the options on the [Dean of Students' website](#).