

**Sociology 3020, Social Psychology**  
**Fall 2014**  
**Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1:00 - 1:50pm**  
**Dixie State University**

**Matthew Smith-Lahrman, Instructor**  
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**Office Hours:** Monday - Friday 11:00am - 12:00pm

**The Course:**

Sociology is the study of human social interaction and structure. Psychology is the study of individuals and individual behavior. Social Psychology, then, is the study of individual behaviors, their relationships to social interaction and structure, and the influences of interaction and structure on individual behavior. We will see that social psychologists go about understanding behaviors in a systematic fashion via empirical observations - they are scientists. By the end of the course you will have an understanding of people as symbol using creatures with selves, of symbols as the creations of humans with each other, and of society as the result of a multitude of meaningful human interactions.

**Course Objectives:**

Students completing social psychology should:

- demonstrate an ability to identify the ideas, people, and events that are generally thought to be important by social psychologists;
- demonstrate an understanding of social psychology as a scientific discipline (i.e. the gathering and analyzing of empirical data in a systematic fashion);
- demonstrate an understanding of symbolic interactionism as a major theoretical perspective of a sociological social psychology;
- demonstrate an understanding of objects, symbols, self, mind, and society as the major concepts used by symbolic interactionists for understanding human behaviors;
- demonstrate and ability to apply the above symbolic interactionist concepts to specific empirical arenas.

**Texts:**

Charon, Joel M. *Symbolic Interactionism*. Prentice Hall.

O'Brien, Jodi. *The Production of Reality*. Pine Forge Press.

**Evaluation:**

Grades will be based on four Field Essays and three Content Essays each worth 13% of your final grade. Attendance worth 9% of your final grade.

**Field Essays:**

You will write four Field Essays in which you will apply concepts from our readings and class discussions to observations you make of the "real world." I will make available a Field Essay assignment on September 5; your essays are due in class on September 19, October 15, November 12, and December 15.

LATE ESSAYS WILL BE MARKED DOWN ONE FULL GRADE.

**Content Essays:**

You will write three Content Essays based exclusively on concepts from our readings and class discussions. I will make available Content Essay assignments on September 22, October 29, and December 5. Essays are due on September 29, November 5, and December 12.

LATE ESSAYS WILL BE MARKED DOWN ONE FULL GRADE.

**Attendance:**

I will take role every day. If you are here for 90% or more of the classes, you'll receive an 'A,' 80% or more you'll receive a 'B,' 70% or more you'll receive a 'C,' 60% or more you'll receive a 'D.' If your are here for less than 60% of the attendances you'll fail this portion of your grade.

NOTE: I reserve the right to (a) adjust individual grades based on my evaluation of your participation and enthusiasm in the course and (b) make changes to the syllabus during the course if I feel it will benefit the class.

ANOTHER NOTE: You must complete all essays to pass this class.

ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE POLICY: Academic dishonesty in any form, including, but not limited to, plagiarism on written assignments, submitting other person's work as one's own, and cheating on exams or quizzes will not be tolerated at Dixie State College of Utah.

Teachers at Dixie State College of Utah have the right to manage their classroom environments to ensure a good learning climate.

Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring reasonable academic adjustment, accommodations, or auxiliary aids to be successful in this class will need to contact the DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER Coordinator (Baako Wahabu) for eligibility determination. Proper documentation of impairment is required in order to receive services or accommodations. Visit or call 652-7516 to

schedule appointment to discuss the process. DRC Coordinator determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

Important class and college information will be sent to your dmail email account. This information includes your DSC bill, financial aid/scholarship notices, notification of dropped classes, reminders of important dates and events, and other information critical to your success in this class and at DSC. All DSC students are automatically assigned a dmail email account. If you do not know your user name and password, go to [www.dixie.edu](http://www.dixie.edu) and select "dmail" for complete instructions. You will be held responsible for information sent to your dmail email, so please check it often.

### Course Schedule

#### Week & Topics

#### Readings

##### Week #1

August 25-29

Review of Sociology

##### Week #2

September 1-5

Perspectives

Realities and Truths

Charon, Ch. 1

O'Brien, "What is

Real?," 1, & 3

**No School, Monday, September 1**

**Field Essay Assignment available, Friday, September 5**

##### Week #3

September 8-12

Perspectives of Social Science

The Perspective of Symbolic Interactionism

Charon, Chs. 2 & 3

##### Week #4

September 15-19

The Meaning of Symbols

The Importance of the Symbol

Charon, Chs. 4 & 5

**Field Essay #1 Due, Friday, September 19**

##### Week #5

September 22-26

Humans as Symbol Using Creatures

O'Brien, "Shared

Meaning as the Basis of

Humanness," 7 & 9

**Content Essay #1 Assignment available, Monday, September 22**

##### Week #6

September 29-October 3

The Self

Charon, Ch. 6

**Content Essay #1 Due, Monday, September 29**

##### Week #7

October 6-10

Social Selves

O'Brien, 11, 12, & 18

Week #8

October 13-17

Mind

Charon, Ch. 7

**Field Essay #2 Due, Wednesday, October 15**

**No School, Friday, October 17**

Week #9

October 20-24

Taking the Role of the Other

Charon, Ch. 8

O'Brien, 22

Week #10

October 27-31

Human Action

Social Interaction

Charon, Chs. 9 & 10

**Content #2 Assignment available, Wednesday, October 29**

Week #11

November 3-7

Social Order

O'Brien, "Meaning is  
Negotiated through  
Interaction," 20, 23, &  
27

**Content Essay #2 Due, Wednesday, November 5**

Week #12

November 10-14

Society

Erving Goffman

Charon, Chs. 11 & 12

**Field Essay #3 Due, Wednesday, November 12**

Week #13

November 17-21

Social Construction of Reality

O'Brien, "Building and  
Breaching Reality," &  
31

Week #14

November 24-28

Ambiguity, Complexity, and Conflict

O'Brien, "Boundaries  
and Contradictions," &  
39

**No School, Wednesday, November 26 or Friday, November 28**

Week #15

December 1-5

Studies and Applications of Symbolic Interactionism

Charon, Ch. 13

**Make Content Essay #3 Assignment available, Friday, December 5**

Week #16

December 8-12

**Content Essay #3 Due, Friday, December 12**

Last Class, Friday, December 12

Monday, December 15

Field Essay #4 Due *No Later Than* 3:00pm