SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY I

1. Introduction and Objectives

This course introduces you to "micro" level perspectives on analyzing and conducting behavioral science research. This course focuses primarily on the field of social psychology, a basic disciplinary field that addresses phenomena and research questions across a vast array of topics that are relevant for management.

The course has four goals:

• Develop your ability to think about research from a psychological, micro-level perspective.
• Make you think about how to evaluate, conduct, and apply behavioral research, in particular experimental research.
• Survey the main topics in social psychology, with a particular focus on classic papers. However, each week will also include new developments and/or applied papers to see how ideas presented in classic papers have developed and evolved over time.
• Provide an opportunity to develop and test ideas for your research from a micro-level behavioral science perspective.

We will pursue these goals by examining a mix of theoretical and empirical research papers, thinking critically about their strengths and limitations, and creating a forum for you to test your ideas relating to your specialized areas of study.

2. Evaluation

Grades will be based on two requirements. They are outlined below and will be discussed in more detail in class.
1) **Class Discussions and Short Assignments (50%).** Students are expected to read all the assigned materials and take an active role in discussing them. Your role in advancing and elevating the discourse in the class will be a substantial component of your grade.

Students should examine the assigned readings before the session and allocate them. Each student is thus responsible for leading the discussion on a subset of these papers in each class session. Non-leaders provide additional comments, insights, and reactions.

The discussion leader:

1. Provides a short synopsis of the main argument and findings, and why they are interesting and important.
2. Critically reflects on whether the provided theoretical framework is consistent, whether the data actually support the authors’ claims, and what could be improved (e.g., in the theory, construct validity, internal validity, external validity, appropriateness of analyses, sample, sample size, etc.).
3. Develops some ideas for future research on the respective topic area.
4. Prepares questions to lead the discussion about this article in class. For example:

   1. **Questions about empirical papers**
      a. Understanding the argument/data
         i. What is the phenomenon from the "real-world"? What are the main variables involved?
         ii. What is the causal mechanism underlying the phenomenon?
         iii. What are possible boundary conditions?
      b. Criticizing the argument/data
         i. What are the methodological strengths and weaknesses of the paper?
         ii. How would you take the following steps to address those weaknesses?
      c. Where do the papers’ ideas fit with those of the other readings?
   2. **Questions about theoretical papers**
      a. What is the central problem or issue addressed?
      b. What are the main variables involved?
      c. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the paper?
      d. How would you take the following steps to address those weaknesses?
      e. Where do the papers’ ideas fit with those of the other readings?

Although we will mainly discuss required readings in class, we could also cover optional readings or those referring to cultural differences.

One day before the beginning of each session, all students will send via email a very brief summary of the assigned readings. These summaries can highlight each paper’s main ideas, arguments, strengths, and weaknesses and provide a broader commentary on their assumptions, similarities/differences, and contributions.

2) **Final paper (50%).** At the end of the course, you will need to write a research proposal that culminates in testable research hypotheses.

1. Write up your *Introduction* as if it were an empirical paper (around 6-11 pages double spaced). Be sure to define the central question or issue that you’re addressing. Draw
your arguments from prior research whenever possible. Explicitly state your hypotheses.

2. Outline the Methods you would use to test your hypotheses. Focus on feasible and rapid data collection and analyses.

3. Write up a potential Discussion (3-6 pages double spaced). Describe what you would learn if your hypotheses were supported. Identify the potential weaknesses of the research if all hypotheses were supported. Lay out limitations and future directions.

4. Make sure your paper is understandable to an audience of intelligent academics who may know nothing about your discipline or specific area of study.

3. Syllabus

Session 1: Social Influence

Required Readings:


Optional Readings:


Cultural differences

Session 2: Social Cognition

*Required readings*


*Optional readings*


*Cultural differences*


Session 3: Motivation

*Required readings*


**Optional readings**


**Cultural differences**


**Session 4: Emotion**

**Required readings**


**Optional readings**


**Cultural differences**


**Session 5: Control**

**Required readings**


**Optional readings**


**Cultural differences**


**Session 6: Groups and Teams**

**Required readings**


**Optional readings**


**Cultural differences**


**Session 7: Culture**

**Required readings**


**Optional readings**


4. **Professor’s Biography**

Álvaro San Martin is an Associate Professor of the Managing People in Organizations Department at IESE Business School. He holds a Ph.D. degree in Management, with a specialization in Organizational Behavior from INSEAD. Álvaro also majored in Economics as class valedictorian at Universidad Autonoma de Madrid. His research interests lie in cultural psychology and team dynamics. Álvaro has published his work in premier scientific journals, such as *Nature Human Behaviour, Psychological Science, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, and Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, and Nature Communication*. He has regularly presented his research in the annual meetings of Academy of Management, Society for Personality and Social Psychology, American Psychological Society, European Association for Social Psychology, and International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology. Prof. San Martin teaches courses on leadership, organizational behavior, and self-management in the Master in Management, Executive MBA, Open Programs, and Custom Programs offered at IESE.

**Prof. Álvaro San Martin**
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