



**Course title: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY/ INTRODUCCIÓN A
LA PSICOLOGÍA SOCIAL/ (45 lecture hours)**

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Language: Spanish/English

Brief Course Presentation:

Social Psychology is a scientific discipline that seeks to study, from a rigorous scientific perspective, the most common type of behavior among human beings: behavior in interaction with other human beings. We are essentially social beings. Everything we are, think, and feel is based on this fundamental psychosocial matrix that accompanies us throughout our lives. Therefore, the scientific and rigorous analysis of the social context of interaction and the relationships that human beings establish is essential to understanding our behavior, enhancing our abilities, and improving our adaptation to our human environment. The scientific approach to these important topics, as in the rest of Psychology, has only been possible since the late 19th century, and thus a profound and critical analysis of the scientific, social, and historical development of the sciences, and particularly the human sciences, is also necessary.

Objectives:

General Objective:

To introduce students to one of the central pillars of behavioral studies (Psychology): Social Psychology. This will take into account the profound consequences this has at the scientific, academic, cultural, and professional levels (and even, more intimately, at the personal and ethical levels).

Specific Objectives:

- 1) To grasp and assimilate a general approach to Social Psychology.
- 2) To understand and acknowledge the importance and universality of psychosocial interaction.



- 3) To become familiar with basic psychosocial principles and processes.
- 4) To consider in detail the fundamental phenomena of social cognition.
- 5) To analyze and understand the processes of psychosocial influence.
- 6) To acquire general knowledge of techniques related to the above objectives.

Skill Outcomes:

Students will develop Knowledge and understanding of:

- a) To understand the main psychosocial theories.
- b) To understand the models, methods, and concepts specific to the psychosocial approach.
- c) To understand the basic psychosocial processes.
- d) To understand the basic aspects of psychosocial interaction.
- e) To understand the essential elements of social cognition (perception, attributions, attitudes).
- f) To understand the basic processes and aspects of social influence.

Students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills during the course:

- a) To know how to apply learned knowledge to social life.
- b) To know how to translate a psychosocial theory into a research design or psychosocial application.
- c) To know how to use essential psychosocial instruments and techniques.
- d) To know how to interpret the results of a psychosocial intervention and evaluation.
- e) To foster a constructive critical attitude toward theories, methodologies, and procedures, and toward social relations and their relevance in general.
- f) To foster interest in the psychosocial aspects of scientific knowledge in general within Psychology, thanks to the contributions and perspective of Social Psychology.



- g) To review, across the board, the ethical implications arising from the scientific study of psychosocial interaction (including, and beginning with, the norms of interaction and conduct within our subject).

Syllabus:

UNIT 1: WHAT DOES SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY STUDY, AND WHY IS IT SO COMMON AND IMPORTANT?

- Human beings as social animals: biological, psychological, and social bases of our relationships with others.
- Generality and importance of human interaction behavior (the luxury of relationships).
- If it is so common, widespread, and important, why have we only recently begun to address it scientifically? Science, Methodology, and Theories.

UNIT 2: BASIC PSYCHOSOCIAL PROCESSES: SOCIAL FACILITATION, SOCIALIZATION, AND EMOTIONS.

- Social Facilitation: being alone or with others (how this affects my behavior and what I am doing)
- Socialization: we learn almost everything in our relationships with others (rules, language, thought processes, and what is good or bad)
- Emotions: we are both rationality and emotions (if others teach us to manage both, we can prevent visceral reactions and negative emotions from “fake news” from overwhelming us)

UNIT 3: SOCIAL COGNITION (I): SOCIAL PERCEPTION AND CAUSAL ATTRIBUTION.

- The world of human relationships is extremely complex, problematic, and systemic: we are taught to simplify it to continue relating to others.
- Social Perception: first impressions, the initial judgment of others (quick, limited information, focusing on the most salient negative aspects, adaptive). Being good and appearing good.
- Causal Attribution: the use of common sense to explain, especially, the behavior of others. The power of the situation.



UNIT 4: SOCIAL COGNITION (II): ATTITUDES, FORMATION, AND CHANGE

- Attitudes are a predisposition to behave in relation to an object or subject: they involve thought, action, and emotion.
- They are formed in a context of social interaction and are key to the subsequent modification of behaviors (attitude as a predictor of behavior).
- We can change dysfunctional attitudes in order to modify the behaviors derived from or connected to them.

UNIT 5: SOCIAL COGNITION (III): STEREOTYPES, PREJUDICES, AND SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION

- A stereotype is a simplified and schematic view of someone based on their membership in a social group.
- Prejudice is a simplified view, a stereotype, with a negative evaluation of the person and the group.
- Discrimination is inappropriate and negatively biased behavior, derived from prejudice, in a context of dominant majority vs. disadvantaged minority.

UNIT 6: INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS (I): ATTACHMENT AND ATTRACTION

- We exhibit social behavior from birth: the attachment bond between the newborn and their parents.
- We are attracted to others. However, attraction is selective: we are only attracted to those who meet our selection criteria.
- Physical aspects appear first. Psychosocial aspects appear later and are more relevant.

UNIT 7: INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS (II): LOVE AND SEXUALITY

- Love as a more complex form of attraction. We must learn, within a social context, that loving is appropriate behavior and worthwhile.
- Different forms of love: passionate love (tolerance and respect), friendly love, altruistic love, and playful love (a dysfunctional form of love).
- Sexuality as an expression of our relationships and orientations (respect and education in our environment). Threats: sexism, machismo, and abuse.



UNIT 8: ALTRUISM OR PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

- Helping others without expecting anything in return: promoting prosocial behavior in our individualistic and competitive societies.
- The "good" side of the "angel within." Psychosocial factors that inhibit our intentions to help others.
- The struggle between the needs of others and the conflicts among humans. What trends are emerging? Good news in the struggle between good and evil.

UNIT 9: AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

- The propensity for and prevalence of aggression, wars, and conflicts throughout human history.
- Different types of violence and their consequences. Theories to explain why. The "weapon effect" (lethality and psychosocial distancing).
- Reducing aggression: techniques and procedures that haven't worked and what we do know works.

UNIT 10: PROCESSES OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE

- Influence as a universal purpose in human relations. The formation of norms as a framework for the processes of influence and relationship.
- Conformity (how we adapt to norms). The processes of obedience to socially established and recognized authority.
- Other processes of influence today: Group Polarization and Groupthink in information societies, networks, and AI (abundant information, limited accumulated knowledge, and a lack of adequate social reference points).

Methodology:

We will focus on an interactive and participatory review of the operational objectives of each of the proposed units. An essential outline of the most scientifically relevant aspects of each topic will be presented. To encourage interactivity, in addition to student questions, a Continuous Assessment System is proposed, including a brief participation quiz at the end of each class.

Scheduled Activities:



In principle, the development of this introductory Social Psychology course involves the review and monitoring of a series of basic outlines of the topics to be covered, which will be presented in class. Furthermore, a series of assessments (Participation and Analysis Test, and Continuous Assessment Exercises) will be conducted to obtain and provide specific feedback on each student's individual progress in assimilating the material.

Assessment Procedures:

The assessment of course knowledge will be carried out through a Continuous Assessment System consisting of three fundamental elements: a) Participation and Analysis Test at the end of each class; b) Continuous Assessment Exercises, after every three units, for the formative and process-based evaluation of students; c) A final exam covering all the content developed.

Assessment Criteria:

The final grade for the course will be determined by the grade obtained on the Exam (an objective multiple-choice test, where a minimum of 75% correct answers is required to pass; incorrect answers will not be penalized). This grade will be increased if at least 80% of the Participation Tests and Continuous Assessment Exercises have been completed.

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