

PSY 1051: Social Neuroscience
Fall 2017

Tu/Th 2:30-3:45 pm, 116 Cathedral of Learning (Italian Room)

Professor: Dr. Tristen Inagaki
Office: 3101 Sennott Square
Office Hours: by appointment

Email: inagaki@pitt.edu
Phone: 412-624-4211

Course Goals & Key Learning Objectives: Social neuroscience is the study of how social processes and experiences are represented in and influence the structure and function of the brain. This course will focus primarily on functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) studies of humans, though we may also discuss other brain imaging techniques and patient studies.

Our primary goals for the semester are to:

- Understand how the brain responds to and represents social information
- Examine how social psychological theories can be advanced with the use of brain imaging techniques
- Become critical consumers of the methods and conclusions presented in neuroimaging research
- Practice all parts of the research process in psychology, including presenting research findings to a group, discussing articles with colleagues, coming up with study ideas and hypotheses, peer reviewing others' work, and writing a proposal for a research study

We will accomplish these goals primarily through extensive reading of journal articles and discussion of the theories, methods, results, and conclusions presented in the papers. You will demonstrate your mastery of the goals through participation in class discussions, a research presentation, a quiz, and a final paper in which you will write a proposal for a novel social neuroscience research study.

Course Requirements:

Attendance & Participation: Regular attendance and class participation are expected, and will count toward your final grade. This will be quantified in three primary ways:

- **Discussion Seeds:** You will be asked to submit “discussion seeds” based on the assigned reading for each class. These seeds can take different forms: questions you’d like clarified, observations connecting readings to other topics we’ve discussed in the course (or in your previous psychology courses), ideas for future studies based on the reading, etc. Seeds will be scored on a 0-2 scale (0=no seed submitted; 1=seed submitted but only addresses a basic question/issue; 2=seed submitted and shows clear evidence of thoughtful reading and critical thinking). Seeds must be emailed to me by 8:00 AM the day of class, otherwise no credit will be given. You will only be responsible for submitting seeds for 11 of the 19 class periods with assigned reading—which 12 you choose to submit for are up to you. Use the following format for the subject line of your email to me: “Social Neuroscience: Discussion Seed_*Date of Class You Are Submitting For*”.
- **In-Class Activities:** Throughout the semester, we will do a series of “in-class activities” that will be turned in at the end of class for the day. Participation in in-class activities will

be graded on the same scale as discussion seeds (0=no participation; 1=minimal participation, was present but not engaged; 2=substantive participation, was present and made active contributions).

- In-Class Discussion: Discussing ideas with colleagues is a critical (and fun!) part of the scientific process. Therefore, you should be ready to contribute to the discussion taking place in-class throughout the semester.

Methods & Anatomy Quiz: Before we can get into the really fun stuff in social neuroscience, we need to have a basic mastery of the procedures/strengths/weakness of the primary brain imaging techniques, cursory knowledge of study design and analysis approaches for functional MRI studies, and basic neuroanatomy. Your knowledge of these principles is fundamental to understanding the subsequent readings and following class discussion for the course. As such, you will take a quiz to encourage you to fully comprehend and digest the information presented in the first three weeks of class and to demonstrate your knowledge of that information.

Paper Presentation: In order for you to get more exposure to the research in each area without having to do additional reading, you will each be responsible for giving a short (13-15 minute) presentation during class in which you discuss the background, methods, results, conclusions, and your own critiques of a research study. You will select a reading from the “supplemental reading” list provided at the end of the syllabus to present on. This will also give you a chance to practice one of the primary ways we communicate with our colleagues in social neuroscience. Explicit guidelines for the presentation will be provided separately.

Final Paper, Proposal & Manuscript: A final paper will determine the bulk of your grade for this course. The paper will be a proposal for a novel study relating to a topic in social neuroscience of your choosing. To help you hone your idea, and to practice reviewing other people’s ideas, you will first complete a paper proposal that will undergo blind review by one of your classmates and a final review by me, to ensure that you have a well-focused and novel study idea. From there, you will flesh out the idea presented in your proposal into a full manuscript of ~10 pages. Explicit guidelines for the paper will be provided separately.

Grades:

Course requirements will be weighted as follows:

Attendance & Participation:	
Discussion Seeds	10%
In-Class Activities	5%
In-Class Discussion	5%
Methods & Anatomy Quiz:	15%
Paper Presentation:	20%
Paper Proposal:	15%
Final Paper:	30%

Final letter grades correspond to the following values:

A =	94 or higher	C+ =	77-79	F =	0-59
A- =	90-93	C =	74-76		
B+ =	87-89	C- =	70-73		
B =	84-86	D+ =	67-69		
B- =	80-83	D =	60-66		

Course Policies:

Attendance and Participation: Regular attendance and class participation are expected. If you know you will miss a class, please let me know in advance. All students are responsible for the Assigned Readings for each class period. This course will be much more engaging, fun, and fruitful if everyone commits to doing the readings and participating in thoughtful discussion with classmates and the professor. Please show up on time, having done the readings and ready to talk about them!

Laptops: As this is primarily a discussion-based course centered around active participation rather than extensive note-taking, laptops are not permitted (see also Mueller & Oppenheimer (2014) "The Pen is Mightier Than the Keyboard" for evidence that longhand note-taking is more effective than typing). You should plan to print articles and take notes on them directly, which you can bring to class to aid discussion.

Late Assignments: NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS will be accepted, and make-up quizzes will not be given. Students who miss a quiz (without valid documentation) will receive a zero for that exam. If you anticipate difficulty with due dates, please let me know as far in advance as possible.

A Note About Email: Between the hours of 8 AM and 5 PM during the work week, I will do my best to respond to email in a timely fashion. Beyond those hours and especially on weekends, I can't guarantee a response. Please plan accordingly should you have questions about your presentation, paper, exams, etc.

Readings: Social Neuroscience is a relatively new subfield of psychology that is changing and expanding on a daily basis, so no textbooks yet exist! As such, for each class session you will be expected to read 1-3 research articles relevant to the topic we'll be discussing that day. Readings can be downloaded from the course website.

A WORD ABOUT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, improper citations, or misrepresenting your work in any way. Students caught behaving in such a way will receive a "0" on the assignment or an "F" in the class, depending on the extent of the infraction.

Class Calendar		
	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1: Aug 29	Introduction to Social Neuroscience	Overview of Brain Imaging Methods
Week 2: Sept 5	Basics of Experimental Design for fMRI	Basics of Data Analysis for fMRI <i>Discussion of Weisberg article</i>
Week 3: Sept 12	Neuroanatomy	Quiz on Methods/Design/Analysis/Anatomy
Week 4: Sept 19	Social Pain	Social Pleasure I
Week 5: Sept 26	Social Pleasure II	Social Emotions
Week 6: Oct 3	Self-Perception	Mirroring & Mentalizing
Week 7: Oct 10	NO CLASS for Fall Break	NO CLASS: Dr. Inagaki traveling
Week 8: Oct 17	Empathy	Altruism
Week 9: Oct 24	Social Hierarchies	Persuasion
Week 10: Oct 31	Prejudice, Stereotyping, & Discrimination I	Prejudice, Stereotyping, & Discrimination II <i>Draft Proposals Due</i>
Week 11: Nov 7	Peer Review of Research Topics <i>Draft Proposals Reviewed In class</i>	Self-Regulation
Week 12: Nov 14	Morality	Default Mode Network I <i>Final Draft of Proposal Due</i>
Week 13: Nov 21	Default Mode Network II	NO CLASS-Thanksgiving break
Week 14: Nov 28	Cultural Neuroscience	Developmental Social Neuroscience
Week 15: Dec 5	Social Brain Disorders I	Social Brain Disorders II <i>Final Paper Due</i>