

EXAM
CODE **357**

CATALOG
NUMBER **PSYx325**

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Social Psychology

CREDIT
HOURS

3

LEVEL

UPPER

PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 2021

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SECTION ONE

Preparing for the Exam

Before You Choose This UExcel Exam

Uses for the Examination

- Excelsior College, the test developer, recommends granting three (3) semester hours of upper-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination.
- Other colleges and universities also recognize this exam as a basis for granting credit or advanced standing.
- Individual institutions set their own policies for the amount of credit awarded and the minimum acceptable score.

Examinees who have applied to Excelsior College should ask their academic advisor where this exam fits within their degree program.

Examinees **not enrolled** in an Excelsior College degree program should check with the institution from which they wish to receive credit to determine whether credit will be granted and/or to find out the minimum grade required for credit. Those who intend to enroll at Excelsior College should ask an admissions counselor where this exam fits within their intended degree program.

For more information on exam availability and actual testing information, see the [Exam Registration and Information Guide](#).

Examination Length and Scoring

This examination consists of 120 multiple choice and other type questions. You will have two (2) hours to complete the exam. Your score will be reported as a letter grade. Questions are scored either correct (1) or incorrect (0). There is no partial credit. Each credit-bearing exam contains pretest questions, which are embedded throughout the exam. They are indistinguishable from the scored questions. It is to your advantage to do your best on all the questions. Pretest questions are being tried out for use in future versions of the exam.

The UExcel exams do **not** have a fixed grading scale such as A = 90–100%, B = 80–90%, and so forth, as you might have seen on some exams in college courses. Each UExcel test has a scale that is set by a faculty committee and is different for each exam. The process, called standard setting, is described in more detail in the [Technical Handbook](#). Excelsior puts each exam through a standard setting because different test questions have different levels of difficulty. To explain further, getting 70% of the questions right on the exam when the questions are easy does not show the same level of proficiency as getting 70% of questions correct when the questions are hard. Every form of a test (a form contains the test questions) has its own specific grading scale tailored to the particular questions on each exam form.

Please also note that on each form, some of the questions (referred to as pretest questions) count toward the score and some do not; the grading scale applies only to those questions that count toward the score. The area with percentage ratings on the second page of your score report is intended to help identify relative strengths and weaknesses and which content areas to emphasize, should you decide to take the examination again. Your grade

is **based on only the scored questions**. Therefore, the percentage ratings do not necessarily reflect the total percentage that counted toward your grade.

For the best view of the types of questions on this exam, see the sample questions in the back of this guide. Practice, practice, practice!

Score Reporting

For most of our examinations, based on performance, an examinee is awarded a letter grade of A, B, C, or F. A letter grade of D can be given, but credit is awarded for A, B, and C letter grades only. The letter grades reported to examinees indicate that their performance was equivalent to the performance of students who received the same letter grade in a comparable, on-campus course.

More specifically, the letter grade indicates the examinee's proficiency relative to the learning outcomes specified in the exam content guide. Following are general descriptions of examinee performance at each level:

Letter Grade Description

- A Highly Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates an advanced level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- B Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates a good level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- C Marginally Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates a satisfactory level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- D Not Competent (no credit recommended): Examinee's performance demonstrates weak knowledge of the content and minimal skill relative to the learning outcomes.^①
- F Fail (no credit recommended): Examinee's performance demonstrates no knowledge of the content and no skill in the subject relative to the learning outcomes.

Credit is transcripted by Excelsior College for examinees who achieve letter grades of C or higher.

We encourage colleges and universities to use the Excelsior College letter grades of A, B, and C as acceptable standards for awarding credit.

^① In general, two-hour exams do not award a D letter grade.

See page 26, at the back of this content guide, for a sample UExcel Grade Report for Examinations.

Excelsior College Bookstore

The Excelsior College Bookstore offers recommended textbooks and other resources to help you prepare for UExcel exams.

The bookstore is available online at (login required): www.excelsior.edu/bookstore

Excelsior College Library

Library services are available to students enrolled in a degree program at Excelsior College. Created through our partnership with the Sheridan Libraries of The Johns Hopkins University, the library provides access to journal articles, books, websites, databases, reference services, and many other resources. To access the Excelsior College Library, visit www.excelsior.edu/library (login is required). Access to the library is available 24/7.

Take Charge of Your Own Learning

At Excelsior College, independent, self-directed study supported by resources we help you find is not a new concept. We have always stressed to students who take exams that they are acting as their own teacher, and that they should spend as much time studying for an exam as they would spend in a classroom and on homework for a corresponding college course in the same subject area.

Begin by studying the content outline contained in this content guide, at its most detailed level. You will see exactly which topics are covered, and where chapters on those topics can be found in the Recommended Resources. You will see exactly where you might need to augment your knowledge or change your approach.

The content outline, along with the learning outcomes for this exam and recommended textbooks, will serve as your primary resources.

How Long Will It Take Me to Study?

Study for a UExcel exam is comparable to an equivalent college-level course. As an independent

learner, you should study and review as much as you would for the same subject in a campus-based college course. If you already have a background in the subject, you may be able to pass the exam successfully with fewer hours of study. It depends upon the learner as well as the subject, the number of credits (for example, a 6- or 8-credit exam will require more hours of study than a 3-credit exam), and the length of the exam. We strongly encourage you to create a long-term action or study plan, so that you have a systematic approach to prepare for the exam. We've included guidelines for creating such a plan.

How Can I Create an Effective Long-Term Study Plan?

1. Determine the time you will require to complete your preparation for this exam. If you have not studied the subject before, you should plan to budget approximately 45 hours of study time for every credit: 135 hours for 3 credits, 180 hours for 4 credits, 270 hours for 6 credits, and 360 hours for 8 credits. These hours are rules of thumb based on expectations for a student taking a course in the subject; it may take you more or less time, depending on how familiar you are with the material and how easily you absorb the information studying on your own. Aside from the content review, you should then factor in time to search for and use other resources, and to complete any projects and assignments in the study materials that will clarify your understanding of the topics in the content outline (that part in the content guide where the specific areas of study are spelled out). Spend more time on concepts and areas in which you feel you are weak. Totaled, this is approximately the amount of time you should expect to devote to a three-credit, campus-based course. The actual amount of time you require depends on many factors, and will be approximate. If your background is weak, you may need to set aside substantially more than 135–150 hours. If your background is strong, you may budget less time.

Take a few minutes to review the content outline to assess your familiarity with the content. Then, in the space below, write the number of hours you will allocate to complete preparing for the exam.

Hours Required =

2. Determine the time you will have available for study.

In self-study, you need structure, as well as motivation and persistence, and a methodical approach to preparation. There is no set class to keep you on task. You have to do that yourself. Construct a time-use chart to record your daily activities over a one-week period. The most accurate way to do this is to complete the chart on a daily basis to record the actual amount of time you spend eating, sleeping, commuting, working, watching television, caring for others and yourself, reading, and everything else in an adult's life. However, if your schedule is regular, you might prefer to complete the chart in one sitting and, perhaps, by consulting your appointment book or planner.

After you have recorded your activities, you will be ready to schedule study periods around these activities or, perhaps, instead of some of them. In the space below, write the number of hours you will be able to set aside for study each week.

Hours Required =

3. Divide the first number by the second number.

This will give you the number of weeks you will need to set aside for independent study. For example, if you think you will require 170 hours of study and you have 10 hours available to study each week, divide 170 hours by 10 hours and you will get 17. This means that you will need about 17 weeks to complete this course of study. However, you will also need to allow about a week for review and self-testing. Moreover, to be on the safe side, you should also add two weeks to allow for unforeseen obstacles and times when you know you will not be able to study (e.g., during family illnesses or holidays). So, in this case, you should allot a total of 18 to 19 weeks to complete your study.

4. Schedule your examination to coincide with the end of your study period.

For example, if you plan to allow 18 weeks for study, identify a suitable examination date and begin study at least 18 weeks before that date. (The date you begin study assumes that you will have received all of your study materials, particularly textbooks, by that time.)

5. Format a long-term study plan.

You will need to use a calendar, planner, or some other tool to format and track your long-term study plan. Choose a method that is convenient and one that keeps you aware of your study habits on a daily basis. Identify the days and exact hours of each day that you will reserve for study throughout your whole independent study period. Check to see that the total number of hours you designate for study on your long-term study plan adds up to the number of hours you have determined you will need to complete this course of study (Step 1).

6. Record in your long-term study plan the content you plan to cover during each study period.

Enter the session numbers, review, and examination preparation activities you will complete during each study period. While it is suggested that approximately 160–170 hours of study is required for this exam, each and every student may require different timelines based on their comfort with, and comprehension of, the material.

You now have a tentative personal long-term study plan. Keep in mind that you will have to adjust your study plan, perhaps several times, as you study. It is only by actually beginning to work systematically through the material, using the content outline, that you will be able to determine accurately how long you should allow for each unit.

What Learning Strategy Should I Use?

The following guidelines are intended to help you acquire the grounding in the knowledge and skills required for successful completion of this examination.

1. Approach learning with a positive attitude.

Most students are capable of learning subject content if they devote enough time and effort to the task. This devotion will give you a positive edge and a feeling of control.

2. Diligently complete the exact work you specified in your study plan.

Your study plan is being designed for the specific purpose of helping you achieve the learning outcomes for this exam.

3. Be an active learner.

You should actively engage in the learning process. Read critically, take notes, and continuously monitor your comprehension. Keep a written record of your progress, highlight content you find difficult to grasp, and seek assistance from someone in your learning community who can help you if you have difficulty understanding a concept.

4. Be patient: you may not understand everything immediately.

When encountering difficulty with new material, be patient with yourself and don't give up. Understanding will come with time and further study. Sometimes you may need to take a break and come back to difficult material. This is especially true for any primary source material (original letters, documents, and so forth) that you may be asked to read. The content outline will guide you through the material and help you focus on key points. You will find that many concepts introduced in earlier sessions will be explained in more detail in later sessions.

5. Apply your learning to your daily life.

Use insights you gain from your study to better understand the world in which you live. Apply the learning whenever you can. Look for instances that support or contradict your reading on the subject.

6. Accommodate your preferred way of learning.

How do you learn best? Common ways to learn are reading, taking notes and making diagrams, and by listening to someone (on video or live). Others learn by doing. Do any of these descriptions apply to you? Or does your learning style vary with the learning situation? Decide what works for you and try to create a learning environment to accommodate your preferences.

Study Tips

Become an active user of the resource materials. Aim for understanding rather than memorization. The more active you are when you study, the more likely you will be to retain, understand, and apply the information.

The following techniques are generally considered to be active learning:

- **preview or survey** each chapter

- **highlight or underline text** you believe is important
- **write questions or comments** in the margins
- **practice re-stating content** in your own words
- **relate what you are reading** to the chapter title, section headings, and other organizing elements of the textbook
- **find ways to engage** your eyes, your ears, and your muscles, as well as your brain, in your studies
- **study with a partner or a small group**
- **prepare your review notes** as flashcards or create recordings that you can use while commuting or exercising

When you feel confident that you understand a content area, review what you have learned. Take a second look at the material to evaluate your understanding. If you have a study partner, the two of you can review by explaining the content to each other or writing test questions for each other to answer. Review questions from textbook chapters may be helpful for partner or individual study, as well.

Study smart for your UExcel exam! Success starts with establishing a relationship with your advisor.

Using UExcel Practice Exams

The official UExcel practice exams are highly recommended as part of your study plan. They can be taken using any computer with a supported web browser such as Google Chrome.

The practice exam package comes with two sets of questions. Please be aware that there will be fewer questions on the practice exams than there will be on the exam you take for credit. Generally, the practice questions will not be the same as the ones you will see when you take the actual exam for credit. They are intended to expose you to the types of questions you'll encounter in the actual exam. Practice questions are a tool, and do not provide a full exam experience. For example, the practice question sets do not have time limitations. Begin with the Content Guide, especially the detailed content outline. Memorizing specific questions and answers on the practice sets is not as effective as using the questions to practice, along with the content outline, to see which concepts you may need to study further. To register for the practice exam, visit www.excelsior.edu and log into your MyExcelsior

account. **Please note: You must be registered for the corresponding credit-bearing exam before you can register for the practice exam.**

Practice exams are not graded. Rather, they are intended to help you make sure you understand the subject and give you a sense of what the questions will be like on the exam for credit. Ideally, you would check any questions you got wrong, look at the explanations, and go back to the textbook to reinforce your understanding. After taking both forms of the practice exam, you should feel confident in your answers and confident that you know the material listed in the content outline.

Practice exams are one of the most popular study resources. Practice exams are typically shorter than the credit-bearing exam. Since the questions are drawn from the same pool of questions that appear on the credit-bearing exam, what you will see when you sit for the graded exam will be roughly the same. Used as intended, these practice exams will enable you to:

- Review the types of questions you may encounter on the actual exam.
- Practice testing on a computer in a timed environment.
- Practice whenever and wherever it is convenient for you.

Take two different forms of a practice exam within a 180-day period. (We highly recommend that you take the first form of the practice exam as a pretest, early in the study period. Use the results to identify areas to further study and carry out a plan. Then take the second form as a post-test and see how much you have improved.)

Although there is no guarantee, our research suggests that exam takers who do well on the practice exams are more likely to pass the actual exam than those who do not take advantage of the opportunity. Note that since the practice exams are not graded (calibrated) the same way as the scores on the credit-bearing exam, it will be hard for you to use the practice exams as a way to predict your score on the credit-bearing exam. The main purpose of the practice exams is for you to check your knowledge and to become comfortable with the types of questions you are likely to see in the actual, credit-bearing exam.

About Test Preparation Services

Preparation for UExcel® exams and Excelsior College® Examinations, though based on independent study, is supported by Excelsior College with a comprehensive set of exam learning resources and services designed to help you succeed. These learning resources are prepared by Excelsior College so you can be assured that they are current and cover the content you are expected to master for the exams. These resources, and your desire to learn, are usually all that you will need to succeed.

There are test-preparation companies that will offer to help you study for our examinations. Some may imply a relationship with Excelsior College and/or make claims that their products and services are all that you need to prepare for our examinations.

Excelsior College does not endorse the products and services of any tutorial or test preparation firm. We do not review the materials provided by these firms for the content or compatibility of their material and resources with UExcel® exams or Excelsior College Examinations®. No test preparation vendor is authorized to provide admissions counseling or academic advising services, or to collect any payments, on behalf of Excelsior College. Excelsior College does not send authorized representatives to a student's home nor does it review the materials provided by test preparation companies for content or compatibility with Excelsior College examinations.

To help you become a well-informed consumer, we suggest that before you make any purchase decision regarding study materials provided by organizations other than Excelsior College, you consider the points outlined on our website at www.excelsior.edu/testprep.

Exam Preparation Strategies

Each learner is different. However, all learners should read the content outline in the exam's Content Guide and ensure that they have mastered the concepts. For someone with no prior knowledge of the subject, a rule of thumb is 135 hours of study for a 3-credit exam—this number is just to give you an idea of the level of effort you will need, more or less.

Content Guides

This content guide is the most important resource. It lists the outcomes, a detailed content outline of what is covered, and textbooks and other study resources. It also has sample questions and suggestions for how to study. Content guides are updated periodically to correspond with changes in particular examinations and in textbook editions. Examinees can download any of the latest free UExcel content guides by visiting the individual exam page or from the list at www.excelsior.edu/contentguides.

Using the Content Outline

Each content area in the content outline includes the most important sections of the recommended resources for that area. These annotations are not intended to be comprehensive. You may need to refer to other chapters in the recommended textbooks. Chapter numbers and titles may differ among textbook editions.

This content outline contains examples of the types of information you should study. Although these examples are many, do not assume that everything on the exam will come from these examples. Conversely, do not expect that every detail you study will appear on the exam. Any exam is only a broad sample of all the questions that could be asked about the subject matter.

Using the Sample Questions and Rationales

Each content guide provides sample questions to illustrate those typically found on the exam. These questions are intended to give you an idea of the level of knowledge expected and the way questions are typically phrased. The sample questions do not sample the entire content of the exam and are not intended to serve as an entire practice test.

Recommended Resources for the UExcel Exam in Social Psychology

The resources listed below were selected by the faculty members on the examination committee for use in developing this exam.

Resources listed under “Strongly Recommended” were used by the committee to verify all the questions on the exam. Please refer to the Content Outline to see which parts of the exam are cross-referenced to these resources.

Resources listed under “Optional” provide additional material that may deepen or broaden your understanding of the subject, or that may provide an additional perspective on the exam content. Textbook resources, both Strongly Recommended and Optional, may be purchased from the [Excelsior College Bookstore](#).

You should allow ample time to obtain the necessary resources and to study sufficiently before taking the exam, so plan appropriately, with an eye towards your own personal learning needs. See the sections in this guide on the Excelsior College Bookstore and the Excelsior College Library, and under Reducing Textbook Costs, to help you secure the Strongly Recommended resources successfully.

Textbook Editions

Textbook editions listed in the UExcel content guides may not be the same as those listed in the bookstore. Textbook editions may not exactly match up in terms of table of contents and organization, depending upon the edition. However, our team of exam developers checks exam content against every new textbook edition to verify that all subject areas tested in the exam are still adequately available in the study materials. If needed, exam developers will list additional Strongly Recommended resources to ensure that all topics in the exam are still sufficiently covered. Public libraries may have the textbooks you need, or may be able to obtain them for you through interlibrary loan to reduce textbook costs. You may also consider financial aid, if you qualify, to further help defray the steep cost of textbooks. A section on open educational

resources (OER) has been included in this guide to help you locate additional, possibly free resources to augment your study.

Strongly Recommended

Aronson, E., Wilson, T.D., & Akert, R.M. (2019). *Social psychology* (10th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

The study materials may be purchased from the [Excelsior College Bookstore](#).

Optional Resources

The examination development committee did not identify any specific Optional resources for this exam. If you would like to explore topics in more depth, we encourage you to refer to available Open Educational Resources (OER).

Reducing Textbook Costs

Many students know it is less expensive to buy a used textbook, and buying a previous edition is also an option. The Excelsior College bookstore includes a buyback feature and a used book marketplace, as well as the ability to rent digital versions of textbooks for as long as students need them. Students are encouraged to explore these and the many other opportunities available online to help defray textbook costs.

Open Educational Resources

There are many resources available online free of charge that may further enhance your study for the exam. Known as Open Educational Resources (OER), these may be textbooks, courses, tutorials, or encyclopedias. Any additional OER that you find independently should be used to augment study—not as replacements for the Strongly Recommended resources.

Most sites for university-based OER can be searched through www.ocwconsortium.org and/or www.oercommons.org.

Sites that specialize in web courses designed by college professors under contract with the website sponsor, rather than in web versions of existing college courses, include:

www.education-portal.com

www.opencourselibrary.org (abbreviated as OCL)

We have included specific courses that cover material for one or more UExcel® exams from the sites in the listings above. It's worth checking these sites frequently to see if new courses have been added that may be more appropriate or may cover an exam topic not currently listed.

Sites like Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.com) and iTunes U feature relatively brief lessons on very specific topics rather than full courses. Full courses are also available on iTunes U (<http://www.apple.com/education/ipad/itunes-u/>). We have chosen a few courses and collections for this listing.

Open Online Textbooks

BookBoon

<http://bookboon.com/en/textbooks-ebooks>

Flatworld Knowledge

<http://catalog.flatworldknowledge.com/#our-catalog>

College Readiness

Khan Academy

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

Hippocampus

<http://www.hippocampus.org/>

Open Course Library

<http://opencourselibrary.org/collg-110-college-success-course/>

Study Aids

Education Portal

<http://education-portal.com/>

Khan Academy

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

Annenberg Learner

<http://www.learner.org/>

OpenCourseWare

<http://ocwconsortium.org/en/courses/search>

OER Commons

<http://www.oercommons.org/>

Open Course Library

<http://www.opencourselibrary.org/>

To achieve academic success, rate yourself at Excelsior College's Self-Regulated Learning Lab. Visit the Diagnostic Assessment & Achievement of College Skills site at <https://srl.daacs.net/>

It's free!

SECTION TWO

Content Outline

General Description of the Examination

The UExcel Social Psychology examination is based on material typically taught in a one-semester upper-level course in social psychology.

The examination measures knowledge and understanding of theories and principles of social psychology, knowledge of research methods (types of design, validity, and ethical concerns), understanding of major theories and phenomena within social psychology, and the ability to apply this knowledge to examples of social psychology events in everyday life. The content of the examination consists of nine major categories: methodology, social cognition and perception, the self, attitudes, group decisions, attraction, helping, prejudice, and applications.

Those beginning to study for this exam should be familiar with the concepts generally taught in research methods in psychology.

Learning Outcomes

After you have successfully worked your way through the recommended study materials, you should be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

1. Summarize the field of social psychology, and differentiate social psychology from sociology, personality, and anthropology. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
2. Examine research designs, hypothesis testing, and p value, and recognize the role of research ethics in conducting studies in social psychology. (Aligns to GECC 2.1 and 6.1)
3. Define and differentiate among the various types of social cognition. (Aligns to GECC 2.1 and 5.1)
4. Summarize theories related to the development of self. (Aligns to GECC 2.1 and 5.1)
5. Examine the models for and typology of attitudes and the theory of planned behavior. (Aligns to GECC 2.1 and 5.1)
6. Summarize concepts of group decision making. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
7. Examine the factors and theories related to social attraction, including cultural standards and theories of love. (Aligns to GECC 4.2)
8. Define prosocial and altruistic behaviors. (Aligns to GECC 4.1)
9. Examine the ABC model of out-group bias, and recognize the role of prejudice in excluding others from social groupings. (Aligns to GECC 4.2)

10. Interpret the causes of and methods for reducing prejudice and addressing aggression. (Aligns to GECC 4.2)
11. Utilize ways of applying social psychology to an understanding of health-related, environmental, and legal issues. (Aligns to GECC 2.1 and 5.1)

General Education Career Competencies Addressed in this Exam

GECC-2: Mathematical and Scientific Problem Solving: Apply scientific knowledge and reasoning to make evidence-based decisions.

GECC-4: Cultural Diversity and Expression: Analyze human thought, creative expression, or cultural representations within their contexts. Explain the dynamics of social identity or cultural differences within interpersonal and societal relations.

GECC-5: Global Understanding: Explain how social, political, economic, or cultural forces shape relations between individuals and groups around the world.

GECC-6: Ethical Reasoning: Explain different ethical positions in relation to a problem or issue.

Content Outline

The content outline describes the various areas of the test, similar to the way a syllabus outlines a course. To fully prepare requires self-direction and discipline. Study involves careful reading, reflection, and systematic review.

The major content areas on the Social Psychology examination, the percent of the examination, and the hours to devote to each content area are listed below.

Content Area	Percent of the Examination	Hours of Study*
I. Overview of Social Psychology and Methodology	10%	13
II. Social Cognition and Perception	10%	14
III. The Self	10%	14
IV. Attitudes	10%	14
V. Group Decisions	15%	20
VI. Attraction	10%	14
VII. Prosocial Behavior and Altruism	10%	14
VIII. Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination	15%	20
IX. Applied Social Psychology	10%	13
Total	100%	

*Approximate: For those examinees who know the topic well, less time may be needed to learn the subject matter. For those who are new to the subject matter, more time may be required for study.

NOTE: Occasionally, examples will be listed for a content topic to help clarify that topic. However, the content of the examination is not limited to the specific examples given.

I. Overview of Social Psychology and Methodology

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

Aronson (2016)

Chapter 1, Introducing Social Psychology

Chapter 2, Methodology: How Social Psychologists Do Research

- A. Defining social psychology
- B. Comparing and contrasting social psychology with sociology, personality, and anthropology
- C. Nonexperimental designs
 - 1. Ethnography
 - 2. Participant observation
 - 3. Archival analysis
 - 4. Correlation
- D. Experimental design
 - 1. Independent and dependent variables
 - 2. Operational definitions
 - 3. Internal validity — random assignment
 - 4. External validity
 - a. Random selection
 - b. Generalizability
 - c. Mundane realism
- E. Hypothesis testing and p -value
- F. Basic versus applied research
- G. Research ethics
 - 1. Informed consent
 - 2. Deception
 - 3. Debriefing

II. Social Cognition and Perception

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

Aronson

Chapter 3, Social Cognition: How We Think about the Social World

Chapter 4, Social Perception: How We Come to Understand Other People

- A. Low-effort thinking
 - 1. Schemas
 - 2. Priming
 - 3. Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - 4. Heuristics
- B. High-effort thinking
 - 1. Thought suppression
 - 2. Counterfactual thinking
- C. Distinguishing between high-effort and low-effort thinking
- D. Nonverbal behavior
- E. Attribution
 - 1. Internal versus external
 - 2. Covariation model
 - a. Consensus
 - b. Distinctiveness
 - c. Consistency
 - 3. Correspondence bias
 - a. Fundamental attribution
 - b. Perceptual salience
 - c. Two-step process
 - d. Actor-observer difference
 - 4. Self-serving attributions
 - 5. Culture and attributions

III. The Self

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

Aronson

Chapter 5, The Self: Understanding Ourselves in a Social Context

Chapter 6, Cognitive Dissonance and the Need to Protect our Self-Esteem

A. Introspection

1. Self-awareness theory
2. Self-perception theory

B. Motivation — intrinsic versus extrinsic

C. Emotions

1. Two-factor theory — misattribution of arousal
2. Cognitive appraisal theory

D. Upward and downward social comparison

E. Impression management

1. Ingratiation
2. Self-handicapping
3. Relevance to culture

F. Positive self-image

1. Cognitive dissonance
 - a. Postdecision dissonance
 - b. Effort justification
 - c. Counterattitudinal advocacy
2. Culture and dissonance

IV. Attitudes

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

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Chapter 7, Attitudes and Attitude Change: Influencing Thoughts and Feelings

A. ABC model of attitudes: affect, behavior, cognition

B. Explicit versus implicit

C. Attitude change

1. Elaboration likelihood model
2. Emotions

D. Persuasion techniques

1. Lowballing
2. Subliminal messages

E. Resisting persuasive messages

1. Attitude inoculation
2. Reactance theory

F. Theory of planned behavior

V. Group Decisions

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Chapter 8, Conformity and Obedience: Influencing Behavior

Chapter 9, Group Processes: Influence in Social Groups

A. Informational versus normative conformity

B. Social norms

1. Asch's line judgment studies
2. Idiosyncrasy credits
3. Minority influence
4. Injunctive and descriptive norms
5. Zimbardo's prison study
6. Gender and social roles

- C. Informational versus normative obedience — Milgram’s Study
- D. Groups and individuals’ behavior
 1. Social facilitation
 2. Social loafing
 3. Deindividuation
- E. Group decisions
 1. Process loss
 2. Groupthink
 3. Group polarization
 4. Leadership
 5. Prisoner’s dilemma

VI. Attraction

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

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Chapter 10, Attraction and Relationships: From Initial Impressions to Long-Term Intimacy

- A. Factors that lead to attraction
 1. Mere exposure
 2. Similarity
 3. Reciprocal liking
 4. Physical attractiveness
- B. Cultural standards
- C. Social exchange theory and equity theory
- D. Theories of love
 1. Sternberg’s triangular theory of love
 2. Evolutionary theories of love
 3. Attachment theory

VII. Prosocial Behavior and Altruism

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

Aronson

Chapter 11, Prosocial Behavior: Why Do People Help?

- A. Evolutionary theories of helping

- B. Altruism
 1. Empathy
 2. Personality
 3. Gender and culture in prosocial behavior
- C. Bystander effect
- D. Volunteerism

VIII. Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination

15 PERCENT OF EXAM

Aronson

Chapter 12, Aggression: Why Do We Hurt Other People? Can We Prevent It?

Chapter 13, Prejudice: Causes, Consequences, and Cures

- A. ABC model of out-group bias
 1. Prejudice: the affective component
 2. Discrimination: the behavioral component
 3. Stereotypes: the cognitive component
- B. Causes of prejudice
 1. Social categorization
 2. In-group bias
 3. Out-group homogeneity
- C. Realistic conflict theory and scapegoating
- D. Institutionalized racism and sexism
- E. Reducing prejudice
 1. Contact hypothesis and limitations
 2. Jigsaw classroom
- F. Aggression
 1. Frustration-aggression theory
 2. Social learning theory
 3. Media and cultural effects and aggression
 4. Catharsis and aggression

IX. Applied Social Psychology

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

Aronson

Social Psychology in Action 1, Using Social Psychology to Achieve a Sustainable and Happy Future

Social Psychology in Action 2, Social Psychology and Health

Social Psychology in Action 3, Social Psychology and the Law

A. Health

1. Stress and perceived control
2. Self-efficacy
3. Learned helplessness
4. Social support
5. Personality and coping
6. Health communications

B. Environment

1. Crowding and noise
2. Conservation

C. Law

1. Eyewitness testimony
2. Recovered memory
3. Jury deliberation

SECTION THREE

Sample Questions

The sample questions give you an idea of the level of knowledge expected in the exam and how questions are typically phrased. They are not representative of the entire content of the exam and are not intended to serve as a practice test.

Rationales for the questions can be found on pages 19–22 of this guide. In that section, the correct answer is identified and each answer is explained. The number in parentheses at the beginning of each rationale refers to the corresponding section of the content outline. For any questions you answer incorrectly, return to that section of the content outline for further study.

1. Social psychology deals with the study of which of the following?
 - 1) general laws and theories about society
 - 2) general laws and theories about the individual
 - 3) the individual in the context of the group
 - 4) the stable psychological traits that determine one's behavior
2. Which variable is expected to change as a result of experimental manipulation?
 - 1) independent
 - 2) dependent
 - 3) extraneous
 - 4) treatment
3. Which type of validity allows the researcher to infer a causal link between the independent and dependent variables?
 - 1) statistical conclusion validity
 - 2) internal validity
 - 3) external validity
 - 4) content validity
4. A student who believes that the professor will be arrogant approaches the professor in a guarded manner. The professor reacts to the guarded manner by not being very friendly. The student therefore decides that the assumption of arrogance was correct. Which phenomenon has just occurred?
 - 1) perseverance effect
 - 2) self-fulfilling prophecy
 - 3) correspondence bias
 - 4) multichannel nonverbal behavior
5. A judge in a court case must decide why he thinks a woman was sexually harassed. Which of the possible reasons for the harassment listed below would be an example of the judge using the "belief in a just world" assumption?

The woman was harassed because

 - 1) her supervisor is sexist.
 - 2) it was just an unlucky day for her.
 - 3) her coworkers thought it would be funny.
 - 4) she is known for being sexually promiscuous.

6. Often people believe that planes are more dangerous than cars because the people can think of several plane accidents in which many people died, but not many car accidents that led to several deaths. However, data show that there are actually more deaths from car accidents, but they are just not publicized as much. This misconception about the safety of car travel is an example of which mental heuristic?
 - 1) base rate heuristic
 - 2) availability heuristic
 - 3) representativeness heuristic
 - 4) anchoring and adjustment heuristic

7. Based on misattribution of arousal, which activity would most likely cause a new couple to assume that the thumping in their hearts is due to attraction to each other?
 - 1) a romantic, candlelit dinner
 - 2) collaborating together on a jigsaw puzzle
 - 3) taking a roller coaster ride at the local fair
 - 4) challenging one another to a game of Scrabble

8. Based on postdecision dissonance, which outcome will occur after an individual finalizes a big decision?
The individual will
 - 1) ask other people if the unselected option would have been a better choice.
 - 2) emphasize the positive aspects of the selected option and the negative aspects of the unselected option.
 - 3) determine if it is too late to change one's mind.
 - 4) feel uncomfortable wondering if most people would have done things differently.

9. In order to increase children's reading during summer months, many libraries offer incentives based on the number of books a child reads. As a result of these rewards, the children will probably read more books. Based on the overjustification effect, once the summer reading program ends, what outcome will occur?
 - 1) The children will probably make new friends at the library, and this power of conformity should further promote reading.
 - 2) The children may lose interest in books, because their summer reading was due primarily to external rewards.
 - 3) The children may have begun the program with a limited interest in reading; however, the sense of accomplishment they experienced should further enhance their motivation.
 - 4) Intrinsic interest should be highest when the rewards are in place.

10. At a baseball game, one person asks another person to refrain from smoking during the game. The request is refused. Which theory explains this response?
 - 1) causal theory
 - 2) social learning theory
 - 3) reactance theory
 - 4) theory of planned behavior

11. Which concept explains the evaluations one makes of various aspects of our social world?
 - 1) attachment
 - 2) attitudes
 - 3) heuristics
 - 4) inoculation

12. A high school senior visits several colleges before selecting one to attend. The student forms an attitude about each campus by logically evaluating a list of pros and cons for each campus. Which attitude component is this student favoring to make a final selection?
 - 1) affective
 - 2) behavioral
 - 3) cultural
 - 4) cognitive

13. In the Asch line study, participants were asked to specify which of three comparison lines best matched the length of a standard line. What was the main finding from this study?
 - 1) When it was difficult to judge the best match, most participants looked for nonverbal cues from the others.
 - 2) The participants knew the correct answer, but the power of the experimenter's authority made it almost impossible to provide a correct answer.
 - 3) Taking on the "role of the participant" caused most of the individuals to experience social loafing.
 - 4) Even when the judgment task was obvious, most participants gave wrong answers when a wrong answer was first provided by others in the study.

14. To take advantage of the power of injunctive norms, what should an antismoking public service announcement emphasize?
 - 1) Show how to overcome the peer pressure to smoke by demonstrating a way to avoid this type of conformity.
 - 2) Show that many people are disgusted by smoking.
 - 3) Show that the norm is that people do not smoke.
 - 4) Show a vivid tragic example of an individual who lost a family member due to lung cancer.

15. In the Milgram study, many participants obeyed an authority figure and gave increasingly painful electric shocks to a fellow participant (actually a confederate). How does informational social influence explain this surprising degree of obedience?
 - 1) The participants assumed the experimenter was an expert and trusted that following the orders was the correct thing to do.
 - 2) The participants witnessed others in the situation who did the same thing, so the ambiguity of the situation made conformity more powerful.
 - 3) Because the pace of the study was so fast, participants did not have an opportunity to carefully weigh their options.
 - 4) Because the shock levels increased gradually, participants were unable to determine a clear stopping point.

16. A married couple find themselves feeling close and emotionally bonded with each other, and they have both decided that this relationship will last for the rest of their lives. However, they do not feel very sexually attracted to each other. According to Sternberg's theory of love, which type of love is the couple experiencing?
 - 1) fatuous love
 - 2) romantic love
 - 3) companionate love
 - 4) passionate love

17. A person sees a family in a car pulled off to the side of the road in need of help. The person decides to help the family. According to the empathy-altruism hypothesis, why did the person decide to help?
- 1) The person is helping purely for the sake of helping, regardless of what the person might gain from this action.
 - 2) The person is helping because the person believes that in the future, the person would want someone to help her or him in the same situation.
 - 3) The person is helping because the person believes this action will increase the person's mood.
 - 4) The person is helping because the person believes if he or she does not help, the person will feel guilty later.
18. A first-year college student has a roommate from a foreign country. The roommate has some unique eating habits. The first-year student assumes that everyone from the roommate's country eats similarly. Which concept describes this assumption?
- 1) heuristic thinking
 - 2) out-group homogeneity
 - 3) groupthink
 - 4) in-group bias
19. A married couple with a young child are having regular arguments. One spouse blames the child for taking too much of the other spouse's time. Which concept explains this behavior?
- 1) scapegoating
 - 2) sexism
 - 3) prejudice
 - 4) diffusion of responsibility
20. A child sleeps overnight at a friend's house and sees a great deal of punching between the friend's siblings. Shortly after returning home, the child punches a younger sibling for the first time. Which theory explains the child's behavior?
- 1) attribution theory
 - 2) social learning theory
 - 3) realistic conflict theory
 - 4) cognitive dissonance theory
21. The owner of a car dealership interviews two equally inexperienced job applicants. The owner hires the male applicant because the owner believes that females do not understand the working mechanics of cars. The owner's action represents which concept?
- 1) illusory correlation
 - 2) discrimination
 - 3) prejudice
 - 4) social categorization
22. A parent takes a child to a psychotherapist because the child has an anger problem and has punched some holes in a bedroom wall. The therapist recommends that the parent buy a punching bag and gloves for the child to use when angry. The therapist based this suggestion on which concept?
- 1) aggressive stimulus
 - 2) overjustification
 - 3) catharsis
 - 4) learned helplessness
23. Which concept is defined as the ability to carry out specific actions that produce desired outcomes?
- 1) social support
 - 2) learned helplessness
 - 3) self-efficacy
 - 4) buffering hypothesis
24. An individual receives more stimulation from the environment than the individual can pay attention to or process. Which term describes this experience?
- 1) density
 - 2) eustress
 - 3) injunctive norm
 - 4) sensory overload
25. Which theory suggests that misleading questions or information distort the recollection of an incident?
- 1) own-race bias
 - 2) reconstructive memory
 - 3) deterrence theory
 - 4) storage and retrieval

Rationales

1.(IA)

- 1) Sociology is the study of general laws and theories about societies, not about individuals.
- 2) This is the focus of clinical and/or personality psychology.
- *3) Social psychology studies individual behavior in the context of a group.
- 4) This is the definition of personality.

2.(ID1)

- 1) The independent variable is manipulated in order to determine its effects on some other variable.
- *2) The dependent variable is measured to determine if it is influenced by the independent variable.
- 3) An extraneous variable is a variable that interferes with one's ability to infer causality between the independent and dependent variable.
- 4) This is another term for the independent variable.

3.(ID3)

- 1) This validity speaks to the appropriateness of the statistics given the research design.
- *2) Internal validity refers to the extent to which only the independent variable affects the dependent variable.
- 3) External validity refers to the extent to which the results of an experiment can be generalized to real-world situations.
- 4) This validity applies to test content/domain, not to causality.

4.(IIA3)

- 1) The perseverance effect is the finding that people's beliefs about themselves and the world persist even after evidence supporting these beliefs is discredited.
- *2) A self-fulfilling prophecy exists when expectations about someone else lead one to act in a manner that brings about those expectations, thus making the expectations come true.
- 3) The correspondence bias is the tendency to infer that people's behavior matches their internal dispositions or personality.
- 4) Multichannel nonverbal communication occurs when people use many different types of nonverbal communications at the same time, such as smiling and nodding simultaneously.

5.(IIE5)

- 1) In this case, belief in a just world refers to the victim of harassment, not the perpetrator (her supervisor).
- 2) Belief in a just world does not align with beliefs of luck.
- 3) In this case, belief in a just world would not predict the judge believing that the harassment was the fault of malevolent coworkers.
- *4) Belief in a just world is the thought process that bad things happen to bad people; therefore, the harassment must have been the fault of the victim

*correct answer

6.(IIA4)

- 1) Base rate heuristics are mental shortcuts based on information about the frequency of members of different categories in the population.
- *2) The availability heuristic is a mental shortcut in which people base a judgment on the ease with which they can bring something to mind.
- 3) The representativeness heuristic is a mental shortcut in which people classify something according to how similar it is to a typical case.
- 4) The anchoring and adjustment heuristic is a mental shortcut in which people start with a number or value and then insufficiently adjust away from this starting point.

7.(IIID1)

- 1) Sharing a romantic dinner is unlikely to cause increased heart rates.
- 2) Working on a jigsaw puzzle is unlikely to cause increased heart rates.
- *3) Taking a roller coaster ride is most likely to cause increased heart rates.
- 4) Playing Scrabble is unlikely to cause increased heart rates.

8.(IIIF1a)

- 1) Considering the other option does not justify the selected option.
- *2) Emphasizing the reasons behind the decision should reduce cognitive dissonance associated with this big decision.
- 3) Considering whether one can change the decision will not reduce dissonance.
- 4) Feeling uncomfortable is a feeling of dissonance, and post-decision dissonance describes how one is motivated to avoid this feeling.

9.(IIIC)

- 1) Conformity is not relevant to the overjustification effect.
- *2) The overjustification effect explains that getting rewards for intrinsically interesting activities can undermine intrinsic interest in that activity because the motivation for the behavior is assumed to be due to the rewards.
- 3) A sense of accomplishment is not relevant to the overjustification effect.
- 4) Intrinsic interest is lowest when rewards are in place.

10.(IVE2)

- 1) This deals with the causes of one's own feelings and behaviors.
- 2) This theory suggests that behavior, such as aggression, is learned by observing others.
- *3) This theory suggests that when one's personal freedom is threatened, it induces a negative reaction.
- 4) This theory suggests that behavior can be predicted by one's attitudes.

11.(IVA)

- 1) Attachment deals with the quality of relationships one makes based on early experiences.
- *2) Attitudes are evaluations we make about our environment.
- 3) Heuristics are mental shortcuts used to make judgments.
- 4) Inoculation makes people immune to attempt to change their attitudes by initially exposing them to small doses of the arguments about their position.

12.(IVA)

- 1) Affect involves feelings or emotions.
- 2) The behavioral component refers to an action.
- 3) Culture is not an attitude component.
- *4) Logically evaluating a list is a cognitive or thought process.

*correct answer

13.(VB1)

- 1) No participants in the Asch study used nonverbal cues in order to decide their response.
- 2) Authority was not an issue in the Asch study.
- 3) Social roles and social loafing are not relevant in this study.
- *4) Participants tended to give wrong answers in a simple task because of the power of conformity: fellow participants answered first with a unanimous wrong answer.

14.(VB4)

- 1) Peer pressure and conformity are more relevant to descriptive norms, not injunctive norms.
- *2) Social disapproval is the hallmark of injunctive norms.
- 3) Emphasizing what most people do is relevant to descriptive norms.
- 4) A vivid example is not relevant to injunctive norms.

15.(VC)

- *1) Informational social influence explains that people tend to obey in situations where they assume that the authority figure is providing accurate information.
- 2) Ambiguity is not relevant to informational social influence.
- 3) Pace is not relevant to informational social influence.
- 4) The gradual nature of the task is not relevant to informational social influence.

16.(VID1)

- 1) In Sternberg's theory, fatuous love refers to love that includes passion and commitment; this couple does not experience passion.
- 2) In Sternberg's theory, romantic love refers to love that includes intimacy and passion; this couple does not experience passion.
- *3) In Sternberg's theory, companionate love refers to love that includes intimacy and commitment, but not passion. This type of love is described in the item.
- 4) In Sternberg's theory, passionate love refers to love that includes passion, but not intimacy or commitment; this couple has the opposite of passionate love.

17.(VIIB1)

- *1) The empathy-altruism hypothesis is the idea that when we feel empathy for others, we will help for purely altruistic reasons (not for other potential benefits).
- 2) In this case, the person is hoping for future reciprocity, which is a potential benefit.
- 3) In this case, the person is hoping to be rewarded by a good mood, which is a potential benefit.
- 4) In this case, the person is hoping to avoid future guilt, which is a potential benefit.

18.(VIIB3)

- 1) Heuristic thinking involves mental shortcuts used in making judgments.
- *2) Out-group homogeneity is a perception that those in an out-group are very similar to one another.
- 3) This way of thinking is involved in creating group consensus.
- 4) In-group bias deals with positively viewing those of one's own group as special.

*correct answer

19.(VIII C)

- *1) Scapegoating involves one's tendency to displace aggression onto someone else who is generally powerless.
- 2) Sexism is negative attitudes against the opposite sex.
- 3) This deals with negative attitudes toward people merely because they belong to a particular group.
- 4) This concept deals with the decreased sense of responsibility within groups.

20.(VIII F2)

- 1) Attribution theory refers to ways in which individuals explain causes of their own behavior.
- *2) This theory suggests that social behavior is learned by observing others.
- 3) This suggests that limited resources lead to conflict and thus prejudice and discrimination.
- 4) This suggests that a feeling of discomfort occurs from performing an action that is contrary to one's customary concept of self.

21.(VIII A2)

- 1) Illusory correlation is the tendency to see connections or correlations between unrelated events.
- *2) This is a negative action or behavior toward someone merely because they belong to a particular group.
- 3) This is a negative attitude without action toward others merely because they belong to a particular group.
- 4) This represents us-versus-them grouping, based on certain individual characteristics.

22.(VIII F4)

- 1) This deals with an object that elicits aggressive behavior, thus increasing the probability of further aggressive acts.
- 2) This deals with a tendency for individuals to view their own behavior as being caused by extrinsic reasons rather than intrinsic ones.

- *3) Catharsis involves "letting off steam."
A punching bag gives the child a controlled method to relieve the anger before acting in aggressive and harmful ways.
- 4) This is a learned state of pessimism by attributing events to internal factors.

23.(IX A2)

- 1) Social support is the perception that others are responsive to one's needs.
- 2) Learned helplessness is the state of pessimism that results from attributing a negative event to stable, internal factors.
- *3) Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to carry out specific actions that produce desired outcomes.
- 4) The buffering hypothesis states that social support provides a buffer against stress.

24.(IX B1)

- 1) Density refers to the number of people occupying a particular amount of space.
- 2) This is stress that is experienced in a positive way.
- 3) Injunctive norms refer to people's perceptions of which behaviors are approved by others.
- *4) Sensory overload occurs when we receive too much stimulation from the environment.

25.(IX C2)

- 1) Own-race bias is the finding that people are better at recognizing faces from their own race.
- *2) Reconstructive memory is the process whereby memory of an event can become distorted by information encountered after the event occurred.
- 3) Deterrence theory is the hypothesis that the threat of legal punishment causes people to refrain from illegal activity as long as the punishment is severe, swift, and certain.
- 4) Storage is the process by which information is put into memory, and retrieval is the process by which information is recalled from memory.

*correct answer

SECTION FIVE

Taking the Exam

Registering for Your Exam

Register Online

www.excelsior.edu/examregistration

Follow the instructions and pay by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover Card.

Examination Administration

Pearson Testing Centers serve as the administrator for all Excelsior College computer-delivered exams.

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The system is designed to be as user-friendly as possible, even for those with little or no computer

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You also will receive a small, erasable whiteboard if you need one.

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NOTE: English Composition, Spanish, Music, and College Writing will NOT be available for online proctoring.

On the Day of Your Exam

Important Reminders

On the day of your exam, remember to:

- dress comfortably: the computer will not mind that you're wearing your favorite relaxation outfit
- arrive at the test site rested and prepared to concentrate for an extended period
- allow sufficient time to travel, park, and locate the test center
- be prepared for possible variations in temperature at the test center due to weather changes or energy conservation measures
- bring your ID, but otherwise, don't weigh yourself down with belongings that will have to be kept in a locker during the test.

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If you choose not to accept the terms of the agreement

- your exam will be terminated
- you will be required to leave the testing center
- you will not be eligible for a refund. For more information, review the Student Policy Handbook at www.excelsior.edu/studentpolicyhandbook.

Student behavior is monitored during and after the exam. Electronic measures are used to monitor the security of test items and scan for illegal use of intellectual property. This monitoring includes surveillance of Internet chat rooms, websites, and other public forums.

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Excelsior College, the test developer, recommends granting three (3) semester hours of upper-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination. Other colleges and universities also recognize this exam as a basis for granting credit or advanced standing. Individual institutions set their own policies for the amount of credit awarded and the minimum acceptable grade.

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Sample Grade Report

Excelsior College
GRADE REPORT FOR EXAMINATIONS

Contact ID:

Test Date: 11/21/2020

Letter Grade: C

Examination Code and Title: 210 Statistics

Recommended Credit:
3 Lower Level

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