



GLOBAL SUMMER PROGRAMME 2023

PSYC212: PSYCHOLOGY OF SUSTAINABILITY

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A. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Today's pressing sustainability issues, such as climate change, pollution, and loss of biodiversity, are largely anthropogenic. Addressing these problems, therefore, requires an understanding of human psychology and behavior.

In this course, we use psychological theories and empirical findings to understand thoughts, feelings, and behaviors regarding environmental problems. We cover various—individual, social, and cultural—factors and levels of processes to find the psychological roots of various environmental problems as well as solutions to address these problems. Specific topics include risk perceptions, values, group identity, and social norms.

B. PRE-REQUISITES / REQUIREMENTS / MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSES (IF ANY)

This course does not require any pre-requisite.

C. ASSESSMENT METHODS / GRADING DETAILS

Class Participation	15%
Group Presentation	25%
Midterm Quiz	25%
Final Exam	35%
Total	100%

- Class participation – The class participation component evaluates your contribution toward the class. These include, for example, participation in discussions, providing constructive feedback on others' research, in-class exercises, and considerate classroom behaviors. This component will be graded strictly. A wide spread of participation marks will be awarded in the end (i.e., the majority of the class getting an A on this component will NOT happen; a 0 is not an impossibility).
- Group Presentation – This is an exercise to help students apply the obtained knowledge to understanding and solving real world problems. Students will form groups of 4-6 (depending on enrollment) and each group presents their analysis of defined sustainability problems. Specifically, each group defines a specific problem of interest and presents own analysis of psychological issues relevant to the problem and how to address the problem by employing a specific framework, theory, and/or concept covered in class.

- Quiz and Exam: The quiz and exam will cover material from lectures, assigned articles, and the textbook with a mixed format (i.e., multiple choice, short answer, and essay). The final exam is cumulative.

D. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

There is a policy of zero tolerance for late submission (except in exceptional circumstances and in agreement with your instructor) and for non-submission of assignments.

Please note that only copyright holders are entitled to reproduce their work, publish their work, perform their work in public, communicate their work to the public and make an adaptation of their work. Hence, making course materials (owned by the faculty) available for sale or posting such works on websites for gain, is strictly prohibited. Disciplinary action will be taken against those found infringing copyright.

E. ACCESSIBILITY

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If students anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let the instructor know immediately. Students are also welcomed to contact the university's disability services team if they have questions or concerns about academic provisions: included@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in the seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

F. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

Classes consist of weekly 3-hour session. Each session consists of a lecture and group discussion of topics and their implications. Powerpoint slides shown in class are made available in eLearn.

Make-up Exams and Presentation: Make-up exams (for missed midterm exams) will only be given and absences will only be approved with legitimate documentation for medical and other such reasons (e.g., medical certificate, proof of representing Singapore in an international competition). The make-up midterm exam will have a different format from the original midterm exam. If the absence is excused on a date of group presentation, the students will be required to submit a written report of the group project to make up. If the absence is unexcused, there will be no possibility for a make-up presentation and midterm exam, and a grade of zero will be given.

G. CLASSROOM POLICIES

As required per Singapore Management University

H. IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT DATES

1. Midterm: Lesson 6
2. Group Presentation: Lesson 11
3. Final Exam: Lesson 12

I. CONSULTATIONS

*Consultation by appointment

J. RECOMMENDED TEXT / READING LIST / CASE STUDIES LIST

TEXTBOOK: Steg, L. & de Groot, J. I. M. (2019). Environmental Psychology (2nd Ed.). Wiley-Blackwell

LESSON PLAN		
LESSONS	TOPICS	READINGS
LESSON 1 Tuesday 27 June	Introduction Methods	Ch. 16 Measuring Environmental Behaviour
LESSON 2 Wednesday 28 June	Attitudes and Values	Ch. 17 Values and Pro-Environmental Behaviour
LESSON 3 Thursday 29 June	Emotions	Ch. 19 Emotions and Pro-Environmental Behaviour <i>Readings:</i> Onwezen, M. C., Bartels, J., & Antonides, G. (2014). Environmentally friendly consumer choices: Cultural differences in the self-regulatory function of anticipated pride and guilt. <i>Journal of Environmental Psychology, 40</i> , 239-248. Zhao, H., Zhang, H., Xu, Y., Lu, J., & He, W. (2018). Relation between awe and environmentalism: The role of social dominance orientation. <i>Frontiers in Psychology, 9</i> , 1-12.
LESSON 4 Tuesday 4 July	Social Norms	Ch. 18 Social Norms and Pro-Environmental Behaviour <i>Readings:</i> Cialdini, R. B., Reno, R. R., & Kallgren, C. A. (1990). A focus theory of normative conduct: Recycling the concept of norms to reduce littering in public places. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 58</i> , 1015-1026. Schultz, P. W., Nolan, J. M., Cialdini, R. B., Goldstein, N. J., & Griskevicius, V. (2007). The constructive, destructive, and reconstructive power of social norms. <i>Psychological Science, 18</i> , 429-434.
LESSON 5 Wednesday 5 July	Personality and Individual Differences	<i>Readings:</i> Markowitz, E. M., Goldberg, L. R., Ashton, M. C., & Lee, K. (2012). Profiling the “pro-environmental individual”: A personality perspective. <i>Journal of Personality, 80</i> (1), 81-111. Brick, C., & Lewis, G. J. (2016). Unearthing the “green” personality: Core traits predict environmentally friendly behavior. <i>Environment and Behavior, 48</i> (5), 635-658.
LESSON 6 Thursday 6 July	Midterm	

LESSON 7 Tuesday 11 July	Motivation	<p><i>Readings:</i> Zaval, L., Markowitz, E. M., & Weber, E. U. (2015). How will I be remembered? Conserving the environment for the sake of one's legacy. <i>Psychological Science</i>, 26, 231-236.</p> <p>Feygina, I., Jost, J. T., & Goldsmith, R. E., (2010). System justification, the denial of global warming, and the possibility of "system-sanctioned change." <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i>, 36, 326-338.</p>
LESSON 8 Wednesday 12 July	Group Processes	Ch. 23 The Role of Group Processes in Environmental Issues, Attitudes, and Behaviours
LESSON 9 Thursday 13 July	Cultural Processes	<p><i>Readings:</i> Eom, K., Kim, H. S., Sherman, D. K., & Ishii, K. (2016). Cultural variability in the link between environmental concern and support for environmental action. <i>Psychological Science</i>, 27, 1331-1339.</p> <p>Preston, J. L., & Shin, F. (2022). Opposing effects of spirituality and religious fundamentalism on environmental attitudes. <i>Journal of Environmental Psychology</i>, 80, 1-9.</p>
LESSON 10 Tuesday 18 July	Behavioral Change	<p>Ch. 26 Informational Strategies to Promote Pro-Environmental Behaviour: Changing Knowledge, Awareness, and Attitudes</p> <p>Ch. 27 Encouraging Pro-Environmental Behaviour with Rewards and Penalties</p> <p>Ch. 28 Persuasive Technology to Promote Pro-Environmental Behaviour</p>
LESSON 11 Wednesday 19 July	GROUP PRESENTATION	
LESSON 12 Thursday 20 July	FINAL EXAM	

GUEST SPEAKER: Details to be finalized closer to date