Social psychology is an area of scientific psychology that seeks to understand how people feel, think, and behave in social situations. The professors in this class are social psychologists who have conducted scientific studies and have published articles on a variety of topics in social psychology. The first half of the course (through March 6th) will be covered by Dr. Wells and the second half of the course (March 11th through the end of the semester) will be covered by Dr. Hessling.


Be sure that you get this custom edition of the textbook in the 2013 edition. This edition includes a Part 2 that has 24 readings that are needed for exams and research credits.

Course note packets: Course notes are available on Blackboard. You should print these and bring them to class for taking notes.

Course Goal: The professors teaching this course expect students who finish this course to have a good understanding of basic psychological processes that underlie human social thinking and social behavior and to understand empirical approaches to the study of social psychological phenomena.

There are five sources of points that determine your grade: Exams (264 pts.), Pop quizzes (24 pts), required research credits (12 pts), extra research credits (12 pts), and a required short online test (5 pts).

Exams: There will be four exams, each comprised of 60 multiple-choice questions and 2 short-answer questions. Each exam will include at least 20 multiple-choice items and one short-answer item that are not in the book but instead will come from lecture material. The fourth exam is not comprehensive and must be taken on the exam date by all students. All exams, except exam 4, are held in the evening (6:30-7:45 p.m.). See exam schedule on page 2 of this syllabus for exam dates. Bring photo identification and soft-lead pencil to each exam. An exam that is missed for any reason will require the student to take a comprehensive final exam immediately following the regularly-scheduled fourth exam.

Pop quizzes: There will be three pop quizzes prior to each exam for a total of 12 such quizzes. Each quiz will involve two short multiple-choice questions, one from the immediately preceding lecture and one from the textbook. The purpose of these quizzes is to reward those who are
attending class and reading the assigned chapter(s) before they come to class. These quizzes will be closed book but you will be able to discuss your answers with those around you. The goal of discussion is to allow you to learn from and interact with the other students in the class. **You cannot make up a missed regular quiz.**

- **Research Credits:** 12 points in research credits are required for this course and an additional 12 credits can be gained for extra credit. There are two methods to obtain all of the research points: 1) participation in research studies and/or 2) written essays to specific readings in Part 2 of the textbook. Students who opt to obtain some or all of their research credits through the essays should note that, beginning on Sept. 10, one essay will be due each week with the very last essay due on Dec. 3rd. No essays will be accepted after April 29th. See the Lecture schedule for deadlines. Pages 6-8 of this syllabus explain these credits in detail.

- **Online test:** A five-point online test over an empirical social psychology article (that will be posted later). Details TBA - Week of March 25.

**Grading**

Exams allow a maximum total score of 264 points (four exams: 60 multiple choice questions - worth one point each, and two short-answer questions - worth 3 points each). Regular quizzes allow a maximum of 24 points (12 quizzes at 2 points each). Required research credits are another 12 points. The short online test near mid-semester is worth 5 points. The number of points that you obtain out of the 305 possible points will be used to determine a grade distribution that approximates ISU norms for 200-level courses (i.e., 15% As, 30% Bs, 40% Cs, 13% Ds, 2% Fs). Extra credit (up to 12 points) will be added after the grade distribution is created.

Starting about mid-semester, you can access your scores on the Blackboard Gold URL address: http://www.celt.iastate.edu/Blackboard/. Research credits earned through experiments are recorded in SONA and will be downloaded to Blackboard during finals week. Research credits earned through essays will be updated on Blackboard every few weeks. E-mail the course assistant at psy280@iastate.edu (not the professors) regarding questions or concerns about your scores. Any problems with your scores should be addressed ASAP, not at the end of the semester.

**EXAM DATES:**

**Exam 1:** Thursday, February 6th (6:30 p.m.) Location TBA. Exam covers Chapters 1-4, readings pages 23-43 (from Part 2 of text) plus all lecture material.

**Exam 2:** Thursday, March 6th (6:30 p.m.) Location TBA. Exam covers Chapters 5-7, SPA 3, readings pages 8-17 & 123-130, plus all lecture material since previous exam.

**Exam 3:** Thursday, April 10th (6:00 p.m.) Location TBA. Exam covers Chapters 8-10, readings pages 44-63, plus all lecture material since previous exam.

**Exam 4:** During Exam week, May 5-9. (Specific date, time, and location TBA when the University sets the final exam schedule.) Exam covers chapters 11-13, SPA 2, readings pages 64-83, plus all lecture material since previous exam.

**Comprehensive Final:** (Same date as Exam 4, immediately after Exam 4). The comprehensive final is taken only by those students who missed a previous exam. It is also 60 multiple-choice and two short-answer questions, but it covers the entire course; all chapters and lectures.

**Disability:** If you have a disability and require accommodations, please contact the Disability Resources (DR) office, located on the main floor of the Student Services Building, Room 1076, 515-294-6624 to obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) that describes the needed accommodations. Students are responsible to make arrangements with the Course Information Office (W004 Lago) before each exam for individual accommodations.

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1 It is the student’s responsibility to put the correct ID number and name on all exams, quizzes, and research participation cards. Failure to do so can result in no credit for that quiz, exam, or research participation session.

2 If you know you are going to miss an exam date, contact the appropriate professor for that exam at least two days prior to the exam. If you miss an exam date for unforeseen reasons, contact the professor at the earliest possible time.
### Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule for Exam 1 (Wells)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 14</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Introduction to the course: Why you should be interested in social psychology</td>
<td>(Ch. 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 16</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Primary theses of social psychology and the empirical versus the intuitive.</td>
<td>(Ch. 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Methods of research: Measurement, sampling, correlation</td>
<td>(Ch. 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 23</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Methods and statistics: Causality, confoundings, interactions</td>
<td>(Ch. 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 28</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>The limited processor and rule-of-thumb thinking *First essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 30</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Mental heuristics (continued); rational attribution and attributional error</td>
<td>(Ch. 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>A/O differences; confusion about one’s own behavior *Second essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 6</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>EXAM #1 Location TBA 6:30 PM --- No regular class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Applicable only to students who choose the essays option instead of the research participation option

### Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule for Exam 2 (Wells)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>The inescapable self; Culture and self; *Third essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 13</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Illusions of the self; Consistency, balance,</td>
<td>(Ch. 5 - 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Dissonance; Attitudes; *Fourth essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 6 - 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Do attitudes predict behavior? Mindless persuasion</td>
<td>(Ch. 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Special topic: Gender differences *Fifth essay due</td>
<td>(no chapter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 27</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Social psychology and law</td>
<td>SPA 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 4</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Social psychology and law (cont’d) *Sixth essay due</td>
<td>SPA 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 6</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>EXAM #2 Location TBA 6:30 PM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Applicable only to students who choose the essays option instead of the research participation option

### Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule for Exam 3 (Hessling)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 11</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Conformity *Seventh essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 13</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>(Ch. 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 17-21</td>
<td></td>
<td>********************* SPRING BREAK ***************************</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 25</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Applications of Social Influence *Eighth essay due</td>
<td>(no chapter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 27</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Group processes</td>
<td>(Ch. 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 1</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Group processes *Ninth essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 3</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Interpersonal attraction</td>
<td>(Ch. 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 8</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Interpersonal attraction *Tenth essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 10</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Exam #3 Location TBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Applicable only to students who choose the essays option instead of the research participation option

### Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule for Exam 4 (Hessling)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 15</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Prosocial behavior</td>
<td>(Ch. 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 17</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Prosocial behavior *Eleventh (last) essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 22</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>(Ch. 12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 24</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Prejudice</td>
<td>(Ch. 13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 29</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Prejudice *Twelfth essay due</td>
<td>(Ch. 13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>Social psychology and health</td>
<td>SPA 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 5-9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final exam (date and time set later by Registrar)</td>
<td>(Ch 11-13, SPA2, readings pp. 624-629;659-664;689-701, and all lecture since Exam 3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Message to Students

Our intention in this course is to enhance your ability to analyze human social thought and behavior. Minimally, you should be able to consider the ways in which human social behavior is influenced heavily by errors in reasoning, attitudes, prejudices, misconceptions, and temporary situational factors. We hope that you will learn to temper your natural tendency to assume automatically that people’s behaviors reflect their inner dispositions, looking instead at the possibility that their behaviors are a common reaction to their situation and that you would probably behave the same way under these circumstances. It takes a skilled and knowledgeable observer to perceive and understand the influence of these nearly invisible but powerful situational forces on social behavior. Your life is now, and will continue to be, filled with thousands of social encounters of considerable significance. Whether you are trying to understand a social issue, a friend, an enemy, a co-worker, a boss, an employee, a relative, a child, a lover, or yourself, there is no escaping the fact that having a scientific understanding of social thought and social behavior is an advantage over your lifetime. Given the goals that we have for this course, you can perhaps appreciate our enthusiasm for the student whose goal is congruent with ours rather than merely having the goal of achieving a particular letter grade.

Procedures for Research Credits for Students in PSYCHOLOGY 280

There are two ways to obtain all 24 points of the Research Credits (12 points required; 12 extra points allowed): 1) Research Participation (Option 1) and 2) essays (Option 2). You can do a mix of either option to get the 24 points. If you choose to do the Research Participation method and you are under the age of 18, you must have written parental consent. Written parental consent forms are available in the Course Information Office (Lago W004) or can be downloaded from the Psychology Home Page (http://www.psychology.iastate.edu). Students can participate in research studies through the last day of class, but are strongly encouraged to start early to ensure sufficient availability of studies. Essays are due each Tuesday beginning on January 28th and ending on April 29th.

NOTE: One “credit” is worth two points.
NOTE: You can participate in only three online studies (the remainder must be in-person participation)

Option 1) Research Participation

Scientific studies are conducted each semester in the Department of Psychology. The professors in this course encourage participation in these studies because participating in psychological research can be an educational experience facilitating your understanding of social psychology. Participation is totally voluntary.

How do I sign-up for a research study?

All Psychology studies for Psych 101, 230, and 280 are listed on the Psychology Research Participation Website (SONA), located at: https://isupsych.sona-systems.com. Your logon password for the website will be automatically created based on the class roster. Shortly after the start of the semester, you should receive an email in your university email address with your logon password information. Then, after you log onto the webpage, you can click the “my profile” option and change your password.

All approved studies are posted in the online registration system. Approved studies are conducted on the University campus locations other than dormitories between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.; some studies might involve completing online surveys. No deviations from these rules are authorized.

SONA provides the study name and number, a brief description of the study including time, place, and length of time required for participation, credit earned, and the name(s) and phone number(s) of the researcher(s). When you sign up on SONA, you will automatically receive a confirmation email with this information; some other studies might also send you a reminder email the day before your appointment.

What if I do not receive the e-mail with my password?

If you do not receive an email with your Research Participation Logon Password by January 23rd, 2014, you should send an email to psychres@iastate.edu so that an account can be created for you. When you send the email, please include your first and last name, university student ID number, and university email address (NetID).

What can I do if I forget my password to the online research sign-up system?

To retrieve your lost or forgotten password, go to SONA at https://isupsych.sona-systems.com/. Underneath ‘Lost your password?’ Click “Click here to retrieve it!” link, which will take you to: https://isupsych.sona-systems.com/lost_password.asp. Enter your NetID (i.e., NetID@iastate.edu), then click ‘Email Password’ button. SONA will respond an email to your iastate email account within the next hour that contains your password. For further information, please refer to: http://www.psychology.iastate.edu/index.php?id=151.

If you receive a message saying, “System Message: Password could not be sent. No user was found matching the specified user ID.” You will need to send your first and last name, course type (psychology 101, 230, or 280), and your Net ID to psychres@iastate.edu so an account can be created for you. Once your SONA account has been established you will receive an email to your iastate.edu account containing your password.

Can I sign up for a study more than once?
Typically, you are allowed to participate in each study only once. If you are allowed to participate more than once, the researcher will let you know.
What are my responsibilities once I sign up for a study?

Both you and the researcher are contracting to show up at the appointed time and place. **BE ON TIME.** By signing up, you are indicating that you plan to participate in that specific study given the information that is available on the posting form. If you are unable to make your appointment, cancel your participation on SONA or call the researcher or the Psychology Office (294-1743) at least two hours beforehand. Prompt cancellation of an appointment will allow another student to sign up for the study.

What happens if I miss a scheduled research appointment?

If you do not show up for a scheduled research appointment, your failure to attend the session will be recorded in SONA, and you will receive an e-mail message indicating that you have missed the appointment. After three missed appointments, your access to SONA will be suspended and you will have to pursue the other credit options listed in this syllabus. Be sure to check for deadlines associated with these alternative options.

If you know that you will be unable to attend a scheduled research appointment, you can cancel the appointment in the online sign-up system up to two hours before the scheduled time of the appointment. If you cancel an appointment at least two hours ahead of time, this will not be counted as a missed appointment in the system, and will not lead to a suspension of your account.

What can I do if my SONA account is suspended?

If you believe that an error has been made and your account was suspended accidentally, please contact the SONA administrator (psychres@iastate.edu). If your failure to appear was beyond your control, send an explanation to the administrator, who might reinstate your account. Alternatively, you might want to consider the other credit options listed in the syllabus to complete this assignment. Be sure to check for deadlines associated with these alternative options.

What should I do if a researcher does not show up for an appointment I scheduled?

If the researcher is unable to make a scheduled appointment, he or she should post a message telling you what you need to do to get your credit. If the researcher does not show and there is no note, wait for 10 minutes past the scheduled time and then immediately check SONA or your email confirmation, to see whether you have the correct date, time, and location. If all the information is correct, go IMMEDIATELY to the Psychology Main Office in Lago W112 with this information, and complete a Researcher No Show Form. If the study is in the evening or on the weekend, then go to the main office the NEXT WORK DAY to complete the form. The form will be used to verify that there was a researcher no show and, once this is verified, you will receive credit for the study. The verification process requires that the form be completed as soon as possible after the no show occurs. Researcher No Show Forms WILL NOT be accepted more than 7 days after the scheduled appointment.

How long does a research appointment take?

The minimum appointment time for research studies is 50 minutes, although in some cases you might finish the study in less time. The maximum length of time for each study is listed on the sign-up sheet. You earn 1 SONA credit for studies that require 50 minutes or less, 2 SONA credits for studies that require between 60-90 minutes, and 3 SONA credits for studies that require 90-120 minutes. Some studies might require multiple sessions that are spread across different days. Each SONA credit is equal to two research credits in this class. Accordingly, to earn all of your required research credits, do 6 SONA credits. To earn all of the additional extra credits, do another 6 SONA credits. Do not do more than 12 SONA credits!

What types of research studies are done?

There are many types of studies conducted in our department. For example, you might be asked to complete questionnaires, to view slides or videos, to listen to music or conversations, to interact with others in a group, or to make judgments on a computer. All studies are reviewed in advance by the Iowa State University Institutional Review Board.

How does a study get approved?

The study is first approved by the Department of Psychology Human Research Ethics Review Committee to determine that no physical or psychological harm will result from the research and that the research is meaningful. After departmental approval, the study is reviewed by the ISU Institutional Review Board. Most studies are open to all Psych 101, 230 and 280 students, but some restrict participation to subsets of students (e.g., females only or left-handed persons only).

What should I do if I have a question about a specific study that I signed up for, such as its location, etc.?

If you signed up for the study on SONA, recheck SONA for that information. If you have questions not addressed on the SONA website, you should get in touch with the contact person listed on the webpage. If you do not get a response from the contact person, contact Ann Schmidt in the Psychology Department Office, W112 Lago, 294-1743.

If you were recruited for the study by telephone or e-mail, you should get in touch with the contact person. This person’s name, the study number, and a description of the study should also be on SONA.

What if I am contacted by someone in the Psychology Department who wants me to be in their study?

**ONLY** students who complete mass-testing questionnaires and indicate their willingness to be contacted might be called or e-mailed and invited to participate in a study. The caller will provide his or her full name and phone number, the study number, the experimenter’s name, and the date, time, and location of the study. (This is important information, be sure to keep it.) You are under no obligation to participate in a study just because you are contacted by phone. If you agree to participate, check that an approved posting form with the same experimenter, study number, and location is posted on SONA before going to the appointment.

If the study is not listed on SONA, do not keep the appointment and immediately notify the staff in the Psychology Office (W112 or 294-1743). If you receive a call or get an email recruiting you for a study, and you did NOT participate in mass-testing, you should immediately notify the staff in the Psychology Office (W112 or 294-1743).
What is the last day that I can earn research credits?

The last day to participate in research studies (Option 1) is the Friday of dead week. Essays (Option 2) are due each Tuesday January 28th through April 29th. Only one essay will be accepted at each due date.

How is research credit recorded?

All credit (except essay credits) will usually be posted on SONA by the researchers within 72 hours after the study. You can click the “My Schedule and Credits” option to see your credits. After each study, researchers will give you a Research Credit Receipt. If you do NOT receive credit within 72 hours after participation in a study, you should contact the researcher directly to find out why. You might be asked to show your Receipt. You must keep the receipts in case there are any discrepancies at the end of the semester with the number of credits assigned to you on SONA.

What if I have other questions?

Please ask the course information office.

Option 2) Essays
How do I complete the essay method?

Below is a list from Part 2 of the textbook that can be used for essays. As a substitute to participating in research studies, you can write essays to any of these 12 articles. Your essay should briefly summarize the reading and then address one of the critical thinking questions that appears at the end of the reading. Each essay must be typed and double-spaced. Use either Times New Roman (12 point) or Arial (11 point) font. Margins must be 1 inch all around. Each essay must be between 550-600 words in length (approximately 2 pages). Either print front and back of the page or staple the two pages. Each essay is equivalent to one SONA credit (i.e., two research points in this class). You can choose to write some essays and participate in some experiments to obtain all of your required research participation and/or extra credit points. If you choose to obtain all the 12 required research participation points through these essays, then you will need to turn in 6 essays. If you choose to obtain all of the 12 extra credit points through these essays, then you will need to turn in an additional 6 essays. Essays will only count as extra credit after the 6 required research credits have been completed (either through research participation or essays or a combination). Do not turn in more than 12 essays. Please note that the essays are due on specific dates (see Question 2 below). Give your essays directly to the professor in the course on the date it is due.

When are the essays due?

Deadlines for the essays are included in the Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule. The first deadline for turning in an essay is January 28th, a Tuesday. The next essay is due on the following Tuesday. As can be seen in the lecture schedule, beginning on January 28th, one essay is due every Tuesday through April 29th. Students can only turn in ONE essay on a due date. If a student wishes to complete all 12 possible essay assignments (6 for required research points and 6 for extra credit) they must turn in ONE essay at each deadline. These deadlines are instituted to allow us to be thorough in our grading of these assignments. Essays must be turned in during class, E-mail attachments are not accepted. If you miss a deadline, you can still participate in an experiment to obtain research points, but you may not turn in any essays late.

How are the essays graded?

Your score will be based on an all-or-nothing scale (you either get the 2 points or 0 points for each essay). Your score will eventually appear on Blackboard, but it can take a few weeks for any score to appear. A score of 0 points might be awarded if a student did not reach the assigned word length, failed to meaningfully answer the question, or is suspected of plagiarism.

List of Part 2 textbook readings permitted for the Essay Method

1. Contingencies of Self Worth, pp. 548-53
2. The Spotlight Effect and …, pp. 554-558
4. The Psychology and Power of False Confessions, pp. 613-617
5. The Emerging Field of Adolescent Romantic Relationships, pp. 636-641
7. Terrorism Between Syndrome and Tool, pp. 653-658
8. Self Esteem, Narcissism, and Aggression … pp. 659-654
9. Comfortably Numb… pp. 665-672
10. Developmental Intergroup Theory … pp. 682-688
11. Climate Change and Violence, pp.702-705
Helpful Hints on How to Get the Most Out of This Course

ATTEND CLASS. Bright, highly motivated students who have superior study skills can learn alone most of what the book presents to you -- enough to do quite well on exam questions that cover the textbook material. However, a considerable amount of material that is not in the textbook will be presented during classes and a number of exam questions will come from material presented exclusively in lectures. Research has shown that one of the best predictors of grades in courses is class attendance, and even the brightest students gain more insight by attending classes regularly.

STUDY CHAPTERS EARLY. Some lectures overlap with information in the book, but even for lecture material that is not redundant with the book, you will learn best by reading/studying the assigned chapters by the date on which they are indicated on the syllabus. Students who read the chapters prior to class will find it rewarding when the quiz questions occur. We will assume in lectures that you have covered the assigned chapters, and hence will not focus unnecessarily on terms/concepts that are well defined in the book. There will be exceptions to this because in some lectures we choose to emphasize particular concepts that are covered in the book or we believe that the book does not cover that material particularly well. However, lack of emphasis or coverage during lectures does not mean lack of importance of material in the book. You should strive to complete assigned chapters on time and several days before an exam. Studying early leaves much more time for resolving difficulties and reviewing the material -- repetition is a fundamental principle of learning.

READ, STUDY, AND TAKE NOTES "ACTIVELY." Research shows that many individuals read and write passively, that is, without thinking about the meaning of what they are covering. In reading and studying textbook material, everyone (professors included) must read actively and as a result somewhat slowly. You must try to understand what you are trying to learn within the framework of what you have already learned. Research shows that learning is much more effective if new information is related to old information. Not only must you work on textbook material actively, but you must also stay mentally active during class. Passively writing down what is on the overhead screen or what we say in class without thinking about it -- about how it fits with previous material in earlier classes or earlier in that lecture -- will not help you learn or understand the material. However, lack of emphasis or coverage during lectures does not mean lack of importance of material in the book. You should strive to complete assigned chapters on time and several days before an exam. Studying early leaves much more time for resolving difficulties and reviewing the material -- repetition is a fundamental principle of learning.

BEFORE BEGINNING A CHAPTER, ACTIVELY STUDY THE SUMMARY FIRST. Also, you should page through the chapter reading headings and illustrations actively to gain a good general understanding of major themes and ideas. These major ideas serve as part of the framework for you to organize the more detailed information if you are to gain a good overall understanding.

OUTLINE EACH CHAPTER. By outline, we mean that you should take organized notes on the chapter as you go through it the first time, just as though you were taking notes on a lecture. Research shows that taking good notes requires active thinking and is much superior to helping you learn any material to underlining or highlighting text material. If you take good notes on chapters, you should be able to study primarily from these notes without having to reread text material. In the long run, that will save you time, particularly as you become more and more skilled (through practice) at taking quality notes on text material. These notes and your lecture notes should be reviewed as many times as feasible in preparation for each exam. Your textbook notes will also give you a manageable amount of material that you can review in preparation for the comprehensive exam that covers the entire course in the event that you need to take it.

ALTER YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDYING. Research consistently shows that college students greatly underestimate the effort and time it takes to do a quality job of learning the new and complex material that is a part of most of your courses. Academic experts generally agree that, for a typical three-semester hour course, spending about 9 hours per week outside of class working on learning is the norm for reasonable achievement. However, if the course is particularly difficult or if your skills are not as great as the typical students’, you will likely need to spend even more than 9 hours per week to do well in the course.

KEEP THE BIG PICTURE IN MIND. Not only must you learn quite an amount of information that you might consider rather detailed, but you should also strive to understand the broader themes and context at all times. Keep in mind what you have learned in previous chapters and lectures. Themes work best when understood together rather than in isolation. In fact, individuals who, after a course is completed, have gone back and reread the textbook, report considerably greater understanding of material partly because the context has changed (e.g., they perceive chap. 2 differently after having studied chapters 3 and 4).

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, ASK THEM. Class time is not the appropriate time for individual specific questions about text material that you are unclear about, although good questions that extend or broaden what you have learned in the book or heard in lectures are strongly encouraged during classes. Such questions enrich class in general and are strongly encouraged. For more detailed questions, seek us out after class, during office hours, or make an appointment.

IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS, SEEK SOLUTIONS EARLY. For example, if you do poorly on an exam, see one of us at that time (instead of later in the course). In addition, the Student Counseling Service (294-4357) exists to help students, whether the source of a problem is personal or academic. The Office of information Service (294-4777) and the Student Assistance Center (294-4357) are also important resources for students. If we can help you or point you in the right direction, we certainly will, but you must ask for help first.