psyc3122 lecture 1

introduction to course and housekeeping
introduction to attitudes and social cognition
What is an attitude?

next week: the planned behaviour model
attitude measurement

Overview of today

- Housekeeping
  - People
  - Course
  - Assessment
- Overview of course content and how it fits into the big picture
- Introduction to attitudes
lecturer

Winnifred Louis
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- phone: 3346 9515
- office: McElwain 407
- contact hours:
  - Thursdays 1-3pm in my office
  - Before the lecture at the lecture theatre
  - After the lecture at the lecture theatre
- Or by appointment

Tutor

- Marc Chan
  - E-mail k.chan@psy.uq.edu.au for any questions re tute sign-ups or tutes
- Carla Barnett
  - E-mail c.barnett@psy.uq.edu.au
- Rachel McDonald
  - E-mail rachel.mcdonald@uqconnect.edu.au
course structure

- **one 2 hour lecture**  
  - Thursdays, 10-12am in this room  
  - Covering theory, examples and applications  
  - PPT slides available from the web before each lecture, assuming that neither I nor the IT guys are struck w/ logistical chaos  
  - Periodic group exercises in class – unmarked  
  - Lectopia available (not guaranteed – only if no IT chaos)

- **one compulsory 2 hour tutorial**  
  - Sign-up via my-SInet starting at 5pm March 5th (Friday)  
  - 5% participation mark  
  - Assignments (45% of course) worked through in tutorials

- **Ongoing Blackboard web site**  
  - Need to monitor web site regularly for announcements and files  
  - Should also check out and ideally post to web forum  
    - Warning: **NEVER post or answer any question with specific numbers or quotations from the assignment in it on the forum**  
    - will end up penalised for plagiarism or collusion even if meant to be helpful (argh!)

materials and resources

- **textbook**  
  BF327 .B64 2002

- **tutorial notes**  
  - available in tutes weekly and posted on the web after each week

- **lecture notes**  
  - on web as noted – may be useful to bring to each lecture
extensions

- Submission of assessments is via Turnitin this year.
- extensions for assignments must be sought through the appropriate channels BEFORE the assignment due date
  - application forms are available online
  - for medical conditions, medical certificates must be provided
  - penalties apply for late submissions without approved extensions
    (one mark per day, including weekends or public holidays)

appeals

- what if you are not satisfied with the mark your tutor has given you, or you believe there is an error in marking?
  - Firstly, wait 1 week after your assignment has been returned
    (your tutor most likely will have late assignments to mark, and the extra week will give you time to consider the matter fully)
  - Secondly, approach your tutor and ask for further feedback. Explain why you disagree with the mark given.
  - Finally, if an agreement is not reached, you are entitled to have the assignment remarked. To do this:
    • Use the School of Psychology request for remark form
    • be aware that the decision of the second marker is final and your amended mark may be lower
Assessment

- Participation (5%)
  - Not all tutes are mandatory (see learning activities), and absence in emergencies will not be quibbled at. However, participation and contributions to the discussions will be assessed.
  - The dimensions which will be rewarded include: completion of the "pracs" with the guidance of the tutor; demonstrated understanding of the material and/or willingness to ask questions; willingness to engage in discussion of topics of the tute; helpfulness to peers.

Assignment 1 (25%)

- approximately 1500-2000 words
- In the tutorials next week, choose a topic with tutor’s assistance (tutor must approve your choice) *
  * can choose topic later in semester, but next week would be a good start!
- Over the next weeks in the tutorial, you will design a questionnaire in a planned behaviour study on this topic, then write up the study (method) under tutor’s supervision & w/ their help – everyone should get near perfect on these sections!
- You will work on title, abstract, and introduction on your own
- due date:
  - April 16th, 23:55pm
assessment

- **Assignment 2 (20%)**
  - approximately 1500-2000 words
  - Having been given a data set for your study, you will analyse and write up the data (results section) under tutor’s supervision & w/ his or her help – everyone should get near perfect on these sections!
  - You will work on a new title and abstract, plus a discussion section on your own
  - due date:
    - Monday 31\(^{st}\) of May, 23:55pm

How it all fits in

- The planned behaviour model is the dominant model of attitude-behaviour relations
- Used in literally 100s of studies and intervention designs in every area
- Common in both theoretical & applied research
- Because you get heaps of help from the tutor, it will have realistic method & stats (good practice for both hons. proj. and/or future work reports)
- More on this in the tutes next week as well as lecture 2 in class next week
The Exam (50%)

- You complete multiple-choice questions (30%) and short-answer questions (20%)
- Content will be drawn from the lectures primarily but also from material in the textbook
- Exam will be held during the exam period and centrally administered
- You must complete all assessment items in order to pass the course
- At the end of the course I want you to be able to discuss (AOT):
  - what an attitude is;
  - how unconscious or implicit attitudes work;
  - how attitudes are formed, activated, and changed;
  - when people act on their attitudes and when they don’t;
  - the main models of persuasion and how they relate to interpersonal, political, business life etc.;
  - theories of social categorisation;
  - schemas for self, relationships, groups & social situations;
  - the relationship between emotions and cognitions and behaviour.

A note about attendance

- Every Thursday at 10am sharp I will review the week’s readings and discuss what I see to be important points particularly worthy of exam coverage – to encourage punctual attendance.
- If you come in late, please enter quietly and sit near the door rather than rustling around …
- I post detailed slides before every lecture, plus Lectopia (assuming I can get it to work)
- I also keep track of attendance. There is no penalty for skipping class – The participation mark in this class is calculated from the (smaller) tutorials rather than the (larger) class
- I just like to know whether my lectures make a difference (e.g., lower exam marks!) and how I can improve.
### 3122 outcomes in 2009 as a function of attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Fails total (among finishers)</th>
<th>Avg Mark (finishers)</th>
<th>% 6s and 7s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>13% (1%)</td>
<td>62.4 (67)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always / often absent</td>
<td>35% (4%)</td>
<td>50.75 (63.9)</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes absent</td>
<td>9% (0%)</td>
<td>62.0 (65.8)</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely / never absent</td>
<td>3% (0%)</td>
<td>70.4 (72.5)</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite Lectopia, absenteeism in 2009 associated with:
- 4x higher failure rate, lower average grades,
- lower % of 6s and 7s

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### Attend and be paid

- a Peer Note Taker is needed to support a student w/ a disability action plan
- If you plan to attend & take good notes & reckon you could consistently upload your notes w/in 3 days of lecture
- Anybody who is interested to go to the Student Services website and register
The course will be …

- March 4: house-keeping & brief intro
- March 11: measurement + planned behaviour
- March 18: decision-making
- March 25: When behaviour -> attitudes
- April 1: Attitude formation
- April 8th – no lecture - BREAK
- April 15: UQ research
- April 22: Persuasion
- April 29: Social change
- May 6: Attitudes and Information-Processing
- May 13: TBA
- May 20: Social Cognition
- May 27: Emotions – Happiness
- June 3: Overview & Revision

The tutes

**Time slot options:**
- Thursdays 12-2 and 2-4, Friday 10-12
- Tutes are held in computer labs which hold only ~20 each
- You will need to each be working at your own computer for web surfing, writing, data entry & analysis.
- We know most prefer the tute after class, but we can’t accommodate everyone – labs are just too small.

- Sign-up for tutes will occur via my SI-NET from 5pm Friday March 5th
- **Questions** about tute enrollment may be directed to Dr. Louis during class or to k.chan@psy.uq.edu.au afterwards
Attitudes & Social Cognition

- What’s it all about and why is it groovy?
  - It’s about everything
  - It’s about what you don’t know you know
  - It’s about why you do things that you don’t understand
  - It’s about understanding and being able to influence your own unconscious and conscious thought and behaviour
  - As well as others’!
  - It’s about understanding (and developing (?)) advertising, propaganda, & great relationships

How it all fits in

- Social psychology - how the thoughts, feelings & actions of people are influenced by the thoughts, feelings and actions of other people

**Group Processes & Intergroup Relations**

**Interpersonal Relationships**

Social perception, attention, memory, etc.

Conscious & unconscious thoughts, feelings, & behaviour
Topics in Social Cognition

- **Group social cognition:**
  - Stereotype formation, activation, change
  - Liking and disliking groups
  - Changing group relations

- **Interpersonal social cognition:**
  - Impression formation
  - Attribution
  - Liking & disliking people, partners
  - Changing relationships

- **The social cognition of the self:**
  - How do you know who you are?
  - Liking and disliking yourself
  - Changing yourself

How do attitudes & social cognition fit in?

- “Attitudes” is older and vaguer, more field
- Social cognition more lab, v. trendy 1970-2000, continues to dominate North American social psych
- The two overlap

![Diagram showing overlap between Attitudes and Social Cognition]
Attitude work is the most relevant to applied work

- Attitude formation, activation, & change
  - “I like myself"
  - “I like my job"
  - “I like my family"
  - “I like to gamble"
  - “I like Coke and sushi and Mr Beans coffee"
  - “I like peaceniks and environmental activism"
  - “I like to work hard and excel"
  - “I like oodles of money"

Social Cognition is more minimalist, segmented, lab-based

- What do I attend to in myself? You? Other people? Society?
- What do I remember about myself? You? Other people? Society?
  - How do my pre-existing beliefs and emotions shape my thinking?
    - Representations, schemas, scripts!
Examples of current work on attitudes and social cognition

PSYCINFO search: >34,000 articles
- The effects of mortality salience and social dominance orientation on attitudes toward illegal immigrants.
- Disparity between the perceived alcohol-related attitudes of parents and peers increases alcohol risk in college students.
- Insincere flattery actually works: A dual attitudes perspective.
- Dysfunctional attitudes, attributional styles, and phase of illness in bipolar disorder.
- Gender differences in computer attitudes and the choice of technology-related occupations in a sample of secondary students in Spain.

Articles in journal Social Cognition:
- Counterstereotypic exemplars in context: Evidence for intracategory differentiation using implicit measures.
- So far away: The role of subjective temporal distance to future goals in motivation and behavior.
- Lady justice thinks unconsciously: Unconscious thought can lead to more accurate justice judgments.
- Downward self-revision: Erasing possible selves.
- Elaborative metaperceptions in outcome-dependent situations: The diluted relationship between default self-perceptions and metaperceptions.

What is an attitude? Early definitions

An attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on the individual’s response to all objects and situations to which it is related (Allport, 1935).

[Attitudes represent] a more or less permanently enduring state of readiness of mental organization which predisposes an individual to react in a characteristic way (Cantril, 1934).

Attitude is the affect for or against a psychological object (Thurstone, 1931).

An attitude is a tendency to act toward or against something in the environment, which becomes thereby a positive or negative value (Bogardus, 1931).
What is an attitude? 
Early definitions

UNIDIMENSIONAL:
Attitudes are likes and dislikes (Bem, 1970).

Attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).
What are they for?

- "Good-bad" reactions
  - Organize our impressions of the world
  - Occur within a second of social perception
  - Without conscious control (debated*)

- Katz (1960): Knowledge function [schema] vs. utilitarian function [acquire benefits, avoid costs] – instrumental functions

- Herek (1986): Pleasantness of the object (utilitarian) vs of expressing the attitude (symbolic function) – e.g., defends against fear of death ("terror management" – Greenberg et al., 1997)

- Attitudes that elicit approval and belonging serve social identity functions (Shavitt, 1989), value expressive functions (Katz, 1960), social adjustive functions (Smith, Bruner, & White, 1956)

What are they for?

- Knowledge implies thinking (cognitions)
- Symbolic function requires expression (behaviour according to your attitude makes you feel good, in control)
- So does social identity function (behaviour according to your attitude makes others like you)
- The same attitude can serve different functions for different people, or at different times
- So it's not just liking-disliking…
A useful way to understand attitudes:

- **Attitude object** – anything a person discriminates or holds in mind (Bohner & Wänke, p. 5)
  - Babies, beaches, curlews, blue tongues, compost

- **Tripartite model of attitudes**:
  - Cognitive responses and beliefs (“Baby”-”Human infant”-”psych finance manager’s baby”)
  - Affective or emotional responses (“Baby”-”warm fuzzy feelings”-”curiosity”-”revulsion”)
  - Behavioural responses (“Baby”-”Approach” vs. “Avoid”)
  - Early thinking tended to hypothesize discrete components in a causal order of cognition -> affect -> behaviour

Nowadays people tend to model a more flexible network:

- Cognitions can be influenced by affect & action
- Affect can influence cognition, and be influenced by action.
• More on this next week: Attitude measurement
  – Read chapters 1, 2 and 3 of B&W
• Next week we also introduce the theory of planned behaviour – the basis for the assignment
• Tutes start next week – Sign up on my-SImnet from 5pm tomorrow