

**Implicit Social Cognition**  
**Tuesday & Thursday 2-3:15pm**  
**Gilmer 225**

**Instructor:** Kate Ranganath

**Office:** Gilmer 013

**Email:** [ranganath@virginia.edu](mailto:ranganath@virginia.edu)

**Office Phone:** 243.7787

**Office Hours:** Wednesday 2-3pm; by appointment

### **Course Description**

While consciousness provides us with a compelling story about why we think and behave in the ways that we do, much of our mental processing occurs outside of consciousness. In this course we will examine psychological research on those influences in our social lives that exist without our awareness or control.

### **Course Goals**

1. Students will have a thorough understanding of the type of research that exists within the area of implicit social cognition.
2. Students will think critically about experimental methodology for studying implicit social cognition and will have an understanding of the types of methodologies that researchers use in the area of implicit social cognition.
3. Students will have an understanding of the current debates and unanswered question in the area of implicit social cognition.
4. Students will examine how basic research in the area of implicit social cognition can help explain and address social issues in society and in personal lives.

### **Course Overview**

The course structure generally consists of two types of classes. On Tuesdays the class will discuss the week's assigned readings with the aid of one or two student discussion leaders; Thursdays will be lecture-based in order for the instructor to expand on the week's topic more fully.

### **Grading and Course Requirements**

I follow the standard cut offs for grades. 100-97 = A+; 96.99-94 = A; 93.99-90 = A-; 89.99-87 = B+; 86.99-84 = B; 83.99-80 = B-, etc.

*Weekly Readings, Discussion Questions, and Participation (25% of final grade).* Each week students are required to read the assigned articles and to submit two discussion questions inspired by the readings. Questions must be submitted on the Toolkit class discussion board before 12pm on Mondays. Generating discussion questions should help you to think critically about the readings prior to coming to class and should help the discussion leaders in determining what the class is interested in, so please put some thought into your discussion questions.

Meaningful, in-depth discussion is critical to this seminar and students are expected to be engaged and to participate fully. You are responsible for other students' learning.

Attendance and punctuality are required. Each time you miss a class will cost you a step down in your overall course grade (e.g. A- to B+). You are allowed to have two absences without penalty if you make prior arrangements with the instructor.

Please keep in mind that sensitivity is important. Science tolerates and critically evaluates all points of view when they are advanced with sensitivity for those who may not share them. Please keep in mind that your fellow students may not share your religious affiliations, political beliefs, cultural backgrounds, economic, ethnic, or sexual orientations. If you do not wish to be exposed to discussions that may challenge your values and beliefs, then this class is not for you.

*Leading Class Discussion (10% of final grade).* One or two students each week will be responsible for leading Tuesday class discussion beginning with Week 5. Discussion leaders should work together to provide for their classmates a brief summary of each of the assigned articles (~5 minutes) and should organize the discussion question to promote class discussion. Discussion leaders are welcome to include activities relevant to the week's readings or to utilize formats other than group discussion (e.g. small discussion groups), but should first clear any such activities with the instructor. Discussion leaders do not need to submit questions for that week.

*In-Class Writing Assignments (15% of final grade).* Throughout the semester you will be asked to complete short, in-class writing assignments on Thursdays. The writing assignments may require knowledge of the week's materials or any materials covered previously.

*Reaction Papers (50% of final grade).* Rather than one large final paper, students are required to complete five short reaction papers during the course of the semester. In each reaction paper you should do ONE of the following: (a) tie together problems or ideas from a number of readings, (b) provide critical analysis/critique of an article, (c) discuss how the ideas under study pertain to real world phenomena, or d) suggest future research inspired by the readings. You do not have to do all four of these options, but you should do at least three of them. You may turn in the reaction papers at any point in the semester though you must have completed two before Spring Break and may not turn in more than one during the last week of class.

The reaction papers should follow APA format and should be no longer than three typed pages of text. Reaction papers should incorporate information from the readings, class discussion, and lectures. In addition to content, reaction papers will be graded on writing style (e.g. clarity, grammar). Reaction papers should be submitted via email to [ranganath@virginia.edu](mailto:ranganath@virginia.edu) or placed in the mailbox outside of my office door before the time that they are due (keeping in mind that Gilmer is locked after 5pm on Fridays).

## **Honor Code**

All work that you complete for this course must abide by the University of Virginia Honor Code – don't lie, cheat, or steal

## Course Schedule and Readings

All readings will be posted by week on the Materials section of the class Toolkit website at least one week before those discussion questions are due.

<b><u>Week</u></b>	<b><u>Dates</u></b>	<b><u>Topic and Activities</u></b>
1	January 17	Introduction to Implicit Social Cognition: Overview and History
2	January 22 January 24	Introduction to Implicit Social Cognition: Automaticity, Subliminal Priming, and Implicit Attitudes
3	January 29 January 31	Measuring Implicit Attitudes *We will meet in Cabell 210 on January 29th*
4	February 5 No class Feb 7	Special Guests
5	February 12 February 14	Implicit Bias and Behavior – Gender
6	February 19 February 21	Implicit Bias and Behavior – Race
7	February 26 February 28	Implicit Attitudes: Culture or Person?
8	March 4 March 6	Spring Break: Have Fun!
9	March 11 March 13	Implicit Learning and Memory
10	March 18 March 20	Implicit Attitude Formation
11	March 25 March 27	Implicit Attitude Malleability and Change
12	April 1 April 3	Implicit Motives and Goals
13	April 8 April 10	Implicit Well-Being and Self-Esteem
14	April 15 April 17	Automaticity in Ideology, Morality, and Social Justice
15	April 22 April 24	Implicit Attitudes in Marketing and Consumer Research
16	April 29	Last Day of Class: Semester Wrap-Up