COURSE TITLE: Social Psychology

COURSE NUMBER: PSY 301

I. RATIONALE:

Social Psychology is the study of how people influence each other. First, social psychologists look at the behavior of people in groups - how their attitudes and actions are shaped by face-to-face contact with others. Secondly, they look at the more remote influences in society, i.e. books, movies, television, social customs and other events that attempt to persuade us to "change our minds". Finally, they pay special attention to the psychological basis of social conflict (such as war, crime, racism) in an effort to develop more humane and constructive relationships among people.

As Psychology professionals, we recognize that reactions to trauma come in many forms. The content of this course, and discussions about trauma from different perspectives, may bring about unexpected and unsettling reactions. Responses to trauma are often strategies that survivors have developed to keep themselves safe, and therefore really reflect strength and resiliency. Recognizing how trauma impacts anyone is an important part of skill building for creating trauma-informed services and systems. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor at any time during the course if you would like to discuss, privately, your reactions to the content we are reviewing and/or the discussions we are having.

II. MAJOR INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

GOAL A: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the field of social psychology.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

A-1 Define social psychology
A-2 Compare and contrast social psychology with psychology and sociology.
A-3 Describe how the study of social psychology has changed over time.
A-4 Identify key issues in the study of social psychology.

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GOAL B:
The student will be familiar with classic research in social psychology.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

B-1 Name specific researchers in social psychology (e.g. Milgram, Asche, Zimbardo).
B-2 Evaluate the research design of a study in social psychology.
B-3 Identify research techniques that could be useful in his/her own work.

GOAL C:
The student will demonstrate understanding of key constructs of social psychology including attribution, bias, conformity, mass communication, social cognition, aggression, and cooperation.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

C-1 Define the construct.
C-2 Describe how it is measured.
C-3 Explain what studies have found about the construct.
C-4 Describe implications of the findings for everyday life.

GOAL D: Understand the different ways that trauma may influence individuals and societies psychologically, and the impact it has on interactions within and between cultures that may contribute to traumatization.

Learning Outcomes: The student will be able to:

D-1 Explain the intersection of psychological trauma with race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and national origin.
D-2 Identify examples of psychological trauma that appear in the media, in social and cultural experiences, and in law and ethics.
D-3 Describe how a trauma-informed approach can help a traumatized system’s capacity to effectively respond to the needs of affected individuals or groups and the capacity of the systems themselves to adjust and recover from trauma.

GOAL E:
The student will use appropriate written and oral communication skills.
Learning Outcomes: The student will:

E-1  Communicate information orally in a logical and grammatical manner.
E-2  Present written information using standard APA style.