Purpose: The study of emotion is a sprawling topic that involves disciplines as varied as philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, biology, and economics. Needless to say, it’s impossible to do justice to all this variety in a single-semester seminar. To make it more manageable, the core component of this seminar is the social aspect of emotion. How do emotions influence cognition, decision-making, and self-regulation? To what extent do emotions help individuals navigate the social world including social perception, group perception, and relationships? In exploring these questions, our readings will come from social psychology, supplemented by affective neuroscience, clinical, health, and evolutionary psychology, and also a smattering of philosophy.

Our readings will cluster around 5 sets of questions:
1. What are emotions? Why do they exist? Are there universal primary emotions?
2. How do emotions and cognitions interact? Is there a bright line separating them?
3. Do emotions grease social interactions? Do they help us read and feel other people’s mental states?
4. What are the different ways in which emotions shape judgment and decision-making?
5. What impact do emotions have on intergroup relations?

Our class discussions will have the overarching goals of critiquing and evaluating the scientific merit of this research with an eye toward (a) integrating findings from different disciplines, and (b) trying to address the above-mentioned questions. Occasionally, the readings will be directly relevant to a much-discussed issue of the day (e.g., autism, meditation). Your final research paper for the course should be designed around your own specific research interests as long as it links to emotion and social cognition in some way.

Requirements

• **Discussion questions:** In order for all of us to get the most out of each class meeting, it is important that we all do the reading ahead of time, and spend some time thinking critically about the issues raised in the readings. In order to facilitate this type of critical thinking and promote class discussion, I would like each of you to generate one discussion question once a week based on that week’s reading. You’ll either write a question for the Tuesday class meeting or the Thursday class meeting. For more details, look at each class meeting later in the syllabus where I specify which group of students will write discussion questions for which class meeting. If your last name begins with A-L you’re in Group 1, if your last name begins with M-Z you’re in Group 2.

One of you will be the discussion leader every class starting February 2. In order to get all of us to think about the readings ahead of time, one discussion question based on each week’s readings should be submitted to the discussion leader and me via e-mail every Monday and Wednesday evening by 8:00 PM. The discussion leader will be responsible for organizing the questions thematically, adding his/her own, circulating the organized list to the rest of the class via email, and leading class discussion the next day. The discussion leader will also bring hardcopies of the list of questions to class for everybody. I would like the discussion leader to do 2 things in class: (1) give a brief, 5-10
minute summary of the primary issues raised in the readings with an eye toward synthesizing themes across articles; (2) facilitate group discussion based on the submitted questions. (8% of your final grade)

- **Class participation**: is required every week. The goal of class discussion is to integrate and critically evaluate the readings, identify unresolved questions and ideas, and evaluate the implications of the research for real world phenomena. I will evaluate not only the quantity of class participation, but rather the quality of ideas raised by each of you. If for any reason you are not able to attend a class meeting, please let me know ahead of time. (8% of your grade)

- **Short papers** (3 total, 3 double-spaced pages): each paper should be based on one of the articles you read in class or you may also integrate multiple readings. Your paper should: (a) raise an issue left unresolved by the article(s) you read or point out a flaw in the paper, (b) explain why this problem is important, and (c) propose a study that will fix this problem. These papers should be submitted to me on **Feb 21, March 13, and March 29**, with no more than one paper covering a single topic. To prevent me from being unintentionally biased, please don’t put your name on the front of your paper; put it on the back so that I can grade the paper without knowing who wrote it. You may revise these papers if you want to improve your grade. All revisions must be submitted by the last day of class. (13% per paper for a total of 39% of your grade)

- **End-of-term research paper**: should be a detailed research proposal with: (a) an abstract that briefly lays out the main thesis of the paper, the planned study, and expected results; (b) an introduction that defines the research question and reviews related literature; (c) a methods section that proposes an original study to answer the research question, (d) a results section that systematically lays out the predicted findings, and (e) a discussion section that links the proposed study to broader implications about what the results might mean for the nature of emotions. Ideally, this research paper should be a project that you are interested in conducting in the future (45% of the grade)
  **Due March 1**: Two-page write-up of your paper topic. Include your main research question, planned experiment, and references.
  **Due April 10**: Complete draft of your final paper.
  **Due May 4 (Friday)**: Final version of your final paper.

**Readings**

All readings are available electronically through e-reserves at DuBois Library (see attached instructions on how to get into the e-reserves account for our class).

**Academic honesty**

All students are expected to adhere scrupulously to the University policy concerning academic honesty. For more information on the University's academic honesty policy, please visit the following website: [www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acad honesty](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acad honesty)
Tue Jan 24: *Introductions and logistics*

Thu Jan 26: no class (I’m away at a conference)

Tue Jan 31: *What is Emotion? Definitions*


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

Thu Feb 2: *What is Emotion? Cont’d*


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Tue Feb 7: *Are emotions evolutionary adaptations?*


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

Thu Feb 9: *What’s the relation between emotion and cognition? Part I*


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS
Tue Feb 14: What’s the relation between emotion and cognition? Part II


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

Thu Feb 16: What’s the relation between emotion and cognition? Part III


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Tue Feb 21: What’s the relation between emotion and cognition? Part IV

SHORT PAPER 1 DUE IN CLASS


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

Thu Feb 23: Emotion Regulation Part I


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Tue Feb 28: Emotion Regulation Part II


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS
Thu Mar 1: *Emotion regulation Part III*

SUBMIT TWO-PAGE PROPOSAL OF FINAL PAPER (main thesis, ideas for studies, references)


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Tue Mar 6: *Sociability and Emotions: Reading others’ emotions Part I*


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

Thu Mar 8: *Sociability and Emotions: Reading others’ emotions Part II*


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Tue Mar 13: *Sociability and Emotions: Feeling others’ emotions Part I*

SHORT PAPER 2 DUE IN CLASS TODAY


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

Thu Mar 15: No class (I’m out of town for work)

Tue Mar 20 and Thu Mar 22: No class (Spring break)
Tue Mar 27: Sociability and Emotions: Feeling others’ emotions Part II


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Thu Mar 29: Effects of emotion on judgment and decision-making Part I

SHORT PAPER 3 DUE IN CLASS


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

Tue Apr 3: Effects of emotion on judgment and decision-making Part II


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Thu Apr 5: Emotion & intergroup relations: How emotions influence implicit appraisals of outgroups


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

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Tue Apr 10: Emotion & intergroup relations: How emotions influence explicit outgroup appraisals

COMPLETE DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Thu Apr 12: Emotion and intergroup relations: Group status and emotion


GROUP 1 QUESTIONS

Tue Apr 17: No class (Monday’s schedule)

Thu Apr 19: Emotion and intergroup relations: Intergroup emotion theory


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS

Tue Apr 24: Emotion and intergroup relations: Anger and disgust


GROUP 2 QUESTIONS
**Thu Apr 26: Emotion and intergroup relations: Sociofunctional theory of prejudice**


**GROUP 1 QUESTIONS**

**Tue May 1: course evaluations & wrap-up**

FINAL PAPER DUE ON FRIDAY MAY 4 BY 5PM