

**MODULE TITLE** Social Psychology of Communication  
**MODULE CODE** CMM109  
**EFFECTIVE FROM** January 2026  
**MODULE LEVEL** 4  
**CREDIT POINTS** 20

<b>MODULE INSTANCE(S)</b>	Location	Semester	Module Coordinator	Teaching Staff
	Belfast	2	Porter, Kerry-Ann	Porter, Kerry-Ann; Stapleton, Karyn

**HOURS**

Independent study	164 hrs
Seminars	12 hrs
Lectures	24 hrs
<b>TOTAL EFFORT HOURS</b>	<b>200 hrs</b>

**ACADEMIC SUBJECT** Communication

### **RATIONALE**

This module is designed to introduce students to key Social Psychology theories and concepts directly related to the study of Interpersonal Communication. It explores social behaviour and interaction in a variety of social contexts, and is concerned with both how we as individuals understand ourselves, others and how our social environment shapes these understandings and process.

In terms of Graduate Attributes, participation in this module will allow students the opportunity to develop in the key competencies. Both the content explored in weekly lectures/seminars and the assessment strategies allow for this development. In terms of being Collaborate Professionals students will work with others and take responsibility for their engagement and participation both in weekly meetings and in the final presentation. They will be required to keep minutes, which is reflective of the professional context. They will continue to enhance their skills as effective communicators through participation in weekly seminars and final presentation. As Active Citizens they will reflect on their own understanding of self and importantly of others through the various topics explored, eg prosocial behaviour; social influence, social perception; self & identity - these topics also encourage them to become more developed Thinking Individuals, reflecting on their own perceptions of others and the environment, as well as the treatment of others more broadly in society. The continual engagement with research both in terms of what research actually is, the challenges associated with research and reading research papers, further enhances their ability to become more Engaged Learners, researchers and critical thinkers.

A number of SDGs are met within this module. Specifically, through both the study of specific social psychology theories and concepts as well as the application of these as examples/assessment, students are helped to better understand 'everyday life' both in terms of the experiences of the individual but also society's treatment of others. As such, the

following SDGs are achieved: 1 No poverty; 2 Zero hunger; 3 Good Health and Wellbeing; 5 Gender equality; 10 Reduced inequalities; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 12 Responsible consumption & production; 13 Climate Action and finally 16 Peace, justice & strong institutions.

## **AIMS**

The aims of this module are to introduce students to the fields of social psychology and communication, exploring key social psychological concepts and aspects of the interactive process and encouraging students to apply this knowledge base to everyday situations.

We will explore a range of models & theories, or ways of thinking about how, why and with what effect we communicate with others, treat others, and understanding this in the context of everyday life and students' own personal experiences.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Successful students will be able to:

- 1 Identify key theories and concepts from social psychology and their application to enhance our understanding of interpersonal communication and show awareness of self and others in interpersonal contexts
- 2 Apply ideas and concepts to illuminate some everyday social events and situations and begin to evaluate evidence and construct balanced arguments.
- 3 Discuss some of the underlying factors that shape the interactive process in functional and dysfunctional ways
- 4 Analyse interrelated concepts, principles and assumptions relating to people and how they engage with one-another.

## **CONTENT**

### **The nature of Social Psychology and Communication**

Key related theories from Social Psychology and their relationship to Interpersonal Communication and the communicative process.

### **Aspects of Social Psychology and Communication**

Understanding concepts such as self-awareness & identity, self-presentation & impression management, social attraction, social perception, social influence and prosocial behaviour.

### **Application of theory & concepts**

Developing understanding of these influential social psychological theories and concepts, and their application to everyday situations such as our own close relationships, working environments and broader (inter)group & societal contexts.

## **LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS**

Lectures will present theoretical, conceptual and empirical ideas through the traditional face-to-face lecture format, during which time use will also be made of practical exercises and exploring the various concepts in film/documentaries.

Seminars will engage students in presentation and discussion of ideas with a particular focus on the group work for the assessed presentations. To help develop the research skills required for the presentation, readings, in the form of journal articles, will be set for each week and then in seminar time students will answer questions in a group and then present

their thoughts at the all class discussion. Students will also be given time during later seminars to work on the group task thus providing them with a structured approach to the group work element, and allowing lecturing staff to facilitate this process.

## **ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK**

### **Written examination [50%]**

The examination is 2 hours long. It is a seen exam and students will be provided with the questions in week 11 of the semester and will be guided in essay planning and development. Students must answer 2 questions from a choice of 5 given.

### **Written assignment [50%]**

You are required to write a 2000 word essay in response to the following:

"In consideration of Goffman's Dramaturgical Model of Interaction (Dramaturgy) explore its contribution to our understanding of social interaction with others. In order to help you explain this you should use one actual example (context) from your everyday life (likely one of Workplace, Home, Social Life which would include, but not limited to, Sport, Nights Out, Church etc...)"

The following is a guideline structure to help you write your essay, and you may use keywords underlined as subheadings in your essay:

**Introduction:** briefly explain what your essay is going to be about. Provide a brief explanation of Dramaturgy and what it focuses on, including an explanation of Impression Management & Self-Presentation (approximately 500 words)

**Describe your chosen situation and give details of your role in this context, the regions in this context and the other 'actors' involved.** (approximately 300 words)

**Identify the various aspects of Goffman's Model:** explain the different aspects of the model (i.e.: Performance; Regions; Roles etc...) and evaluate the model by applying the different aspects of your chosen social situation to the Dramaturgical model. From what you have read about the model, do YOU think it is useful in helping us understand social life? Do you think some aspects are more important and significant for our understanding of social interaction, than others? (approximately 900 words)

**Conclusion:** Conclude your essay with a brief summary of what you have discussed, and why you think your essay has helped increase our understanding of Dramaturgy. (approximately 300 words)

Timely formative feedback will be provided throughout the module in line with the University's guidelines on assessment and feedback. There will also be continual feedback

on the progress of groups toward their final presentation submission. Summative feedback and written commentary, and final mark will be provided within three weeks of the presentation. Marks for exams will be presented via the University student portal.

50% Coursework

50% Examination

## **READING LIST**

### **Required:**

Baron, R & Byrne, D. (2003) Social Psychology, Allyn & Bacon  
Baron, R. & Branscombe, N. (2014) & (2017) (2023) Social Psychology, Pearson  
Beebe, S., Beebe, S. & Redmond, M. (2014) Interpersonal Communication: Relating to Others, Pearson Education  
Brown, C. (2006) Social Psychology, SAGE  
Crisp, R. & Turner, R. (2011) Essential Social Psychology, SAGE  
DeVito, J. (2015) The Interpersonal Communication Book, Pearson  
Hogg, M. & Vaughan, G. (2014) & (2018) (2022) Social Psychology, Pearson  
Smith, R. et al (2015) Social Psychology, Psychology Press  
Sutton, R. & Douglas, K. (2020) Social Psychology, MacMillan Educ.

## **SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

This module is designed to introduce students to key Social Psychology theories and concepts directly related to the study of Interpersonal Communication. It explores social behaviour and interaction in a variety of social contexts, and is concerned with both how we as individuals understand ourselves, and how our social environment shapes us. Students are introduced to the fields of social psychology and communication, exploring key aspects of the interactive process and encouraging students to apply this knowledge base to everyday situations.