

## Reference list PSY4111 *Applied Social Psychology*

### Module 2 *Motivation and Self-regulation*; Autumn 2018, PSI, UiO

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Module 2 of the Master level course "Applied Social Psychology" deals with theories and empirical findings on motivation and self-regulation in humans. In particular, we will examine what motivates people, how they work towards goals, how they overcome temptations, and how their social relations are relevant for what they want to achieve and for whether and how they achieve it. We will focus in all of this on how we can support people in finding something they want to pursue, in staying motivated to achieve a positive change in their lives, and in successfully planning their endeavor. We will also address how one can influence the behavior of large groups of people to be more in line with the common good, and how we can evaluate the effectiveness of such interventions.

The module consists in five units, each comprising a lecture and a seminar. The units are *Why we strive*, *Planning*, *Temptations*, *The Social Cure*, and *Intervention*. Each lecture gives an overview of the topic, and in each seminar, we will discuss the texts for that week in small groups and do a practical group activity. Both lectures and seminars require your active participation, thus you should only take the course if you can attend at least 80 % of the classes. Let me know if you are absent due to unforeseen circumstances so that we can find a solution together. There are 2-4 core texts for each week. You should try to read all core texts, preferably before the lecture, but definitely before the seminar. If you do not manage, focus on only one text. You will be able to assign yourself to one of the texts (as your primary text) on Canvas, and it is important that you do so, so that we have an equal number of experts for each topic in each seminar. I will provide guiding questions for some of the texts. For the others, the instruction is to read the text, note or mark 2-3 points that you found particularly noteworthy and interesting, and formulate 2-3 questions about the text (things you did not understand, things you doubt, things you'd like to discuss with the group or simply things you wondered while reading).

In the end, you will write a short essay with an indicative word count of 1500 (indicative meaning that you may write a somewhat longer or shorter text than that) and 6-15 references. The essay will deal with interventions relevant to the topic of the module. I will give more information on its content during the course in due course. If you would like to conduct an empirical investigation of some sort and write about that, that could be a possibility as well. Just ask me! Prior to handing in the essay, you will present the first results of your work orally in a group. The exam form of the module is portfolio evaluation, meaning that the various course activities as well as the oral presentation and the essay all count towards the final grade (pass/fail). If needed for an exchange program, you can also get a grade on an A-F scale.

Below, I give some more information on the topics, activities and on the reading list. All course material, including the core pensum and additional articles, will be accessible via Canvas.

#### 1 *Why we strive*

The first lecture gives an overview of the module and of motivational constructs relevant to understanding human striving from basic reward circuitry in the brain to higher order values that guide important life decisions.

## Topics

- Introduction of the module
- *Quiz on prior knowledge*
- Evolution, needs and motives
- Self-determination theory
- Need-based regulation
- Emotion and motivation
- Wanting systems in the brain
- Reward/punishment
- *Determine your behavioral inhibition and behavioral activation index*
- Developmental changes in motivation
- Goal representation
- Values
- Temperament
- Approach and avoidance, ought and ideal goals
- Expectancy x value

## Core pensum (to be discussed in seminar)

Armitage, C. J., & Conner, M. (2007). Social cognition models and health behaviour : A structured review. *Psychology & Health, 15*, 173-189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08870440008400299>

Elliot, A. J., & Niesta, D. (2009). Goals in the context of the hierarchical model of approach-avoidance motivation. In G. B. Moskowitz & H. Grant (Eds.), *The psychology of goals* (pp. 56–76). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Kruglanski, A. W., Chernikova, M., Babush, M., Dugas, M., & Schumpe, B. M. (2015). The Architecture of Goal Systems. In *Advances in Motivation Science* (Vol. 2, pp. 69–98). <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.adms.2015.04.001>

## Seminar activity

Collecting and discussing your goals for the course in relation to the motivational factors introduced in the lecture.

## Follow-up activity

Interview one friend on their ultimate motive for a goal or action.

## 2 Planning

This lecture deals with planning and implementing actions in pursuit of a goal. In particular, we will discuss characteristic features of goals, how they relate to the likelihood of successful completion and to satisfaction with one's achievements. We will then discuss planning strategies aimed at facilitating habit change or aimed at managing complex projects. Finally, we are going to examine the results of a few intervention studies using such strategies.

## Topics

- Rubicon-model
- Characteristics of goals
- Definition of self-regulation
- The Tote-model

- Positive affect as motivator
- Mental contrasting
- What is a good goal?
- Effort and persistence
- Planning complex projects
- *Using Trello as a planning tool (hands-on exercise)*
- Planning to overcome the intention-behavior gap
- Action and coping planning
- Implementation intentions
- *Q&A on the current master thesis project: "Implementation intentions as a tool for changing one's habits towards walking or cycling more"*

#### Core pensum (to be discussed in seminar)

Oettingen, G., & Stephens, E. J. (2009). Fantasies and motivationally intelligent goal setting. In G. B. Moskowitz & H. Grant (Eds.), *The psychology of goals* (pp. 153–173). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Sheeran, P. (2002). Intention-Behavior Relations: A Conceptual and Empirical Review. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 12, 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14792772143000003>

Verhoeven, A. A. C., Adriaanse, M. A., de Vet, E., Fennis, B. M., & de Ridder, D. T. D. (2014). Identifying the “if” for “if-then” plans: Combining implementation intentions with cue-monitoring targeting unhealthy snacking behaviour. *Psychology & Health*, 29, 1476–1492. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2014.950658>

#### Seminar activity

- Brief report on the interviews
- Apply an MC/II intervention to a current goal of yours (together with a partner).

### 3 Temptations

The lecture discusses what temptations are, what kinds of conflicts can arise during goal pursuit and how to deal with them.

#### Topics

- Detecting temptations
- Counteractive control strategies
- *Quiz on reinforcement learning*
- Reinforcement plans (self-management interventions)
- Mindfulness-interventions for resisting temptations
- Impulsivity as a personality variable
- Hot and cold states
- The representation of goals on different levels of construal
- Delay of gratification and hyperbolic discounting

#### Core pensum (to be discussed in the seminar)

Fishbach, A., & Converse, B. A. (2011). Identifying and Battling Temptation. In K. D. Vohs & R. F. Baumeister (Eds.), *Handbook of Self-Regulation: Research, Theory, and Applications* (2nd ed., pp. 244–260). New York: Guilford Press.

Keesman, M., Aarts, H., Häfner, M., & Papies, E. K. (2017). Mindfulness Reduces Reactivity to Food Cues: Underlying Mechanisms and Applications in Daily Life. *Current Addiction Reports*, 4, 151–157. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40429-017-0134-2>

Nordgren, L. F., Van Der Pligt, J., & Van Harreveld, F. (2008). The Instability of health cognitions: Visceral states influence self-efficacy and related health beliefs. *Health Psychology*, 27, 722–727. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-6133.27.6.722>

#### Seminar activity

Practice motivational interviewing in groups of three on own motivational challenges.

### 4 The Social Cure

The lecture focuses on social connectedness as target for intervention, as condition for intervention and as an active ingredient of interventions.

#### Topics

In particular, we will discuss

- norms,
- contagion,
- responsibility,
- challenge and
- relationships

as important mechanisms through which our strivings and behaviors are influenced by others.

Next, we will examine interventions using social factors for behavior change. These are

- Community-based social marketing,
- Interventions using social identity and
- Interventions using social comparison

#### Core pensum

Allcott, H., & Rogers, T. (2012). *The short-run and long-run effects of behavioral interventions: Experimental evidence from energy conservation* (NBER working paper series No. 18492). Retrieved from <http://www.nber.org/papers/w18492>

Haslam, C., Cruwys, T., Haslam, S. A., Dingle, G., & Chang, M. X.-L. (2016). Groups 4 Health: Evidence that a social-identity intervention that builds and strengthens social group membership improves mental health. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 194, 188–195. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2016.01.010>

Mckenzie-Mohr, D., & Schultz, P. W. (2012). Choosing Effective Behavior Change Tools. *Paper Presented at the Behavior, Energy and Climate Change Conference*. Retrieved from <http://media.cbsm.com/uploads/1/BECC.pdf>

Rawn, C. D., & Vohs, K. D. (2011). When people strive for self-harming goals: Sacrificing personal health for interpersonal success. In K. D. Vohs & R. F. Baumeister (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation: Research, theory, and applications* (2nd ed., pp. 374–389). New York: Guilford Press.

## Seminar activity

Small group work on intervention studies with a focus on social elements.

## 5 Intervention

The lecture will give an overview over practical issues important for designing and conducting an intervention, including factors important for mode choice (online vs. offline) and persuasion vs. nudging. For each of these, we will discuss examples of interventions that have used these elements.

### Topics

- Some principles for intervention
- Nudging
- Persuasion
- Gamification
- example: min vej
- Evaluation

### Core pensum (to be discussed in the lecture)

Frederiks, E. R., Stenner, K., & Hobman, E. V. (2014). Household energy use: Applying behavioural economics to understand consumer decision-making and behaviour. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 41, 1385–1394. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rser.2014.09.026>

Salmon, S. J., Fennis, B. M., De Ridder, D. T. D., Adriaanse, M. A., & De Vet, E. (2014). Health on impulse: When low self-control promotes healthy food choices. *Health Psychology*, 33, 103–109. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031785>

## Seminar activity

In the seminar, we discuss first our experiences with pursuing our individual goals. Please prepare for by

- evaluating your goal progress
- assessing what helped and what hindered goal progress
- evaluating whether and how the mental contrasting helped
- evaluating whether and how the implementation intention helped
- evaluating what role other people played in your reaching or failing to reach the goal.
- any lessons learned for doing an intervention?

Second, we will debate the pros and cons of using nudging as a behavior change tool. Each group will read articles with relevant arguments for their position.

- group nudging: please argue for the position that nudging is highly effective and unproblematic.
- group contra nudging: please argue for the position that nudging is problematic.