1) General Overview:

This course will survey classic and contemporary conceptualizations of the attitude construct with a focus on understanding the question, "What is an attitude?" In doing so, we will examine the cognitive processes that underlie attitude formation and expression and the practical and theoretical issues that have presented themselves as the field has attempted to measure this construct.

2) Course Website:

The syllabus and all course materials are available on my lab website: [http://psych.colorado.edu/~chlo0473/teaching.html](http://psych.colorado.edu/~chlo0473/teaching.html).

3) Class Meetings:

(As always), every student is expected to have read the assigned articles and come to class ready to discuss each. Conversations will center on the larger theoretical issues presented by each set of readings (i.e., what is an attitude, is there an “implicit attitude”, what does an IAT measure, etc.) as well as critiques and laudations of the individual articles that are covered (i.e., what you liked & what you didn’t). Students are encouraged to use the class sessions to actively explore those aspects of the topics and articles that they don’t understand.

The goal is to actively improve our understanding of these issues by focusing our (substantial) collective resources on a particular topic/set of readings. We should all have a more accurate understanding of the human condition by the end of the five weeks.

4) Weekly Assignments – **E-MAILED TO ME BY 5PM THE NIGHT BEFORE CLASS:**

Each Tuesday by 5pm, students should e-mail me (chris.loersch@colorado.edu) a set of three questions that they would like to raise for the in-class discussion. **Please include 5606 in the subject line.** At least two of these questions should cover issues that connect two (or more) of the week’s readings. Remember, these should be questions that make the group think and comment, things you would bring up if you were the course instructor. I will post everyone’s questions on the course website by the end of the evening.

* **Everyone should read through the posted questions before class.** *

The presence of a faculty member should not be a requirement for these readings and questions to generate a fruitful and interesting multiple-hour conversation.

5) Final Paper – **DUE BY MIDNIGHT ON WEDNESDAY, 12/16:**

For the final paper, you will analyze a new set of (actual) MTurk data. The experiment basically features a 2 (attitude topic: race vs. pets) x 2 (measure type: implicit, explicit) mixed design. Participants
complete two (.5) different implicit measures and series of explicit measures about one of two attitude objects (plus a few individual difference scales & demographics). Your task is to analyze the data and provide a theoretical discussion of why the different measures do or do not relate to one another. The paper should include three parts: 1) a ½ - 1 page analysis introduction outlining the analytical plan you will use to answer the focal question (i.e., why different measures do or do not provide similar attitude estimates); 2) 1 – 2 pages presenting the key results that were obtained; and 3) a 2 – 3 page “General Discussion” section that discusses the theoretical reasons for divergence or convergence among the key measures (plus whatever else you might think is relevant/important).

All page number guidelines are soft.

* Note: Please do not simply report every correlation and list whether the relationships are or are not significant. Imagine that you’re writing a manuscript that will help the field understand what mental content is being tapped by the measures and why this content is likely to be similar or different when assessed using the various DVs. Some measures (e.g., individual difference scales) have been included just in case they help you make sense of the data. They do not have to be included.

*Data available for download here. The data must be cleaned before analyses are done. CSV files are the original raw data. ELXS files are sorted by sj and trial and include a “DataCheck” pivot table that will allow you to clean the data more easily. The pivot table lists the number of times a particular subject completed each trial for each task. Any subject that has missing data or double (or triple or quadruple) data for some trials should be deleted for that task. The Study.HTML file contains the full code. Sample the procedure here: http://psych.colorado.edu/~chlo0473/canvas/Study.html.

6) Grades: Final course grades will be based in equal parts upon weekly assignment completion, in-class discussion participation, and final paper performance.

Weekly Readings:

Week 1 – 11/04: Overview & History


Student Questions/Comments

Week 2 – 11/11: Formation


**Student Questions/Comments**

Week 3 – 11/18: Function


**Student Questions/Comments**

11/25 – Thanksgiving Break

Week 4 – 12/02: Measurement


**Student Questions/Comments**

Week 5 – 12/09: Selected Theories*


*Note: For more thorough coverage, see: Social Cognition, 25(5), Special Issue: What is an Attitude?