As a result of my classes students should be able to transfer course material to novel problems and to creatively analyze situations and contexts they encounter. For instance, when reading about a current event, I’d love for students to say, “Whoa, I totally get why people think/feel/behave this way; this is a classic example of xyz theory!” To get students to this goal, I break down this process in class, allow them to practice it, and use out-of-class assignments to assess their ability to apply course material.

In one assignment, student groups work on a persuasion campaign for an issue they care about. The goal is for them to critically analyze a current persuasion campaign and improve upon it using social psychology. I try to be very clear on how their work will be assessed. I emphasize that I’m looking for them to demonstrate their ability to analyze a current persuasion campaign from a social psychological perspective, propose improvements for the campaign based on course material, and design a study to evaluate their proposal.

—Brittany Liu Psychology