

introduction to psychology (psyc100-02)
spring 2014
mwf 9:40 - 10:40 a.m.

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course description and overview:

This class will introduce you to key ideas, controversies, and research in the very broad field of psychology. The field is so broad in large part because we humans are so complex! We are an amazing interplay of biological, psychological, social, and cultural events and influences. The course will introduce you to how psychologists think, ask questions, and conduct research from biological, cognitive, social, and cultural perspectives in order to understand why and how we think and behave in the ways that we do. It will begin to teach you how to “think like a psychologist” and will help you develop general critical thinking skills. Because the class is introductory, we will move quite quickly through many topics. There are intermediate and advanced courses offered in the department on virtually every area that is covered in the course; I strongly encourage you to take more courses on any topic that particularly interests you.

The course also has a laboratory component. You will meet in a separate lab section for an additional 1.5 hours a week with our lab instructor, Jamie Atkins. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn more – in a much more “hands on” way – about how research is conducted in the field. That class has its own syllabus and requirements. Sometimes the topics you will be working on in the lab will coincide exactly with what we’re learning in our class at the time; other times, our timing will be a bit out of synch but it will all come together in the end. Your performance in the lab is included in your grade for this course.

course goals:

- develop critical thinking skills
 - find, evaluate, and analyze relevant ideas, information, data
 - understand multiple perspectives on an issue or idea
- learn and apply important concepts in the field of psychology
- learn basic research methods in psychology
- understand and appreciate human complexity and diversity

required text and readings [available at the campus bookstore or through the MCSG Academic Affairs Committee's Textbook Reserve Program]:

- Myers, D. G. (2013). *Psychology* (10th edition). NY: Worth Publishers.
- Additional readings will be available via the course Moodle site.

requirements:

It is your primary responsibility to come to class prepared, having read and thought about the readings for the day. Although this is primarily a lecture-based course, you will also be expected to be an active participant in class. Participation may mean a lot of different things – showing up prepared for class; paying close attention to the material being presented; sharing your ideas and thoughts; listening well to others' ideas; asking questions; connecting the course material to issues in your life or the lives of other people you know, and/or to issues on campus and in the world, etc.

In addition, the course has the following requirements:

- **field trip report** This assignment will be discussed during the first week of class and is posted on Moodle.
- **four reaction papers/in-class writing** over the course of the semester (due dates are on the syllabus). This 2-3 page (typed, double-spaced) paper is an opportunity for you to think "on paper" about the article(s) (not the textbook chapter) that is/are assigned for that day. The first half page or so should be a summary, in your own words, of the article and its key points. The remainder is your response to the reading: your opinions and reactions to the article and/or any unanswered questions you have about the material covered in the article. There will also be some in-class writing assignments throughout the semester (see last page of syllabus about additional readings).
- **hour exams** There will be five, non-cumulative hour exams throughout the semester. You may drop the one lowest grade you receive on an exam. As the grading system allows for one examination grade to be dropped, NO make-up exams will be given except under extraordinary circumstances (which will require documentation from the health center or the Dean of Students). Missing an examination (beyond the ONE hour exam that may be dropped) without prior approval by me will result in a grade of zero for the missed exam.
- **research paper** You will have the opportunity to write a paper that reviews psychological research in an area of your choosing. Details about the assignment will be posted to the Moodle site.

your final grade will be calculated as follows:

class participation	5%
reaction papers/in-class writing/field trip report	10%
exams (4 @ 13% each; lowest grade dropped)	52%
research paper	13%
laboratory	15%
research participation (or alternative)	5%

course policies:

- academic integrity: I expect all of you to follow the college's guidelines regarding academic integrity, outlined in the Student Handbook. Please talk to me if you are not clear how these guidelines apply to the course. I will report any suspicion of academic dishonesty (including plagiarism and cheating, see the detailed descriptions of these in the Academic Honesty handout) to the Dean of Academic Programs. Academic dishonesty may result in a zero on the assignment or in a failing grade in the course.
- late work: You may not receive extensions on work in the class, except in the most extraordinary circumstances (in which you will need documentation from the Dean of Students' Office or Health Services). Reaction papers will receive a "check-

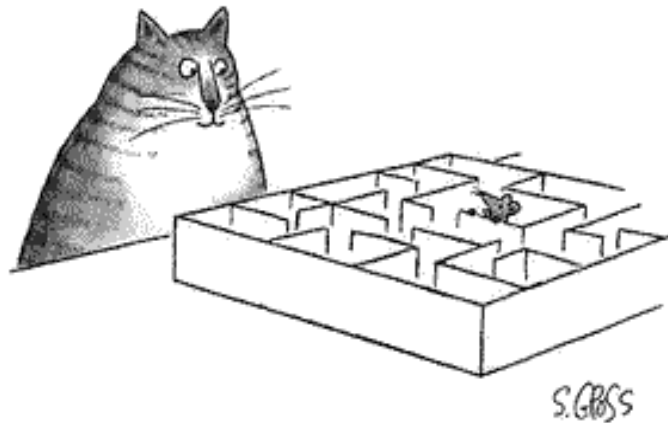
minus" if they are turned in late (but it's a lot better to turn it in late than to get a "0" factored into your grade!). Papers (including reaction papers and your final paper) that are turned in late for any reason (besides an extraordinary circumstance) will have a third of a grade taken off for each day that it is late (e.g., a B+ would become a B if you hand in work any time after the exact time that it is due – the "day late" begins immediately after the time the assignment is due). The exams may not be made up (or taken early) as described above.

- incompletes: I will only grant incompletes under extraordinary circumstances that occur in the second part of the semester. This will not include being really busy at the end of the semester.
- written assignments: Please type, double-spaced with 12-point font, all of your written assignments for this course. Please do not use margins that are larger than 1 inch – all around. Don't use smaller margins, or smaller font, either. Length is not necessarily strength, but when I expect you to write at least a page on a topic, I'd like it to be a full page!
- religious observance: If you will miss class because of a religious observance, please let me know in advance to make alternate arrangements.
- cell phones: Please turn your cell phones and other mobile devices off or to a (completely) silent (vibrate is not silent!) mode while in class. Except under extraordinary circumstances, you may not make or accept phone calls or text messages during class. If you know you are expecting a call or text in an emergency situation, please try to let me know in advance of class that this may happen. If you must take a call, do so quietly outside of the classroom.
- my commitment to accessibility: I am committed to creating an accessible class that ensures that every student can participate fully in course activities and benefit from course materials. I would be happy to talk to any of you about how to maximize your experience in this class.
 - What I will do for every student:
 - Post assignments at least three weeks in advance of when they are due (when possible)
 - Share PowerPoints and other materials used in class lectures (where applicable)
 - Meet with you individually during office hours
 - Facilitate your connection to the MAX Center or other sources of study/writing support
 - Provide an extra 20 minutes to complete an exam
 - Submit an Early Academic Warning and/or contact the Dean of Students when your academic performance slips or I notice a pattern of frequent absences
 - Be as flexible as possible in the event of a crisis or emergency
 - What you can do if your needs are not met by the above:
 - If you know you have a disability that affects your learning process, you must meet with Associate Dean of Students Lisa Landreman in order to receive any kind of accommodation. The [Disability Services website](#) within the department of Student Affairs is your best guide to this process. The Associate Dean of Students will provide me with a confidential letter detailing your accommodation request.
 - Meet with me after you've met with Lisa Landreman so that we can work together to ensure that I can meet your accommodation request successfully.
- What I cannot do for you if you are not registered with Disability Services:

- I cannot accommodate you retroactively, after you're already in trouble in the course
- Without a letter from Lisa Landreman:
 - I cannot offer a flexible schedule of assignment deadlines
 - I cannot offer a flexible attendance policy



"What do you think . . . should we get started on that motivation research or not?"



"Well, you don't look like an experimental psychologist to me."

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
M 1/27	introduction	
W 1/29	nature/nurture	Prologue (optional), Ch 4
F 1/31	nature/nurture	
M 2/3	critical thinking	Ch 1, Field trip report due
W 2/5	critical thinking	
F 2/7	neuroscience	Sacks, RP #1 due
M 2/10	neuroscience	Ch 2
W 2/12	neuroscience	
F 2/14	EXAM #1	
M 2/17	sensation & perception	Ch 6
W 2/19	sensation & perception	Kleege, RP # 2 due
F 2/21	sensation & perception	Guest: Laurie Johnson, Ph.D.
M 2/24	learning	Ch 7
W 2/26	learning	Poling et al.
F 2/28	memory	Ch 8
M 3/3	memory	St. Jacques & Schacter
W 3/5	memory	
F 3/7	EXAM #2	
M 3/10	development	Ch 5
W 3/12	development	
F 3/14	development	Chua; Dweck
	SPRING BREAK	
M 3/24	thinking & language	Ch 9
W 3/26	thinking & language	Final paper topic due
F 3/28	thinking & language	Hickok, Bellugi, & Klima
M 3/31	EXAM #3	
W 4/3	intelligence	Ch 10
F 4/4	intelligence	
M 4/7	emotion, stress & health	Ch 12
W 4/9	emotion, stress & health	
F 4/11	emotion, stress & health	Final paper references due
M 4/14	psychological disorders	Rosenhan; Goddard RP #3 due
W 4/16	psychological disorders	Ch 15
F 4/18	EXAM #4	
M 4/21	personality	Ch 13
W 4/23	personality	Seligman, Nolen-Hoeksema, Thornton, & Thornton
F 4/25	personality	
M 4/28	social psychology	Ch 14
W 4/30	social psychology	Carnahan & McFarland; Haney & Zimbardo, RP #4 due
F 5/2	social psychology	
M 5/5	EXAM #5	
F 5/9		Final paper due by 11 p.m.

More about the readings

These essays and research articles are intended to expose you to the writing and research of people who work (or have lived experiences) in the subdisciplines of psychology that we will be learning about throughout the semester. All readings are available on the course Moodle site. Readings with an asterisk are those about which you will write a 2-3 page reaction paper. You can expect to do some short in-class writing about the remaining articles on the day that they are due.

2/7: Neuroscience: What can we learn about the mind from people who have sustained damage to their brains?

*Sacks, O. (1985). Introduction and Chapter 1 of *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. NY: HarperCollins.

2/19 Sensation and Perception: What is it like to be blind and what does that tell us about sight?

*Kleege, G. (1999). Introduction, Chapters 1 and 4 from *Sight Unseen*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

2/26: Learning: How are the principles of learning and behavior applied in “real life?”

Poling, A., Weetjens, B., Cox, C., Beyene, N. W., Bach, H., & Sully, A. (2011). Using trained pouched rats to detect land mines: Another victory for operant conditioning. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 44, 351-355.

3/3: Memory: Can memories be modified?

St. Jacques, P. L., & Schacter, D. L. (2013). Modifying memory: Selectively enhancing and updating personal memories for a museum tour by reactivating them. *Psychological Science*, 24, 537-543.

3/14: Development: What is the relation between culture and parenting style?

Chua, A. (2011). Why Chinese mothers are superior. *The Wall Street Journal*.

Dweck, C.S. (2007/2008). The secret to raising smart kids. *Scientific American Mind*, 69-75.

3/28: Language: What does sign language reveal about language and the brain?

Hickok, G., Bellugi, U., & Klima, E. S. (2002). Sign language in the brain. *Scientific American: The Hidden Mind*, 32-39.

4/14: Psychological Disorders: Is there such a thing as mental illness? How can we know?

*Rosenhan, D.L. (1973). On being sane in insane places. *Science*, 179, 250-258.

*Goddard, M. J. (2011). On being possibly sane in possibly insane places. *Psychiatric Services*, 62, 831-832.

4/23: Personality: Can our personality influence our performance?

Seligman, M. E. P., Nolen-Hoeksema, S., Thornton, N., & Thornton, K. M. (1990). Explanatory style as a mechanism of disappointing athletic performance. *Psychological Science*, 1, 143-146.

4/30: Social Psychology: Should we blame the person or the situation when people do really bad things?

*Carnahan, T., & McFarland, S. (2007). Revisiting the Stanford Prison Experiment: Could participant self-selection have led to the cruelty? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33, 603-614.

*Haney, C., & Zimbardo, P. G. (2009). Persistent dispositionalism in interactionist clothing: Fundamental Attribution Error in explaining prison abuse. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 35, 807-814.