



Foundations of Psychology



Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide you with an overview of the study of Psychology, or the study of human behavior and mental processes. In doing this, we will approach such issues as

- *Why do we remember some people's names better than others?*
- *What happens to our brains and bodies when we sleep?*
- *Why are we more willing to help some people more than others, and why does it sometimes depend on the situation?*
- *Why do we stereotype other people?*

In answering these and similar questions, we will explore such areas of psychology as its history, the methods that we use to research and practice psychology, the biological bases of behavior, psychological disorders, personality and social interaction, and human development.

Course Objectives

Think of this course as a way to study an instruction manual for human thought and behavior. Although the manual is far from complete, it does contain some pretty interesting facts thus far. In exploring this manual, you will learn to **learn the methods** that psychologists use to approach questions about behavior, **critical thinking** skills necessary for approaching these questions, and **how to apply** what we already know about human behavior to everyday life.

I want students to keep in mind that psychology is a **science**. Because it is a scientific enterprise, it is important that you become familiar with the empirical methods that scientists use to test their ideas. In addition, I want you to become more aware of some of the misconceptions about psychology. You will begin to learn how to dispel myths about human behavior by using critical thinking skills so that you may make more informed judgments about human behavior. In a nutshell, by learning about human behavior, you will learn how to remain open to new information, while using skepticism.

There are a couple of additional outcomes that I expect you to achieve. These include the ability to:

- Recognize and explain the scientific method and evaluate scientific information
- Discriminate between reliable and less reliable information in your decision-making

In addition to these, there are also learning goals that you should achieve, which are specific to this course. They include the ability to:

- Demonstrate how course concepts apply to daily living.
- Understand that behavior, thoughts, and emotions are shaped by heredity, immediate environment, and culture.
- Understand that people's experience of the world is subjective.
- Recognize that psychological conclusions are based on the scientific method.

It is also my hope that, as a result of having taken this class, you will be able to maintain an appreciation for psychological principles and their application to everyday life. Lastly, we will spend some time going over how people differ according to the culture that they live in.

Format

The format for this class will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, small group work, and other activities. Research shows us that people learn much better and retain the information that they learn much longer when they actively participate in the learning process, and I encourage you to do just that. Therefore, I encourage you to talk about what you are learning with others, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to your daily life.

Resources

Required Text

Lilienfeld, Lynn, Namy, & Woolf. (2009). *Psychology: From Inquiry to Understanding*. Pearson: Boston, MA.

Your Teaching Assistant

Your teaching assistant will be here to help you with evening assignments in the event that I will not be present. However, it will sometimes be the case that both she and I will be present, in which case you should still take advantage of utilizing her help as well as mine.

Course Requirements

Readings

Be sure to come to class prepared; this means having read the assigned material for that day in class. Much of class discussion will be based on the readings for that day.

In Class Exercises

Every day we will have an afternoon activity period in which you will work either alone or in small groups on activities that will reflect the topics covered earlier in the day. Your teaching assistant and I will be on hand to assist you with the activities in the event that you require assistance. However, keep in mind that most of the activities are designed to be somewhat challenging, so try to the best of your ability to complete the exercises on your own.

On Professional Behavior and Academic Integrity

As an instructor, I am responsible for creating a comfortable yet professional learning environment that will help you to learn. I take my obligation seriously by coming to class prepared, treating you with respect, and establishing a positive and supportive atmosphere. Therefore, I expect you to help me by doing just the same. This includes...

- Active Participation- Please stay involved in class discussion by staying involved in discussion and completing in-class assignments.
- Punctuality- Part of being professional entails being on time and prepared. Please strive to do so.
- Respect- Variety is the spice of life! This definitely applies to the class experience, as a variety of opinions almost always enhances the learning experience. The only way we can achieve this is if you as students listen to the other students in the class, reflect on what they have to say respect their input. Although it's alright to disagree, please do so with due consideration.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1		
DAY	AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES	TOPICS AND EVENING SESSION TOPICS
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Test • Riddle-Solving Exercise • Horoscope Exercise 	Intro. Go over syllabus Honor Code, CTY policy rules and Classroom Rules Psychology: Science or Pseudoscience Themes in Psychology
		Study Session Readings
		LLNW: Ch. 1
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pepsi Challenge! • Research Design Activity (involving initial taste test) 	Research Methods
		Study Session Readings
		Ch. 2, pp. 71-85 LLNW: Ch. 2 pp.85-94
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correlation vs. Causation (shoe size and height) • Round-table debate 	More Research Methods Research Ethics
		Study Session Readings
		Looking Ahead: LLNW: Ch.3 pp. 124-129, 116-117,
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Split-Brain shoe-tying exercise • Dog-unculus • Nerve impulse Play Doh activity • Play Doh brain 	The Nerve and its actions The central nervous system Introduction to the Brain
		Study Session Readings
		LLNW: Ch.3 108-116 V.S. Ramachandron's Phantom Brain Story
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change Detection Challenge • Subliminal Perception Activity • Attention shifting demonstration 	Sensation and Perception: what's the difference? Subliminal Perception Selective Attention and Perception
		Following Sunday Study Session Readings
		LLNW: Ch. 4, pp. 153-163 <i>Present paper idea to me and get feedback on an individual basis (during meetings, other students play brain game)</i>

Week 2		
DAY	AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES	TOPICS AND EVENING SESSION TOPICS
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squirt bottle conditioning exercise • Operant Conditioning Exercise • Bobo Doll Modeling Exercise 	Learning Classical Conditioning Operant Conditioning Social Learning and Modeling
		Study Hall Readings
		LLNW: Ch 6, pp.234-255, and 256-261
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • False Memory Activity • Deese –Roediger McDermott activity 	Memory: Encoding, Storage and Retrieval
		Study Hall Readings
		LLNW: Ch. 7 pp. 287-296 and 304-311 Catch-Up Day Get Paper Idea Finalized
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dream Log exercise • Dream interpretation debate • Mouse-on-drugs computer lab 	Levels of Consciousness Sleeping and Dreaming Chemical interactions with levels of consciousness
		Study Hall Readings
		LLNW: Ch 9, pp. 354-361, 363-371,375-380, and 387-391
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autobiography exercise • Moral inquiries in development exercise 	Human Development: Birth Cognitive Development Social Development Moral Development
		Study Hall Readings
		LLNW: Chapter 10 The Child’s brain in the age of the Internet Study
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewing of the film Jack 	Adolescence Old Age
		Following Sunday Study Hall Readings
		Prepare literature for research project

Week 3		
DAY	AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES	TOPICS AND EVENING SESSION TOPICS
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conformity Study Replication of the Bystander Effect 	Introducing Social Psychology
		Study Hall Readings
		LLNW: Ch. 12, pp.495-523
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implicit Prejudice and Racism (IAT) exercise 	Social Psychology
		Study Hall Readings
		Viewing of Stanford Prison Experiment and Milgram Study
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Viewing of “A Beautiful Mind” 	Psychological Disorders
		Study Hall Readings
		Read Case Studies <i>Last Day to Work on Research Projects</i>
		Research Fair Day
Thursday		Study Hall Readings
		Review Day
		Do Post- Course Assessments
Friday		Reflections on the Course