

Psychology 101 - Fall 2008

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Contact Information

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Books

- Gerow, J. R., Bordens, K. S., & Blanch-Payne, E. (2007). *General Psychology with Spotlights on Diversity* (8th [1st] ed.). Pearson.
- Optional Study Guide available online:
www.benttreepress.com/products/Stu_Companion_Site_FILES/Student_Companion_Site.htm

Overview

In Introduction to Psychology, we will examine many aspects of the science of psychology, the study of behavior. Psychologists are concerned with issues ranging from the activity of individual brain cells through the actions of individual people to the interactions of people in groups. We will look into all of these areas, and more. We will also examine the methods employed by psychologists in conducting research on behavior, and the specific experiments that have enhanced our understanding of behavior. By the end of the semester, you will have a basic understanding of many of the topics of interest to psychologists. You might then decide to take more advanced courses in any specific areas of interest.

Grading

Exams

Your grade in the course will be based in part on five scheduled examinations. The exams will consist of multiple choice items, fill-in-the-blanks, identification and short answer essay questions, and will be non-cumulative; that is, each exam will cover explicitly only the material presented in the readings and in lecture since the preceding exam. However, the mastery of later material will often require an understanding of material covered earlier in the semester, so please do not assume that because an exam has occurred the previous material is unimportant.

Table 1

Topics & Reading List

Topic	Chapter	Week
History	1	1
Methods	1	2
Brain & Behavior	2	3–4
		Test 1
Sensation & Perception	3	5
Consciousness	4	6–7
		Test 2
Learning	5	8–9
Memory	6	9–10
		Test 3
Gender	10(364–369)	11
Personality	9	11–12
Intelligence	7(246–271)	13
		Test 4
Psychopathology	12 (13)	14
Social Psychology	14	15
		Test 5

Make-Up Exams

I understand that the unexpected does happen, and that sometimes attendance at exams is not possible. Therefore, you may make-up ONE exam this semester, if you let me know why this is necessary within 24 hours of the original exam date. The make-up exam will consist entirely of short-answer essay questions, and must be taken within one week of the missed exam. *You may not make-up more than one exam, so additional missed exams will receive a grade of 0.*

Research Requirement

Psychology is not a passive, static discipline. Psychologists continue to add to our knowledge of behavior by conducting research, and that research requires subjects. In order that you become familiar with this active aspect of psychology, PSY 101 students are required to serve as subjects in research projects during the course of the semester. Each project lasts from 15 min to 1 hr; you are required to take part in a total of 5 hr of research. This research participation accounts for 5% of the course grade: each hour served is worth 1%. To receive credit, you must do the following:

1. Sign up for an experiment of interest to you. Sign-up sheets are posted on the bulletin board outside of the classroom.

2. Show up at the assigned time and place to serve as a subject. *Note that there are penalties for failing to show up for a study for which you signed up. They include losing the "participation points" for that study, and therefore having to do an additional study to make up for the missed one.*

3. Collect a sticker from the researcher, and place it on your sticker page.

4. It is *your* responsibility to retain the sticker page until I request it from you at the end of the semester. Lost stickers represent lost research credit.

Research Alternative.

Students who, for ethical or moral reasons, object to participation in research can complete alternate assignments that entail summarizing current research in psychology. Our library subscribes to numerous psychological journals. The student should find an article of interest in a current issue of a journal and then write a summary of that article. The summary should contain information about the hypothesis being tested, the independent and dependent variables (if the study is an experiment), the methods used, the results, and the conclusions. The student should also find at least one earlier article addressing a similar question, and indicate how the current article's conclusions relate to the findings of the earlier article. Photocopies of both articles must be provided with the paper. The paper must be typed or printed, double-spaced, and must include a Reference section in which the articles discussed are listed. Each such paper will count as equivalent to 1 hr of research participation. Note that this option is available to those students who are opposed to serving as subjects on ethical or moral grounds, and may not be used in place of research participation by students who simply failed to sign up for sufficient research participation. A student with ethical or moral objections *must notify me of these objections in writing by the end of Week 3 of the semester.*

Course Grade

Your course grade will be based on a weighted mean of your grades on the exams, plus credit for research participation: Grade = (.10 x Lowest Exam) + (.2125 x Sum of Other Exams) + (.05 x Research Credit) thus your worst exam is worth 10%, the other exams 21.25%, and the research participation 5% of your grade. The course grade is then determined as follows:

90 - 100:	4.0	70 - 72.9:	2.0
87 - 89.9:	3.7	67 - 69.9:	1.7
83 - 86.9:	3.3	63 - 66.9:	1.3
80 - 82.9:	3.0	60 - 62.9:	1.0
77 - 79.9:	2.7	< 60:	0
73 - 76.9:	2.3		

Attendance

Attendance at class is expected. As you will learn from the first exam, material presented in lecture is important, and material presented in lecture will not always appear in the readings. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed, both in terms of lecture material and announcements about exams, assignments, etc. Twice during the semester I will be gone from campus to attend scientific meetings. Unless you are told otherwise class will meet in my absence.

A Final Note

If you are having difficulties with the course, or just want to talk in more detail about the material that we are covering, please see me during my office hours. If you cannot be here during those hours make an appointment with me or just stop by the office. I am on campus nearly every day, often including weekends, and will find time to meet with you.