

**Introductory Psychology**  
 PSY 101, Winter 2017  
 M,W,F 1:00- 1:50pm, ASH 2302  
 Grand Valley State University

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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2-3pm or by appointment.

**Course description**

Welcome to Introductory Psychology! Psychology is the study of human behavior and mental processes. This course will provide you with an overview of psychology, examining the science from several perspectives including biological, cultural, behavioral, cognitive, and social. Some examples of topics that will be covered are human development, thinking and learning, personality, motivation, emotion, and psychological disorders. Following this course, you will understand what psychology is as a science and the basic areas in psychology. You will also have an understanding of how psychologists think and how psychology is relevant to your own life.

Introductory Psychology is part of GVSU's General Education Program. This course partially fulfills the requirement of the Social and Behavioral Sciences category in Foundations. As part of the General Education Program, the goals of this course are to help students develop a) an understanding of how knowledge in the social or behavioral sciences is created and applied, b) an understanding of the major approaches, methods, theories, and substantive findings of the field, and c) an informed critical stance that will allow students to weigh and apply ideas and claims from the social and behavioral sciences outside the classroom. The skills goals for this course are critical and creative thinking and ethical reasoning (see the end of this document for more information on these goals).

**Required textbook**

Myers, David G. (2013). *Psychology* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Worth Publishers.

**Course evaluation**

The total points for this class will be 640. You will be evaluated on 4 exams and a Final (each exam is worth 100 points; 500 points total). You will complete 20 in-class exercises (worth 5 points each; 100 points total). You will complete 4 enrichment activities (worth 10 points each; 40 points total).

Exams will use the following grading scale.

A	93-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	62-66%
B-	80-82%	F	61% or lower
C+	77-79%		

*Note.* I reserve the right to curve grades under certain circumstances. However, if I do curve grades, it will only be for your benefit.

## Exams

*Midterm exams:* Midterm exams will be administered in class. They will be non-cumulative, and cover 3-4 textbook chapters as documented in the Course Schedule. Exams will also cover material from lecture (see section on Attendance). Exam questions will include both multiple choice and short answer.

*Final exam:* The Final exam will be cumulative, covering material from the entire semester. It will also be a combination of multiple choice and short answer. The Final exam date and time is listed at the end of the Course Schedule. If you cannot make this date and time, please talk with me as soon as possible.

*Make-up policy:* You are expected to take the exams on the specified dates. If you do not appear for an exam, and you have not been given permission by me to delay it, you will receive a zero unless you bring documentation (such as a doctor's note) to excuse your absence. You will have one week after the date of the scheduled exam to take a make-up exam.

## Class exercises

There will be approximately 20 in-class exercises (occasionally you may be asked to complete these as homework, in which case they will be due the next class period). Each exercise is worth 5 points. The exercises vary from written reactions to something we read or watch to small group work or discussion related to class topics. The purpose of these exercises is to complement learning of class material.

*Credit for class exercises cannot be made up.* If you are not present for any reason, you will not be able to earn credit for a missed exercise. However, all students will be able to drop one missed exercise. In other words, if you miss only one of them, you can still obtain a perfect score for these exercises. If you miss two exercises, you will lose points for one exercise, if you miss three, you will lose points for two exercises, etc. **This “freebie” accounts for all reasons for missing so please do not ask me about make-ups.** You also do not need to let me know when you missed an exercise as the “freebie” will simply be added at the end of the semester for an exercise that you missed at any point during the semester.

## Enrichment activities

Enrichment activities are to be completed outside of class. These activities are designed to give students the chance to learn more about how psychological research is conducted. **There are two options for completing these activities.** In Option 1, students participate in psychological research studies. In Option 2, students read and write papers on psychological research from scholarly journals. Within either option chosen, students will complete four activities. Enrichment activities are due the last week of class. Please see the end of this syllabus for more detailed information.

## Useful things to know

*Reading:* Topics in the Course Schedule correspond to your textbook chapters. Reading the assigned chapter before class will help you take better notes in lecture and prepare you for class activities. Reading will also help you perform well on exams because not all assigned reading will be covered in class, but exams will require you to demonstrate that you have read and understood all of the assigned reading.

*Attendance:* Although I will not take attendance, it is to your advantage to come to class regularly. This is because during class, I may lecture on material that is not in your textbook. There will also be class exercises and, as noted above, there are no make-ups for these. We will also watch films, listen to radio programs, and have class discussions that elaborate on and extend material. You can expect exams to cover your textbook, lecture, and anything else that we do in class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to ask a fellow student for the notes as I do not give my notes outside of class.

*Blackboard website:* I will post notes, grades, assignments, and any announcements on the website for this class. Notes will be posted under “Course documents”. Grades and assignments will be posted under

“Grade center”. Make sure you have access to the BB website or contact the help desk. **Please check your grades and assignments on the website OFTEN. You have only one week after an assignment is posted to dispute it- no exceptions!** Contact me ASAP if you think an error has been made.

*Respect.* This is a large class so students sometimes feel anonymous. Please do not let this perception make you think it is okay to engage in disrespectful behavior. I expect you to respect me and your fellow students by not talking, texting, or browsing the internet while class is in session. When class begins, you should cease all of these activities. If you do not, I will ask you to leave. If you are asked to leave more than once, you will be dropped from the class. Please understand that talking when I am talking or when your classmates raise questions or are sharing their insights is particularly bothersome, and you will be asked to leave for these disruptions.

### **Students with special needs or concerns**

If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please let me know. You should also contact Disability Support Resources (DSR) at (616) 331-2490. If you have a disability and think that you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency, please make me aware so that the university and I can develop a plan to assist you. It is the student’s responsibility to request assistance from DSR.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to adhere to the university's policies on Academic Honesty. You are responsible for making yourself aware of and for understanding the policies and procedures that pertain to academic integrity. To that end, be sure to familiarize yourself with the GVSU Student Code [Section 223.01] related to academic integrity. Cheating and plagiarism will be dealt with according to procedures described in the Student Code.

## Winter, 2017 Course Schedule\*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
M 9-Jan	Course welcome and introduction
W 11-Jan	Thinking critically with psychological science
F 13-Jan	Thinking critically 2
M 16-Jan	<b><i>Martin Luther King Day- No class</i></b>
W 18-Jan	Thinking critically 3
F 20-Jan	Biology of mind <span style="float: right;"><i>Jan 22 last day for prescreen</i></span>
M 23-Jan	Biology of mind 2
W 25-Jan	Consciousness
F 27-Jan	Consciousness 2

M	30-Jan	Wrap up
<b>W</b>	<b>1-Feb</b>	<b>Exam 1</b>
F	3-Feb	Nature, nurture and human diversity
M	6-Feb	Nature and nurture 2
W	8-Feb	Nature and nurture 3
F	10-Feb	Developing through the life span
M	13-Feb	Developing 2
W	15-Feb	Developing 3
F	17-Feb	Sensation and perception
M	20-Feb	Sensation and perception 2
W	22-Feb	Wrap up
<b>F</b>	<b>24-Feb</b>	<b>Exam 2</b>
M	27-Feb	Learning
W	1-Mar	Learning 2
F	3-Mar	Memory
	5-12 Mar	<i>Spring break- No class</i>
M	13-Mar	Memory 2
W	15-Mar	Memory 3
F	17-Mar	Thinking and language
M	20-Mar	Thinking and language 2
W	22-Mar	Wrap up
<b>F</b>	<b>24-Mar</b>	<b>Exam 3</b>
M	27-Mar	Motivation and work

W	29-Mar	Motivation and work 2
F	31-Mar	Emotions, stress and health
M	3-April	Emotions, stress and health 2
W	5-April	Emotions stress and health 3
F	7-April	Personality
M	10-April	Personality 2
W	12-April	Wrap up
<b>F</b>	<b>14-April</b>	<b>Exam 4</b>
M	17-April	Psychological disorders <i>April 18 last day to participate for Option 1</i>
W	19-April	Psychological disorders 2 <i>Option 2 papers due in class</i>
F	21-April	Course review and close
<b>Final exam: Tuesday, April 25, 2-3:50pm</b>		

\* This schedule may be revised as needed.

This course is part of GVSU's General Education Program.

The goal of the program is to prepare you for intelligent participation in public dialogues that consider the issues of humane living and responsible action in local, national, and global communities.

The program is designed to increase your knowledge and skills in the following areas:

**Knowledge Goals:**

1. The major areas of human investigation and accomplishment—the arts, the humanities, the mathematical sciences, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.
2. An understanding of one's own culture and the cultures of others.
3. An understanding of how academic study connects to issues in the world.

**Skills goals:**

1. Written communication is the practice of creating and refining messages that educated readers will value.
2. Oral communication is the practice of effectively communicating verbally with a public audience across a variety of contexts.
3. Critical and creative thinking uses systematic reasoning to examine and evaluate ideas, leading to new ways of thinking or doing.
4. Information Literacy is the process of locating, evaluating, and using multiple forms of information.
5. Quantitative literacy is a competency and comfort in working with numbers.
6. Ethical reasoning is a decision-making process based on defining systems of value.
7. Collaboration is the process of working together and sharing the workload equitably to progress toward shared objectives.
8. Problem solving is the process of designing and evaluating strategies to answer open-ended questions or achieve desired goals.

9. Integration is the process of synthesizing and applying existing knowledge, past experiences, and other perspectives to new, complex situations.

Ensuring that undergraduate students receive a broad general education has been a primary goal of colleges and universities since their inception. In this era of increasing specialization and growing demand for professional expertise, it is vital that we continue to emphasize the value of general learning.

GVSU maintains that a complete education involves more than preparation for a particular career. A career occurs in the context of a life, and a sound general education helps one “make a life” as well as “make a living.” The university is committed to assuring that all undergraduate students, regardless of academic major, receive a broad education rooted in the arts and sciences.

Teaching in the liberal tradition is at the heart of Grand Valley's identity, and this focus is critical in our General Education Program. Liberal education transcends the acquisition of information; it goes beyond the factual to ask important evaluative and philosophical questions. Liberal learning holds the fundamental principles and suppositions of a body of knowledge up to inquiry, question, and discussion. It helps a person recognize the assumptions under which he or she operates and encourages the examination and questioning of those assumptions. Liberal learning begins in the General Education Program and continues through the more specialized studies comprising each student's major and minor areas of study.

*Grand Valley State University educates students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies.*

## ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

### LEARNING ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Students are required to participate in activities designed to acquaint them with the nature and variety of research in psychology. **There are two different kinds of enrichment activities options, and students can choose which one they want to do.** *Option 1* involves participating in research studies, while *Option 2* involves reading and writing about papers that report research in scholarly journals. **Students can meet the requirement by doing four activities of either option.** For example, students who choose Option 1 will participate in four credits worth of research studies. Students who choose Option 2 will write four papers summarizing research in scholarly journals. If a student completes the prescreening questionnaire, they will only need to do three enrichment activities of either option.

#### OPTION 1: PARTICIPATION IN PSYCHOLOGY EXPERIMENTS

##### **Objective**

The objective of this assignment is for you to gain direct experience with psychology research studies and what it is like to participate in them. In class, we shall discuss the social psychology of psychology research and how experimental designs take into account the expectations and beliefs of the participants. By participating in studies yourself, you can gain an understanding of the strengths and limits of psychological research. Psychology Department faculty and their research assistants perform the studies, all of which have been reviewed and approved by the university's Institutional Review Board.

##### **Online Registration**

To participate in studies, you must register on the *Study Scheduling System*, accessible from the Psychology Department website (<http://www.gvsu.edu/psychology/>). The vendor maintains a strict policy protecting privacy and confidentiality. (This policy is available for review in the Psychology Office.) Navigating the Study Scheduling System is straightforward, and if you need guidance, detailed instructions are available on the Psychology Department website.

##### **Prescreening Survey**

An on-line prescreening questionnaire is available during the first two weeks of the semester. Completing this survey counts as one Enrichment Activity. It will appear the first time that you log into the *Study Scheduling System*, and you can access it from your My Profile page. If you opt to complete the survey, plan to complete it in a single, one-hour sitting. Several of the studies taking place later in the semester determine eligibility according to the responses on the Pre-Screening Survey, so completing it may increase the number of studies you will be eligible to choose. (You may receive invitations based on the Pre-Screening responses.) The last date to participate in the prescreening survey is **Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**.

##### **Participating in Studies**

Register for studies on the Study Scheduling System. Before you sign up to participate in a study, review any listed restrictions (for example, “left-handed people only”). If you sign up for a study and you do not meet the posted eligibility requirements, you will not receive credit for the study.

Arrive before the scheduled time, as studies start punctually. You will be given a description of what participating in the study will involve, and you will be asked for your consent before the study begins. If you then choose not to participate, you may leave without penalty. You can check to see that you have received credit by selecting My Schedule/Credits, where credits are typically posted within a week after you participate in a study.

If you sign up for a study but cannot attend, please cancel your session on-line.

### **Under 18?**

Special rules apply to students who are under 18. If you are under 18, please use *Option 2*, or see the Lab Assistant, Jeff Nolan, for information about permission requirements before participating in studies.

### **Need Help?**

If you need assistance registering for studies, please contact Jeff Nolan, who can be reached in the Psychology Department Office (2224 Au Sable Hall, 616.331.2195) or by sending an email to [psychlab@gvsu.edu](mailto:psychlab@gvsu.edu).

### **Option 1 Deadline**

The last day to participate in studies is **Tuesday, April 18th**.

## OPTION 2: PAPERS ON EXPERIMENTS IN SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

A second Enrichment Activity option is to read a selected journal article and then write a brief report on the article.

### **Summary of the Assignment**

Pick a current, empirical article from a psychological journal listed below. Read the abstract, introduction, and conclusions of the article and skim the remainder of it to understand the gist. You are not expected to understand the details of the article; your task is to understand the article's general thrust, content, and conclusions. Write a brief summary (as detailed below) to document your reading. *Be sure to use your own words. Do not copy or paraphrase the abstract or the paper.*

### **Objective**

This option, like the first, is intended to familiarize you with the nature and variety of psychological research. The objective to broaden your understanding of psychological research and how it is conducted.

### **Selecting an Article**

Choose a current article published in 2016 or 2017 that reports an empirical study (i.e. one that is based on the collection of data). The large majority of the papers published in the journals listed below are suitable for this assignment, but a few are not. In particular, reviews, meta-analyses, and other comparisons of studies from separate researchers are not appropriate for this assignment. The article you read should have sections labeled “Methods” and “Results.” Note that there are other journals, not acceptable for this assignment, which have misleadingly similar names. Make sure the title of the journal matches *exactly* one on this list:

#### Behavioral Neuroscience

Developmental Psychology

Experimental and Clinical  
Psychopharmacology

Health Psychology

Journal of Abnormal Psychology

Journal of Applied Psychology

Journal of Comparative Psychology

Journal of Consulting and  
Clinical Psychology

Journal of Educational  
Psychology

Journal of Experimental Psychology:  
General

Journal of Experimental Psychology: Animal Behavior  
Processes

Journal of Experimental Psychology:  
Applied

Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception  
and Performance

Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory,  
and Cognition

Journal of Personality and Social  
Psychology

Journal of Counseling Psychology

Neuropsychology

Psychological  
Science

Psychology and Aging

## Finding the Journals

The journals are available electronically through databases you can access through the GVSU Library website. Base your paper on the “full text” of the paper. You can watch a video showing how to access the journals by going to <http://libguides.gvsu.edu/psych> and then clicking on the *Recommended Journals* tab. Access the journals *only* through the GVSU Library, not other sources or websites, as such materials may be incomplete or from the wrong journal.

Once you have located the journal article, select the “full text” version.

## Documenting Your Reading

Write a brief, double-spaced paper summarizing the article. The body of your essay should contain three sections, each between 100-300 words. Start each of the three sections with a heading, copying the exact words for each heading described below. No separate introduction or conclusion is required, simply answer the three questions. Under each heading write a well-organized paragraph that specifically addresses the question posed in the heading:

1. *What question or questions does the article address?*
2. *Why are the question(s) that the article addresses important ones to consider?*
3. *What answers does the article provide?*

## The Paper Must Be Your Own Work and Written in Your Own Words

At the core of Grand Valley State University’s policy on plagiarism (described in the catalog and in the Student Code) is the principle that “[a]ny ideas or material taken from another source... must be fully acknowledged.” This means that your paper must be written strictly in your own words, and it must acknowledge any ideas that you take from another source. Try to avoid quoting from the article, but if you must quote to make a point, take care that the phrases quoted are in quotation marks. All quoted phrases must be in quotation marks, even if the phrases are only two or three words long. Words or ideas borrowed from a source other than the target article should be acknowledged and completely referenced. If you submit a paper that violates this policy, you may receive a failing grade for the course.

## Required Identifying Information

At the top left-hand corner of the first page of your summary, on separate lines, put your name, your student number (G-number), your professor’s name, and the date. Immediately below this, provide a full reference to the article, with the information in the following order: Names of all authors (last name, comma, initials), the year of publication (in parentheses), the exact title of the article, the full name of the journal, the volume number, and the page numbers. Here is a sample of a reference with the information in the proper order:

Lastname, F. and Othername, S.B. (2013) A study of titles of research reports. *Journal of Obscure Psychological Research*, 13, 93-108.

If the article you select has not yet appeared in print, instead of page and volume numbers, include the words “Advanced online publication. doi:” and then give the *doi* number. The *doi* number is typically found in the upper right hand corner of the first page of the full-text paper. This reference information must be complete and accurate for you to receive credit for the paper.

## Copy of First Page of Journal Article

To the back of your summary, staple a photocopy or printout of the first page of the full-text version of the article that you read. Make sure that the photocopy includes the exact name of the journal, the title of the paper, the volume number, the page numbers, and the abstract and first paragraph of the article. If you copy from the printed journal, all of the required information will usually be on the first page of the article, but if you download the “full text” version of the article from a library database, you may have to print several pages to make sure all the required information is present. If you select an article that has not yet been published in print version, volume and page numbers will typically not be available. In such cases, make sure the photocopy or printout you submit includes the *doi* number of the article, which is usually in the upper right hand corner of the first page of the full-text article.

**Credit/No Credit Grading of Papers**

The papers will be graded on a Credit/No Credit basis. No partial credit will be given. Most papers that receive a failing grade are ones where the writer fails to follow the instructions. Double-check your paper before you submit it, to make sure it conforms *exactly* to all the rules described above.

**Submitting Papers for Grading & Deadline**

*Option 2* papers can be turned in anytime during the semester. At the latest, they must be turned in by **Wednesday, April 19 in class.**