

PSY 101-01
INTRODUCTORY PSYCHOLOGY – ONLINE EDITION, SUMMER 2023
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00 – 3:20 p.m.

Brian Bowdle, Course Instructor

Virtual Office Hours: by appointment

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Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to psychology, which is the science of behavior and mental processes. We will cover how psychologists conduct research, and how psychological phenomena are examined at the biological, cognitive, behavioral, and sociocultural levels of analysis. Among the topics we will discuss are perception, learning, memory, intelligence, human development, personality, social behavior, and abnormal psychology. Critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and the adoption of a scientific mindset will be emphasized throughout the semester. This course is worth three credits.

Learning Objectives

Upon successfully completing this course, students should be able to (a) demonstrate an understanding of the scientific process in psychology, (b) identify major psychological theories and use psychological terminology correctly, (c) critically evaluate the findings of psychological research, and (d) recognize examples of how psychological concepts are applied to daily life.

General Education Foundations

Introductory Psychology is part of the General Education program at GVSU, and meets the Social and Behavioral Sciences Foundations criteria listed at:

<https://www.gvsu.edu/gened/foundations-social-and-behavioral-sciences-277.htm>

Required Books

- 1) Richard A. Griggs and Sherri L. Jackson (2020) – *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (6th edition)
- 2) Oliver Sacks (1995) – *An Anthropologist on Mars: Seven Paradoxical Tales*

These two books constitute the core of this course, and everyone is expected to keep up with the readings – and to come to class prepared to discuss whatever chapters and case studies have been assigned for that day. See our course schedule for details.

Blackboard

Our Blackboard website is an essential component of this course. Blackboard will be our platform for completing and submitting assignments and tests. Class announcements, course documents and videos, and grades will also be posted on this website. And I will be using Blackboard to send out emails to members of this class, which means that you should regularly check the messages on your GVSU student email account.

Please note that GVSU moved from Blackboard Classic to Blackboard Ultra this summer. If you are unfamiliar with this new version of Blackboard – or if you have never used Blackboard at all – I encourage you to complete GVSU's Blackboard Ultra Student Orientation at the start of the summer term:

https://lms.gvsu.edu/ultra/courses/_384725_1/outline

Virtual Class Meetings

With just a couple of exceptions this semester, we will have synchronous class meetings every Tuesday and Thursday starting at noon. I would like to emphasize that these meetings will NOT be online lectures in which I do little more than summarize the assigned readings. Yes, I will spend some time reviewing key concepts from the readings, but more often than not I will (a) extend these concepts to areas not covered

in the readings, (b) offer interactive activities to help you better understand the material, and (c) initiate open-ended discussions of topics and issues I think you will find especially interesting.

We will be using Zoom for all our class meetings. Ideally, you should have reliable access to high-speed internet and a device with both a webcam and a microphone in order to fully participate in these meetings. If you have concerns about any of these technological requirements, contact me so that we can discuss your options.

To attend a class meeting, go to Blackboard and follow the Zoom link on the Content page. Click Join and wait for me to admit you to our session. And please be ready to turn on your camera and microphone. I would prefer to see and hear all of you during class!

Although attendance does not figure into the course evaluation, you are strongly encouraged to join each and every one of our virtual class meetings. Not only will they solidify your learning, they will also offer us the opportunity to have a bit of fun! Here are some guidelines for how to get the most out of these meetings – and how to make them a positive experience for everyone:

- **Come prepared.** This means reading any assigned chapters and case studies IN ADVANCE of the meetings devoted to discussing these readings; keeping your notebook and a pen nearby; and being ready to actively participate during class.
- **Take minimal notes.** As will be detailed below, my expectation is that you will have already taken most of your notes on the assigned readings before attending class. Therefore, you should primarily be LISTENING during our meetings in order to check and reinforce your comprehension of the material. (As you have probably learned for yourself, it is difficult to actually listen to someone if you are trying to write down every single thing you hear at the same time.)
- **Ask questions.** If something is not clear to you, or if you are especially curious about something, do not hesitate to raise your hand and ask about it, even if you are not quite sure about the best way to phrase your question.
- **Participate in our open-ended discussions.** The discussion segments of our meetings will often delve into the ways in which psychological science is personally relevant, and these discussions will therefore benefit from everyone being personally involved.
- **Be mindful and courteous.** Among other things, this means joining our meetings on time; anticipating and minimizing avoidable domestic interruptions; silencing your smartphone and putting it away; not surfing the web on your laptop during meetings; and not taking naps during class (especially if you snore). In other words, be fully – and respectfully – present.

Please note that I will not be recording any of our meetings.

Evaluation

The maximum number of points you can receive in this course is 240, and point totals will be translated into grades at the end of the term using this scale:

222 – 240 points = A	174 – 183 points = C
215 – 221 points = A-	167 – 173 points = C-
208 – 214 points = B+	160 – 166 points = D+
198 – 207 points = B	150 – 159 points = D
191 – 197 points = B-	143 – 149 points = D-
184 – 190 points = C+	142 points or less = F

Your grade will be cumulatively determined by the following:

Exams. There will be two open-book essay exams – a midterm and a final – covering material from the assigned readings and my in-class presentations. The exams are worth 60 points each, for a total of 120 points (50% of your grade). The final exam will not be cumulative. Detailed information about the expectations and procedures for our exams will be posted on Blackboard later this semester.

Homework. Ten short homework assignments will be due this term, all of which will be made available to you on Blackboard via the relevant learning modules. When you open a particular homework, you will be given instructions about how to complete that assignment.

All ten homework assignments are worth six points each, for a total of 60 points (25% of your grade). The due dates for our homework assignments can be found in the course schedule. Late homework will not be accepted.

Journal. Throughout this course, you will be keeping a written journal documenting your reflections on and reactions to the material we cover. More specifically, you are expected to compose and submit ten journal entries this semester, each of which will delve into one of the major areas of psychology explored in our assigned readings. Your entries should not be summaries of the chapters and case studies from our two books; rather, what I would like you to write are your own thoughts and feelings about what you have read.

There is no template for what the “ideal” journal entry should look like, and you should follow your muse when composing each one. But here are some examples of the kinds of questions you might consider when writing in your journal:

- Did certain concepts, theories, or studies strike you as being especially important in terms of understanding human nature?
- Did any of the concepts, theories, or studies help you make sense of things that you (or people you know) have done, felt, or experienced?
- Did some of the ideas challenge beliefs that you've held about human nature? If so, how did you find yourself responding to this challenge?
- Do any practical applications of concepts, theories, or studies come to mind that were not covered in the readings and class discussions?

(The above questions should be treated as food for thought – feel free to approach the material from whatever direction you'd like.)

The minimum length of each journal entry should be 250 words. Do not attempt to write about every significant issue covered in the readings; instead, focus on a small set of concepts, theories, or studies that grabbed your attention and made you think. The tone of your writing can be informal, but I do expect you to write using complete sentences. All your journal entries will be submitted through Blackboard. To make a submission, open the relevant learning module, follow the link to the Journal Entry, and then create and post your entry.

All ten journal entries are worth six points each, for a total of 60 points (25% of your grade). The due dates for these entries can be found in the course schedule. I am willing to accept journal entries up to three days late for half credit.

Video Materials

A variety of short video clips will be offered throughout the semester to tie in with specific topics and assignments. I strongly recommend watching all of them – they will enhance your understanding of our course materials. All such videos can be found on Blackboard in the relevant learning modules.

Reading and Studying Tips

As stated earlier, I expect everyone to keep up with the assigned readings for this course. There are, however, both good ways and bad ways of reading if your intention is to learn. Here are some tips for engaging with our required books. (Some of this advice may run counter to the ways in which you typically prepare for classes, but it is based on solid empirical research on effective reading and studying techniques – research that we will discuss later in the course.)

How to read *Psychology: A Concise Introduction*. This is our primary textbook. Each chapter begins with a brief overview (which you should read), and is then divided into three major sections. Try to read each section in a single sitting, using the following steps. First, read the entire section with care – that is, don't

skim or skip over any of the passages. Second, go through the section again from start to finish, but this time, take notes covering the main ideas and how they are related to one another. (Taking notes is a more effective learning strategy than simply highlighting or underlining key phrases and sentences. Also, you should write your notes by hand instead of typing them on a computer.) And third, after you have done all of the above and have read the section summary, immediately test your comprehension of the main ideas with the ConceptCheck questions – compare your responses to these questions with the ConceptCheck answers given at the end of the chapter, and go back and review the relevant material if your responses fall short.

Once you have finished reading and taking notes on all three sections of a chapter – and have completed all three ConceptChecks – set the book aside for a while. When we have a class meeting to discuss the chapter, be sure to keep your notes on the chapter nearby. At some point after our class meeting, pull the book back out, go to the Study Guide at the end of the chapter, and test yourself with the Key Terms Exercise and the Practice Test Questions. Check your answers and, as before, go back and review the relevant material for any questions you struggled with.

How to read *An Anthropologist on Mars*. This is a classic – and thoroughly enjoyable - collection of case studies by Oliver Sacks, and reading these case studies will lend a human face to many of the concepts covered in our primary textbook. There is no need to take extensive notes on any of these case studies; rather, you should approach this book as an invitation to delve more deeply into a number of fascinating psychological issues. We will be discussing these case studies during our class meetings in an open-ended fashion, and your comments and questions will be most welcome.

Pacing your reading. You should allow yourself at least six hours each week to complete our assigned readings, and I would strongly recommend not cramming all of a week's readings into just one or two long sittings. Rather, you should aim to do a moderate amount of reading each day.

A few words about studying. Whenever you sit down to read and study for this (or any) class, you should eliminate as many distractions as possible. Find a quiet spot, close your laptop if you aren't using it for our readings or activities, and keep your smartphone on silent and out of sight. (You may believe that such devices are not truly distracting, or that you can multitask while reading, but then you would be wrong.)

If you follow the above advice as you read each of our required books, you will not only be well prepared for all of our regular class meetings, but will also have done much of your actual studying far in advance of our midterm and final exams.

GVSU Policies

This course is subject to all GVSU policies regarding enrollment, grading, academic integrity, and fairness:

<https://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>

Students with Disabilities

If anyone in this class has special needs because of a cognitive, physical, or other disability, please let me know, and contact Disability Support Resources (DSR) at (616) 331-2490. Although students with disabilities are held to the same academic standards as all other students, accommodations will be provided as appropriate.

And Finally

I would like to see EVERYONE in this class succeed. Do not hesitate to reach out to me if you find yourself struggling in terms of comprehension, motivation, organization, or what have you. I will be more than happy to offer whatever help I can.

PSY 101-01 COURSE SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION

June 27 (Tuesday) ... Virtual class meeting at noon.

THE SCIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY

Readings

Chapter 1 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 1-39)

Preface to *An Anthropologist on Mars* (pp. xv-xx)

"A Surgeon's Life" from *An Anthropologist on Mars* (pp. 77-107)

Activities and Assignments

June 28 (Wednesday) ... Submit Homework 1 by midnight.

June 29 (Thursday) ... Virtual class meeting at noon.

... Also, complete Journal Entry 1 by midnight.

FOURTH OF JULY BREAK

NEUROSCIENCE

Readings

Chapter 2 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 40-95)

Activities and Assignments

July 5 (Wednesday) ... Submit Homework 2 by midnight.

July 6 (Thursday) ... Complete Journal Entry 2 by midnight.
(No class meeting.)

SENSATION AND PERCEPTION

Readings

Chapter 3 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 96-147)

"The Case of the Colorblind Painter" from *An Anthropologist on Mars* (pp. 3-41)

Activities and Assignments

July 10 (Monday) ... Submit Homework 3 by midnight.

July 11 (Tuesday) ... Virtual class meeting at noon.

... Also, complete Journal Entry 3 by midnight.

LEARNING

Readings

Chapter 4 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 148-197)

Activities and Assignments

July 12 (Wednesday) ... Submit Homework 4 by midnight.

July 13 (Thursday) ... Virtual class meeting at noon.

... Also, complete Journal Entry 4 by midnight.

MEMORY

Readings

Chapter 5 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 198-241)
"The Last Hippie" from *An Anthropologist on Mars* (pp. 42-76)

Activities and Assignments

July 17 (Monday)	...	Submit Homework 5 by midnight.
July 18 (Tuesday)	...	Virtual class meeting at noon.
	...	Also, complete Journal Entry 5 by midnight.

MIDTERM EXAM

July 18 (Tuesday)	...	Exam goes online at 5:00 p.m.
July 20 (Thursday)	...	Exam must be turned in by 11:00 a.m.

Please note that Journal Entry 5 (above) and Homework 6 (below) are due during the midterm window.

THINKING AND INTELLIGENCE

Readings

Chapter 6 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 242-281)

Activities and Assignments

July 19 (Wednesday)	...	Submit Homework 6 by midnight.
July 20 (Thursday)	...	Virtual class meeting at noon.
	...	Also, complete Journal Entry 6 by midnight.

DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Readings

Chapter 7 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 282-327)
"To See and Not See" from *An Anthropologist on Mars* (pp. 108-152)

Activities and Assignments

July 24 (Monday)	...	Submit Homework 7 by midnight.
July 25 (Tuesday)	...	Virtual class meeting at noon.
	...	Also, complete Journal Entry 7 by midnight.

PERSONALITY THEORIES AND ASSESSMENT

Readings

Chapter 8 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 328-367)

Activities and Assignments

July 26 (Wednesday)	...	Submit Homework 8 by midnight.
July 27 (Thursday)	...	Virtual class meeting at noon.
	...	Also, complete Journal Entry 8 by midnight.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Readings

Chapter 9 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 368-423)

"An Anthropologist on Mars" from *An Anthropologist on Mars* (pp. 244-296)

Activities and Assignments

July 31 (Monday)	...	Submit Homework 9 by midnight.
August 1 (Tuesday)	...	Virtual class meeting at noon.
	...	Also, complete Journal Entry 9 by midnight.

ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

Readings

Chapter 10 of *Psychology: A Concise Introduction* (pp. 424-473)

"The Landscape of His Dreams" from *An Anthropologist on Mars* (pp. 153-187)

Activities and Assignments

August 2 (Wednesday)	...	Submit Homework 10 by midnight.
August 3 (Thursday)	...	Virtual class meeting at noon.
	...	Also, complete Journal Entry 10 by midnight.

FINAL EXAM

August 7 (Monday)	...	Exam goes online at 9:00 a.m.
August 8 (Tuesday)	...	Exam must be turned in by midnight. (No class meeting.)

Disclaimer: This schedule of topics and assignments is subject to change. Any such changes will be announced during class.