

Fall 2021 Course Syllabus
PSY 101(07): Introductory Psychology
T/TH 11:30 am - 12:45 pm, Lake Michigan Hall (LMH114)
Department of Psychology

Instructor: Walter Sá, Ph.D.
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Virtual Office Hours: Tue 10am-11am & Th 3pm-4pm (& by appointment)

Course Description

This will be an introductory course to the science of psychology. Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. The course will provide a general survey of a wide variety of psychological topics including the history and roots of psychology, research methods used in psychology, biological processes, sensation and perception, behavioral learning perspectives, memory processes, language, reasoning and judgment, intelligence, emotions, personality, and social psychology.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific process in Psychology.
2. Identify major psychological theories and use psychological terminology correctly.
3. Critically evaluate the findings of psychological research.
4. Recognize examples of how psychological concepts are applied to daily life.

GVSU Course Policies*

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at
<http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>

Behavioral Sciences Foundation requirement*

This course fulfills the Social and Behavioral Sciences Foundation requirement:
<https://www.gvsu.edu/gened/foundations-social-and-behavioral-sciences-277.htm>

Textbook (Mandatory):

Introducing Psychology: Brain, Person, Group. Version 5.1 (2020). By Stephen M Kosslyn & Robin S. Rosenberg. Flatworld.

It is important that you keep up with the assigned readings throughout the entire duration of the course. It will not be necessary to bring your textbook to class.

* you will find an e-copy of this syllabus up on blackboard with the clickable links.

Course Evaluation*

Your final course grade will be calculated from i) three non-cumulative midterm exams and a final semi-cumulative exam, ii) assignments and in-class activities and iii) enrichment activities:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Midterm Exam 1 | 18 points |
| Midterm Exam 2 | 18 points |
| Midterm Exam 3 | 18 points |
| Final Exam | 21 points |
| Assignments & In-Class Activities | 17 points |
| Enrichment Activities | 8 points |
| <hr/> | |
| 100 points** | |

* This scheme assumes a regular full face-to-face (f2f) semester. It is subject to substantial modifications in the event of a necessary change in course format (e.g., the need to go online or a hybrid mode)

** Note that the terminology “points” and “percentage” are interchangeable in this grading scheme since the sum of points is 100.

Exams (75% of grade)

There will be three non-cumulative midterm exams and one cumulative final exam. Exams will consist of multiple-choice questions. Questions will be drawn from both lectures and assigned readings. Although there will be a very large overlap between lecture content and the assigned readings, lectures will present some content not found in the assigned readings, and lectures will not cover all the content of the assigned readings for which you will be responsible for. A result of this is that a non-trivial portion of exam questions will comprise of both material that is unique to lectures, and material that is unique to assigned readings. In other words, to do “well” on the exams you must do both the assigned readings and attend class (which means paying attention and taking good notes--not just physically being present). **A good rule-of-thumb for estimating how much time you should devote to studying for a psychology class is two (to three) hours outside class for every hour in class.** Thus, you are strongly encouraged to plan on spending at least six hours a week studying outside of class time.

On exams days

On exam days make sure you bring to class a black lead pencil and a good eraser. You will be filling out a scantron form.

A point of caution, be conscientious about filling these scantron forms. Bubbles should be filled in properly, and you should thoroughly erase any changed answers. Your answers as bubbled-in on these scantrons will be considered your response to the questions. No corrections will be made as a result of errors on your part.

All electronic devices (e.g., phones) must be placed away (also make sure to silence your phones)

On missing exams

Don't!

Rescheduling exams presents problems for the class as a whole, for me as an instructor, and for support staff in the psychology department. Numerous people may be inconvenienced by any modifications to course scheduling due to a student missing an exam.

If, however, you miss an exam for a valid reason, be prepared to provide documentation for your justified absence (e.g., a doctor's note) and be prepared to make up the exam ASAP. This is by no means an issue taken lightly, you **must** have a justified reason for your absence, and you **must** be able to document it.

If you are going to be absent, get in touch with me ASAP (E-mail or telephone call)-- this is your responsibility (do not wait for me to get in touch with you, or simply wait until you see me at the next class). If I do not hear from you within 24 hours of the exam, you have forfeited your opportunity to write that exam. You can contact me at my office number. If you do not speak to me personally, make sure to E-mail me in addition to any phone messages you may leave.

Any alternative date/time exams are likely to consist of an alternative form to the one provided to the regular class.

Emergency closings on exam dates

In the event that the university closes on the date of a scheduled exam, the affected exam will be held during our next regularly scheduled face-to-face class.

Students should assume the university is open unless they are notified otherwise via the GVSU website.

Assignments & In-Class Activities (17% of grade)

It is best to think of this portion (& the below **Enrichment Activities** portion) as the "participation" or "effort" component of your grade. You should be able to get a perfect score on these by simply attending class and completing the assigned work in a timely manner. **Since this is essentially the participation/effort component of your grade, any missed work cannot be made up.**

Assignments will be made available on blackboard and largely scored on a credit/no credit basis (it is your effort that is essentially being gauged here).

Incomplete assignments will not be credited (i.e., the assignment has to be fully complete as outlined in the provided instructions in order to receive credit.)

Assignments that display "low effort" will also not be fully credited.

In-class activities will be unannounced and graded on the basis of participation (completed vs. not completed). Some of these may take the form of pop quizzes that draw upon either assigned readings that should have been completed or material presented in class (including content presented in the class in which the activity is conducted in.) Some other in-class activities will consist of quick "mini-experiments" generating class data that will serve to illustrate upcoming course concepts/material. If you have a valid reason (e.g., illness) for missing an in-class activity, obtain documentation for this absence (e.g., doctor's note) and supply this to me. Note that these activities will be brief in duration (typically no more than 10 or so minutes) and **you must be in class during the time of their administration to**

be credited. You will not be deducted any points if you miss only one or two in-class activities.

Enrichment Activities (8% of grade)

You will need to complete a total of four enrichment activity credits (EA credits) to attain the full eight points (8%) for this class. Each half enrichment activity will be worth 1 point (1%) in this grading scheme (each full activity point will be worth 2 points or 2%.) **Please see pages 8 for more details.**

Important: 1 EA Credit = 2 Points (2%) for this class

Concerning your final submitted grade

Your final course grade will be recorded as a letter grade under the following schedule:

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| A | 93-100% | B+ | 87-89% | C+ | 77-79% | D+ | 67-69% |
| A- | 90-92% | B | 83-86% | C | 73-76% | D | 60-66% |
| | | B- | 80-82% | C- | 70-72% | F | 0-59% |

For purposes of letter grade submission, numerical scores are rounded up from the **second decimal place value** to the nearest whole number (i.e., xx.45 and greater). For example, 82.45, (a **B-**) would be rounded up to an 83 (a straight **B**). An 82.44, however would remain a B- (the border needs to be placed somewhere).

Attendance

Class attendance (& engagement) is crucial for success in this course. If you must miss a non-exam date class you need neither secure my consent nor supply me with a reason for the absence. But please note that missing classes will most likely have consequences on your grade in this course: i) I will be presenting material in class that is not covered in the assigned readings; ii) I often clue students in to especially important assigned reading material during lecture / discussion; iii) an unannounced in-class activity may have been conducted (see above Assignments & In-Class Activities section); iv) **I do not provide lecture notes for missed classes**—please do not ask as I can make no exceptions on this out of fairness to all students; v) you may miss obtaining important announcements and /or handouts in a timely manner. You can mitigate some of these—see the **A helpful suggestion** section below.

Please do NOT email me the following (or variants of the following) questions:

1. "I missed class today. Did I miss anything important?"
2. "Can you send me the lecture notes that I missed?"
3. "I am going to miss class because . . . will there be an in-class activity today?"

Answers to above questions will always have to be:

1. *uh ...* yes, of course you did.
2. No, sorry. See the A helpful suggestion section below.
3. Maybe.

On being late for classes

It is a mistake to think that missing the first few minutes of class is harmless. All things being equal, the worst x minutes that you could possibly miss in a lecture is often the **FIRST** x minutes. Those first few minutes of class are often where the context for all the remaining lecture material gets outlined. Your comprehension of lecture material will often be “challenged” when you miss the preceding material—even just a few minutes. If you do arrive late, please be courteous to your fellow classmates and quietly take the closest or least disruptive seat.

A helpful suggestion

Get to know some of your fellow classmates. Pair up with at least one other student as a “**Lecture-Notes-Buddy.**” That is, in the event you do miss a class, your Lecture-Notes-Buddy will allow you to copy her/his notes for the missed. **Do not expect the instructor to provide you the notes for a missed class. Do not expect the instructor to recap for you an entire missed lecture after class.**

Our responsibilities:

Both the professor and student have responsibilities in the teaching and learning process.

My responsibilities as an instructor include...

- being well organized
- being courteous and helpful with students
- providing an updated and informative course
- returning graded materials promptly
- being fair and unbiased with grading

Your responsibilities as a student include...

- attending classes and being punctual--especially for exams!
- paying attention, taking notes, and asking questions about material you do not understand
- seeking help with material if you're having difficulty (e.g., meeting with me)
- doing the assigned readings and studying the course material

Class Distractions:

Please be courteous to your fellow students (& instructor) by not creating distractions during the class period.

- **silence your phones** (phones should also be placed away from view altogether)
- refrain from “chatting” with other students during the class period
- If you must use a lap-top computer, please ensure that you are utilizing it for the sole purpose of taking notes (don't be watching videos, playing games etc.)

A note about student dissatisfaction with grades:

An unfortunate reality of any course is that not all students will obtain the final grade they desire. Some students may even fail the course. As an instructor of the course, my responsibility is to ensure that evaluation procedures were fair. To a very large extent, this can be determined by how the class is performing overall. If your performance as a member of this class is substantially below the general class performance, then you cannot simply claim that the evaluation procedures were unfair. Some careful thought has to be given to what else might possibly be wrong, and how it might be changed.

To minimize any damage to your student records, **it is important that you consult with me very early once difficulty arises** (e.g., discuss this with me during an office hour.)

Remain vigilant about your progress in the course.

When students approach me late in the term claiming that they NEED a specified grade, what can I (the instructor) do for them? the answer will be disappointing. As long as the grading procedures were fair, YOU as a student are in control and responsible for your own grade. As an instructor, I must be fair and unbiased with the grading procedures, which includes sticking to the same procedures that applied to the entire class. Deviations on my part from the outlined procedures for any single student amounts to cheating those students who were evaluated under the original scheme.

Topics covered:

The following is a list of the topics that will be covered in this course. Although no dates are indicated below, we will progress through the topics in the order listed. Topics are not of equal length (i.e., the duration of time we devote to them.) **Please note that Topic # ≠ Chapter #.** Throughout the course I will often refer to the topic number as indicated below, so please don't confuse topic number with chapter number.

| Topic # | Topic Title | Assigned Readings† |
|---------|---|---|
| 1 | Introduction to the Science of Psychology | Chapter 1: Sections 1.0 - 1.2 |
| 2 | Research Methodology | Chapter 1: Sections 1.3 - 1.4 & Appendix A (basic statistics) |
| 3 | Biological Psychology | Chapter 2: Sections 2.0 - 2.4 |
| 4 | Sensation & Perception | Chapter 3 |
| 5 | Learning | Chapter 4 |
| 6 | Memory | Chapter 5 |
| 7 | Language, Thought & Intelligence | Chapter 6†† |
| 8 | Personality & Social Psychology | Chapter 8: TBA Chapter 13: TBA |
| 9 | Emotion & Development | Chapter 7: Sections 7.0 - 7.1 Chapter 9: Section 9.2 |
| (10) | Psychological Disorders & Treatment | Chapter 11: TBA Chapter 12: TBA |

† The above listed readings should **NOT** be viewed as the official assigned readings that you are responsible for and is presented here only as a useful guide for you. Some of the above may be scaled back, removed and/or **additional readings may be added**. These modifications will always be announced.

†† While there will always be some material presented in lecture that you won't find in the assigned textbook readings, the Topic 7 (Chapter 6) lecture presentations will consist of more material unique to lecture presentations than usual.

Exam and other important dates:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Last day 100% refund | September 2 (5:00 pm) |
| Midterm 1 | Sept 22 |
| Last day 75% refund | Sept 23 (5:00 pm) |
| Midterm 2 | Oct 20 |
| Fall Break | No class on Tuesday October 25 |
| Drop deadline with a grade of "W" | October 28 |
| Midterm 3 | Nov 17 |
| Enrichment Activities Deadline | December 6. |
| Final Exam | Tuesday Dec 13 10 am |

Please note that an audio recording of any class session may be made and that this recording might be made available to some other PSY101 student(s).

Important:

Your continuation in this course indicates your acceptance of all the above scheduling and procedure details along with the acceptance that some modifications may have to be made in the event of extenuating circumstances.

Psych Friends

If you feel you could use some extra help/guidance/support in any academic domain or for your well-being, please consider scheduling an appointment with a mentor through Psych Friends. Psych Friends mentors are upper-level undergraduate peer mentors who are trained to provide support in many areas including: effective study and time management techniques, exam preparation and reflection skills, comprehension of the psychology and behavioral neuroscience major requirements, tips for engaging in the field, strategies for education continuation, methods for maintaining physical and mental health. Schedule an appointment here: <https://www.gvsu.edu/navigate> and Questions? Email psychfriends@gvsu.edu

**Enrichment Activities:
Learning about Psychological Research**

In the Enrichment Activities (EA) portion of the course, students will be given the opportunity to experience psychological research first-hand. Two kinds of enrichment activities are available:

- **Option 1** involves being a participant in research studies conducted by Psychology Department faculty and students.
- **Option 2** involves completing activities that will introduce you to a variety of research techniques used in psychological research.

Students must earn **four** EA credits for this requirement. The credit you earn by completing each EA is a function of the amount of time it takes to complete it. For example, participating in a brief online study (30 minutes or fewer) you would earn ½ of an EA credit, an EA that takes one hour to complete would earn 1 credit. Both types of Enrichment Activities will be available in face to face and online formats.

At least **one full credit** of EAs must be completed in person.

Enrichment activities are scheduled and offered through the Sona Study Scheduling System. You will receive an email at the beginning of the semester containing your User ID and an initial password, and a link to the Sona system website at <https://gvsu.sona-systems.com>. If you do not receive an email regarding your account by the end of the first day of classes, please contact Ember Tokarski at psychlab@gvsu.edu or by phone at 616-331-3262.

SONA Systems maintains a strict policy protecting your privacy and confidentiality. This policy is available for review in the Psychology Office.

Additional details regarding the enrichment activities and an FAQ are available online at <https://www.gvsu.edu/psychology/undergraduate-research-296.htm>

Enrichment Activity Deadline

The last day to complete both Enrichment Activities types is **December 6th, 2022.**

If you have questions regarding any aspect of the Enrichment Activities, please contact Ember Tokarski, who can be reached in the Psychology Department Office (2224 Au Sable Hall, 616.331.3262) or by sending an email to psychlab@gvsu.edu.