

Fall 2016 Course Syllabus
PSY 101: Introductory Psychology (09)
Tuesday & Thursdays 2:30 pm - 3:45 pm, 114 LMH
Department of Psychology

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm, and 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. Students are not expected to have any previous experience in psychology. We will survey a wide variety of topics including the history of psychology, research methods in psychology, biology and behavior, sensation and perception, memory, language, reasoning & judgment, intelligence, emotions, personality, and social psychology.

Course Objectives

Upon the completion of this course you should:

1. Have a firm foundation for understanding modern day psychology including its history, methods, major findings, controversies, and current programs of research.
2. Have an appreciation for the incredible diversity of domains that psychologists study.
3. Be able to make a clear distinction between psychology and "Pop Psychology."
4. Have an appreciation for what issues psychological science can and cannot address.
5. Acquire some necessary background knowledge to evaluate claims of relevance to psychology.
6. Refine analytic thinking skills by using them and by studying and reflecting upon the "thinking" process itself.

Textbook (Required):

Fundamentals of Psychology: The Brain, The Person, The World, 3rd Edition, (2007), by Stephen M. Kosslyn & Robin S. Rosenberg, Allyn and Bacon.

The above textbook is mandatory for this course. **It is extremely important that you keep up with the readings throughout the entire duration of the course.** It will not be necessary to bring your textbook to class.

Course Evaluation

There will be four (4) non-cumulative exams (including the final), several assignments / in-class activities and Enrichment Activities (see below).

Exam 1	22 points
Exam 2	22 points
Exam 3	22 points
Exam 4	22 points
Assignments/ in-class activities	12 points (includes 4 points for Enrichment Activities see p. 8)

100 points*

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

Exams

There will be four non-cumulative exams. Exams will consist of multiple-choice questions. Questions will be drawn from both lectures and assigned readings. Although there will be much overlap between lecture materials and assigned readings, I will present some material not found in the assigned readings and will also not cover all assigned reading material in class. A consequence of this is that a significant portion of exam questions will comprise of 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 there).

On writing exams

On exam days make sure you bring to class a black lead pencil (#2 or softer) and a “good” eraser. You will be filling out scantron forms.

A point of caution, be very conscientious about filling these scantron forms. Bubbles should be filled in properly, and you should thoroughly erase any changed answers. No corrections will be made as a result of errors on your part--think of this as part of the exam, i.e., can you fill these forms properly?

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 modifications to course scheduling.

If, however, you miss an exam for an extremely good 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 I take lightly, you **must** have a very good reason for your absence and you **must** be able to document it for me.

If you are going to be absent, get in touch with me ASAP (via phone and/or E-mail)--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 the 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.

Emergency closings and exams

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 class.

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

Assignments / In-Class Activities

Any provided assignments will be announced in class and graded on a credit / no credit basis. Make sure you have a personal copy of each completed assignment in addition to the copy you submit to me. There will also be unannounced **in-class activities**. These will essentially amount to quick "mini" experiments yielding class data that will serve to illustrate upcoming course concepts/material. **Late assignments will not be accepted--No Exceptions. You will also not be able to "make-up" any in-class activity you miss due to absence.** Think of this as the participation element of these assignments. You can miss one of these assignments or in-class activities without any consequence to your grade. Six of the 12 points will be derived from these assignments and in-class activities.

Four points for this portion of your grade (i.e., 4 of the 12 points) will be allotted to your participation in the **Psychology Enrichment Activities** (see the section that starts on page 8 of this syllabus). A maximum of 4 points (one point for each obtained enrichment activity credit) will be awarded to this portion of your grade.

Important Note: Although missing one of the assignments / in-class activities will not hurt your overall score, you will lose points for not taking part in a total of four psychology enrichment activities. One percentage point will be lost for each enrichment activity credit not obtained (i.e., maximum loss of 4 points).

Concerning your final grade

Although I will provide you with numerical grades (e.g., 85%) throughout the course, your final mark will be recorded as a letter grade under the following schedule:

A	92-100%	B+	88-89%	C+	78-79%	D+	68-69%
A-	90-91%	B	82-87%	C	72-77%	D	60-67%
		B-	80-81%	C-	70-71%	F	Below 60%

Attendance

You will not be directly penalized for missing classes. If you must miss a class you need neither secure my consent or 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 text book; ii) any given assignment must be submitted on the due date in “hard-copy” form at the start of class—no email attachments accepted; iii) in-class activities will often be unannounced (see above section on Assignments / Participation Points); 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 important announcements and/or handouts.

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 be:

1. YES.
2. NO.
3. Maybe.

You can mitigate some of the above consequences—see the **A helpful suggestion** section below.

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 usually 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.

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 photocopy her/his notes for the missed class and

inform you of any announcements you missed. **I will NOT provide lecture slides other than the partial copies that will be posted on blackboard.**

Our responsibilities:

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

My responsibilities as an instructor include...

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

Your responsibilities as a student include...

- attending classes and being punctual--especially for exams!
- paying attention in class
- taking notes during lectures
- asking questions about material you do not understand
- seeking help with material if you're having difficulty (e.g., meeting with me during an office hour, and/or getting a tutor
- not creating distractions for other students or the instructor (e.g., excessive talking); **PLEASE SILENCE YOUR PHONES!**
- establishing advanced arrangements with others to recover any material for a missed class
- doing the assigned readings
- studying the course material

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. Don't fall asleep at the wheel--make sure you 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 is nothing. As long as the grading procedures are fair, YOU as a student are in control and responsible for your own grade. As an instructor, I must be fair 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 one student amounts to cheating those students who were evaluated under the original scheme.

Order of topics to be covered:

The following is a list of the topics (along with the assigned readings) that will be covered in this course. Although no dates are listed below, we will progress through the topics in the order listed. Exam dates have already been scheduled (see Exam and other important dates section). You will be tested on the lecture and reading material we cover prior to each scheduled exam date (not including the material already covered in a previous exam)

Please Note: Topic # \neq Chapter #. Throughout the course I will refer to the **Topic** number as indicated below.

Topic		Assigned Readings
1	Introduction to the Science of Psychology (& introduction to course)	Chapter 1 (pp. 2 - 24) read this syllabus!
2	Research Methods & Statistics	Chapter 1 (pp. 24 - 41) & Appendix A
3	The Biology of Mind and Behavior	Chapter 2
4	Sensation and Perception	Chapter 3
5	Learning	Chapter 4
6	Memory	Chapter 5
7	Language and Thinking*	Chapter 6 (pp. 228 - 252)
8	Intelligence*	Chapter 6 (pp. 252 - 280)
9	Emotion	Chapter 7 (pp. 286 - 306)
10	Personality	Chapter 8
11	Social Psychology	Chapter 13
<hr/>		
if time . . .		
12	Developmental Psychology (Psychology Over the Life Span)	Chapter 9 (pp. 374 - 403)

* These topics will have more material “unique” to lectures (i.e., not found in textbook) than usual.

Exam and other important dates:

Last day 100% refund

Sept. 2

Labor day Recess

Sept. 4-6.

Midterm 1

Tue Sept. 20

Prescreening Survey (last day)

Sept 11

Last day 75% refund

Sept. 23

Midterm 2

Tue Oct. 18

Drop deadline with a grade of "W"

Oct. 28

Midterm 3

Tue Nov. 15

Option 2 for Enrichment Activities

Tuesday Nov. 22

written assignments (Submitted at the start of class)

Option 1 for Enrichment Activities

Tue Dec. 6

Psychological Research (final participation day)*

Final Exam

Tue Dec 13, 4:00 pm

Important: Your continuation in this course indicates your acceptance of the above schedule and procedures. The above schedule and procedures, however, are subject to some modification in the event of extenuating circumstances (as assessed by the instructor).

* *Research participation requires one to sign-up in advance for available time-slots (see the section that starts on page 8). Signing up for available time slots can--and often do--become scarce toward the end of the term. Thus, **DO NOT PROCRASTINATE** if you plan on pursuing this option.*

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. Students must participate in *four* enrichment activities.

Two kinds of enrichment activities are available. *Option 1* involves participating in research studies, while *Option 2* involves reading and writing about papers that report research in scholarly journals.

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, September 11**.

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.

Option 1 Deadline

The last day to participate in studies is **Tuesday, December 6th**.

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 is to broaden your understanding of psychological research and how it is conducted.

Selecting an Article

Choose a current article published in 2015 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 Counseling 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
- 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 handed in (hard-copy) in-class anytime prior to or on **Tuesday November 22.**