

**Fall 2021 Course Syllabus**  
**PSY 101(13): Introductory Psychology**  
T/TH 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm, Lake Michigan Hall 114 (LMH 114)  
**Department of Psychology**

**Instructor:** Walter Sá, Ph.D.  
**Office:** 2210 Au Sable Hall (ASH)  
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**Virtual Office Hours:** T/TH: 2:45 – 3:45 (& 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 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
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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 a minimum of 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 scantron forms.

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 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"/"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. **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 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 to attain full credit for this portion of your grade. Each half enrichment activity will be worth 1 point (or 1%) in this grading scheme (each full activity point will be worth 2 points or 2%.) Pages 8 - 10 of the syllabus outlines the options available for you in attaining these enrichment activity points.

### **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 / 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 insure 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 <sup>†</sup>
1	<b>Introduction to the Science of Psychology</b>	Chapter 1: Sections 1.0 - 1.2
2	<b>Research Methodology</b>	Chapter 1: Sections 1.3 - 1.4 & Appendix A (basic statistics)
3	<b>Biological Psychology</b>	Chapter 2: Sections 2.0 - 2.4
4	<b>Sensation &amp; Perception</b>	Chapter 3
5	<b>Learning</b>	Chapter 4
6	<b>Memory</b>	Chapter 5
7	<b>Language, Thought &amp; Intelligence</b>	Chapter 6 <sup>††</sup>
8	<b>Personality &amp; Social Psychology</b>	Chapter 8 & Chapter 13
9	<b>Emotion &amp; Development</b>	Chapter 7: Sections 7.0 - 7.1 Chapter 9: Section 9.2
(10)	<b>Psychological Disorders</b>	Chapter 11: TBA

<sup>†</sup> 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 3 (5:00 pm)

Prescreening Survey (last day)

Sunday September 19

**Midterm 1**

**Sept 23**

Last day 75% refund

Sept 24 (5:00 pm)

**Midterm 2**

**Oct 21**

Fall Break

No class on Tuesday October 26

Drop deadline with a grade of "W"

October 29

**Midterm 3**

**Nov 18**

**Enrichment Activities Deadline**

Tuesday December 7, 2021.

**Final Exam**

**Tuesday Dec 14  
12:00 pm – 1:50 pm**

**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.

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**Enrichment Activities:  
Learning about Psychological Research**

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In the Enrichment Activities portion of the course, students will become acquainted with the nature and variety of research in psychology. 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 give you first-hand experience with research techniques used in Psychological research.

Students must earn *four* enrichment activity credits for this requirement. Enrichment activities are worth a varying number of credits depending upon how much time it takes to complete the study/research technique activity.

**Enrichment activities use an account in the SONA Systems Scheduling System Software.** You will receive an email at the beginning of the semester containing your User ID and an initial password. Once you have your account, you can log in at any time and sign up to participate in any available studies/activities for which you qualify. If you do not receive an account email by the end of the first day of classes, please contact Casimir Tokarski at [psychlab@gvsu.edu](mailto:psychlab@gvsu.edu) or by phone at 616.331.3262.

To access SONA Systems, along with downloadable registration instructions, follow this link: <https://www.gvsu.edu/psychology/be-a-participant-in-research-296.htm>. A video tutorial is available at the following link that will walk you through the study sign-up process: <https://gvsu.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?pid=14a9aaf9-814f-4a4c-830e-a9ce013e8887&id=c84e8a38-1238-4486-b590-a9cb01307e70&advance=true>

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

**Option 1: Participation in Psychology Studies**

**Objective**

By participating in psychology research studies, you will experience directly some of the procedures used in psychological research while also making a valuable contribution to the generation of knowledge within the discipline. All studies have been reviewed and approved by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is an administrative body established to protect the rights and welfare of human research participants.

**Step 1: Find a study and sign up**

When you log in using your new SONA Systems account, you will see a list of studies. If there are available timeslots there will be a link on the right that will take you to a sign-up page. Before you sign up to participate in a study, review any listed restrictions (for example, "left-handed people only"). If you do not meet the posted eligibility requirements, you will not receive credit for the study.

## **Step 2: Participate in the study**

Some studies on SONA Systems may be completed online, while other studies will require you to participate in person at a physical location (usually the Psychology Laboratories in Au Sable Hall). If the study requires you to attend a session at a particular location, please arrive before the scheduled time, as studies start punctually. If you sign up for a study session but cannot attend, please cancel your session on-line. Online studies must be completed by the study deadline to get credit.

At the beginning of a study session, you will first be given a description of what you will have to do, 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 24 hours after you participate in a study.

## **Under 18?**

Special rules apply to students who are under 18. A general non-study specific Parent/Guardian Permission form must be completed and placed on file in the Psychology office before you are able to participate in any of the studies. In most instances, having the general non-study specific document on file will allow you to participate in studies. However, it is important to read carefully the eligibility requirements for a study. If you need a study specific Parent/Guardian consent form signed in order to participate, it will say so in the eligibility section of the study description. If you are under the age of 18 when you create your SONA Systems account, you will receive an informative email from Casimir Tokarski, the Psychology Department Laboratory Assistant detailing the steps you will need to take in order to document parental consent. Once your parental consent form is on file, you will see a list of studies for which you are eligible.

## **Participation opportunity during the first 3 weeks of the semester: Prescreening Survey**

An on-line prescreening questionnaire is available for the first three weeks of the semester when you log in to SONA Systems. **This is only available to students who are 18 years of age or older.** It is not necessary to do this survey, but by completing it, you may receive invitations to additional studies later in the semester based on your responses. Thus, completing the pre-screening survey may increase the number of studies you will be eligible to choose throughout the semester. Completing the survey counts as one-half credit toward Enrichment Activities. The survey 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, half-hour sitting. The last date to participate in the prescreening survey is **Sunday September 19, 2021.**

## **Option 2 Research Techniques Activities**

### **Objective**

By completing research techniques activities, you will carry out some of the procedures researchers use in their psychological research. For example, you may be asked to watch an exchange between two people and carry out behavioral coding of their interaction. In doing these activities you will gain an understanding of the strengths and limits of various research methods used in psychological science. Research Techniques Activities are listed in SONA Systems along with the research studies. There are no age restrictions on these activities. You may complete each activity only once.

**Need Help?**

If you have questions regarding any aspect of the Enrichment Activities, please contact Casimir 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](mailto:psychlab@gvsu.edu).

**Enrichment Activity Deadline**

The last day to complete both Enrichment Activities types is **Tuesday December 7, 2021.**