

**Winter 2019 Course Syllabus**  
**PSY 101: Introductory Psychology (16)**  
Thursdays 6:00 pm - 8:50 pm, Kennedy Hall of Engineering  
**Department of Psychology**

**Instructor:** Walter Sá, Ph.D.  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 10:15 am – 11:15 am & Thursdays 2:30 pm to 3:30 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. 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 (2018), 4th Edition. By Daniel Schacter, Daniel Gilbert, Matthew Nock & Daniel Wegner. Worth Publishers. Loose-leaf version.**

**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. Note that the required loose-leaf version of this textbook will also come bundled with LaunchPad access to the text (Winter 2019 class only).

\* 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, ii) a final exam (cumulative), iii) several assignments and in-class activities and iv) enrichment activities:

Midterm Exam 1	17 points
Midterm Exam 2	17 points
Midterm Exam 3	17 points
Final Exam	24 points
Assignments & In-Class Activities	17 points
Enrichment Activities	8 points
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100 points*	

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

## Exams (75% of final 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. **You might want to reconsider taking this class if you are not prepared to make this time commitment.**

### 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 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 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 very good 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 final grade)**

It is best to think of this portion as the "participation" component of your grade. You should be able to get a perfect score on this portion by simply attending class and completing any assigned work. Since this is essentially the participation component of your grade, any missed work cannot be made up.

**Assignments** will be announced in class and graded 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. Assignments will always be due in hard-copy form in class (no hand-written assignments will be accepted.) Make sure you retain a personal copy of each completed assignment (e.g., e-copy) in addition to the hard-copy you submit to me.

**In-class activities** will be unannounced and graded on the basis of participation (completed vs. not completed). Some of these will 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**. It is also possible that more than one in-class activity may be administered during a single class session (a possibility due to a full week's coverage of material in a single class.)

**Scoring Details:** Your first missed assignment or in-class activity will result in a zero-point deduction from this portion of your grade. Your second missed assignment or in-class activity will result in a one-point deduction. Your third missed assignment or in-class activity results in an additional two-point deduction (the first “freebie” is effectively withdrawn at this point.) Each subsequent missed assignment or in-class activity will result in an additional **one**-point deduction. **You will not be able to make-up any in-class activity you miss due to absence.**

### Enrichment Activities

You will need to complete a total of four enrichment activities to attain full credit for this portion of your grade. Each enrichment activity will be worth 2 points (i.e., 4 activities x 2 points each for a total of 8 points.) Pages 8 - 10 of the syllabus outlines the two options available for you in attaining these enrichment activity points.

### Concerning your final grade

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

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

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 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 in class and taking notes
- asking questions about material you do not understand
- seeking help with material if you're having difficulty (e.g., meeting with me)
- not creating distractions for other students or the instructor (e.g., excessive talking) **Silence your phones** (phones should also be placed away during class)
- doing the assigned readings and 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 insure 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 class. Although no dates are indicated below, we will progress through the topics in the order listed. Exam dates have already been scheduled (see exam and other important dates section). Below topics are not of equal length (i.e., the duration of time we devote to them in class will vary substantially as some below topics simply have more material to be covered in lecture.) Throughout the course I will refer to the topic number as indicated below.

**Please note that Topic #  $\neq$  Chapter #.** Unless otherwise announced in class, you are responsible for reading the entire chapter(s) and page ranges listed for each topic below.

<u>Topic</u>		<u>Assigned Readings*</u>
1	Introduction to the Science of Psychology	Chapter 1
2	Research Methodology	Chapter 2 & Appendix A (pp. A1-A6)
3	Biological Psychology	Chapter 3
4	Sensation & Perception	Chapter 4
5	Learning	Chapter 7
6	Memory	Chapter 6
7	Language, Thought & Intelligence	Chapter 9 & Chapter 5 (pp. 129-139)
8	Personality & Social Psychology	Chapters 11 & 12
9	Development & Emotion	Chapter 10 & Chapter 8 (pp. 237-249)
10	Psychological Disorders	Chapter 14

**\* IMPORTANT:** The above assigned readings may **NOT** be the official assigned readings that you are responsible for. Some of the above is likely to either be scaled back and/or additional readings may be added. These modifications will always be announced in class.

**Exam and other important dates:**

Last day 100% refund	Jan. 11 (5:00 pm)
Prescreening Survey (last day)	Jan 27
<b>Midterm 1</b>	<b>Jan 31</b>
Last day 75% refund	Feb. 1 (5:00 pm)
<b>Midterm 2</b>	<b>Feb 28</b>
Spring break	March 4 – 8
Drop deadline with a grade of “W”	March 8 (5:00 pm)
<b>Midterm 3</b>	<b>April 4</b>
<b>Option 2 for Enrichment Activities</b> <u>written assignments</u> (Submitted at the <u>start</u> of class)	April 11 (by <u>start</u> of class)
<b>Option 1 for Enrichment Activities</b> <u>Psychological Research</u> (final participation day)*	Tuesday April 16
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>April 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00-7:50 pm</b>

**Important note:**

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

## **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 three weeks of the semester. Completing this survey counts as one-half 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, half-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 27<sup>th</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 17 and regularly enrolled at GVSU, you can sign up for studies that allow regularly enrolled students that are under 18 to participate. This information can be found in the study's eligibility requirements. A parental consent form can also be filled out for studies that do not have this requirement. Please contact [psychlab@gvsu.edu](mailto:psychlab@gvsu.edu) to get this form. You will need a different parental consent form for each study that requires one. If you are under 18 and not regularly enrolled, please use *Option 2*.

If you have any questions, please contact the Lab Assistant, Casimir Tokarski, at [psychlab@gvsu.edu](mailto:psychlab@gvsu.edu).



### Need Help?

If you need assistance registering for studies, 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).

### Option 1 Deadline

The last day to participate in studies is **Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>**.

## 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 2017 or 2018 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 turned in anytime during the semester. **The last date to submit papers is at the start of our Thursday April 11 class (6:00pm).**