

Environmental Psychology
(PSY. 362)
121 LHH
T/TH 2:30-3:45

Instructor: Prof. Eaaron Henderson-King

Office: 2206 ASH, phone: 331-2938

e-mail:henderse@gvsu.edu

Office hours: Tues. 2-3pm and Thurs. 2-3pm or by appt.

Readings:

Norman, D. (2013). *The Design of Everyday Things*. (e-book) available through the library

Bechtel, R. B. & Churchman, A. (2002). *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons. e-book available through library. You will need this book in order to read Gifford (2002) and Carpman and Grant (2002).

All other readings will be available on Blackboard under "Course Documents".

Overview: Environmental psychology is the study of how humans effect, and are affected by, the environment they inhabit. It examines human behavior, well-being, perceptions and attitudes and how each of these is influenced by the socio-physical environment. Environmental psychologists look at how the natural environment, homes, offices, educational settings, neighborhoods and communities, and technology shape, and are shaped by, those in the environment.

Thus, in this course we will ask, and address, questions such as: How do we find our way around the environments in which we live and work? What factors lead us to like, or dislike, the places in which we live? What are the effects of overcrowding, pollution, and noise on our psychological well-being?

Exams: There will be three exams in the course. The first will be based on the lecture and reading material that will be presented in the first 3 weeks of the semester, and the second will cover weeks 4 through 8. The Final Exam will be cumulative and will cover the readings assigned in the later half of the semester as well as the material covered in the first eight weeks of the semester.

Pop quizzes on readings (Four) – 40 points (10 points each)

Exam 1 – 50 points

Exam 2 – 50 points

Final Exam – 70 points

The exams will be a mix of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. The questions will be taken from BOTH the lecture material and the course readings.

Action Project: One of the primary foci of those who are interested in environmental psychology and those who conduct research in the field is *change*. How can we change people's behavior or the environment in which they live for the better? Thus, the action project will provide you with an opportunity to attempt to make a positive change on some level (people's behavior or perceptions, or the environment in which people live and work). The action project can be relatively small or large, and, depending on the scope of the project, only a portion of it needs to actually be completed.

Your task is to develop an intervention that is designed to influence the person-environment relationship. The project can be something on the university level, in the local community, at the state level, or even on the national level. An example might be a campaign to get drivers to use the fast lane on highways only for passing, since traffic backups is a significant stressor in people's lives. A second example might be an educational campaign addressing global warming, or littering on campus, or food waste at the individual or institutional level.

The project should consist of the following components:

- 1) a theoretical and empirical rationale for the project
- 2) conducting the project
- 3) an assessment component in which you propose how you would assess the project's effectiveness
- 4) writing an 8-10 page paper that incorporates the theoretical and empirical/assessment components; a detailed discussion of the method you used to implement the project; and an assessment and critique of the project's effectiveness (what happened in conducting the project, what were it's effects, what did you learn, what would you do differently in the future and why, etc.).

Each group will be responsible for gathering readings (theoretical, empirical, and/or applied) that address the problem. They will then select **two readings** for the class to read. These readings must give the class a clear understanding of what the issue is AND the relevant empirical background that assisted the group to determine how they would approach addressing the issue. These readings will be used as the basis for the group leading a class presentation and discussion of their action project. Also, note that the final exam will include questions based on these readings. The readings must be submitted to me in a **PDF** format by **October 18, 2016**. A set of discussion questions, which may be revised, should also be submitted.

In the second half of the semester, each group will be given an entire class period to lead a discussion on the readings, and both present and discuss their action project in its entirety.

Each person will be responsible for one aspect of the project and will be graded individually on that portion the project as well as the entire group project.

Paper – 50 points

Class presentation – 30 points

Individual portion of project – 30 points

Group evaluation of each individual member's contribution and performance – 20 points

Submission of readings – 15 points

Total points for the course -- 355 points

Grade Distribution:

A -- 100 -94%	A- -- 93.9-90%
B+ -- 89.9-87%	B -- 86.9-83%
B- -- 82.9-80%	C+ -- 79.9-77%
C -- 76.9-73%	C- -- 72.9-70%
D+ -- 69.9-67%	D -- 66.9-63%
D- -- 62.9-60%	F -- 59.9%-->

Schedule of classes and readings

Aug. 30 and Sept. 1 (Week 1)

Introduction: What is Environmental Psychology?

Readings:

Gifford, R. (2002). Making a difference: Some ways environmental psychology has improved the world. In R. B. Bechtel and A. Churchman, *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons. **(e-book) (Chapter 21)**

Christakis, N. A. & Fowler, J. H. (2007) The spread of obesity in a large social network over 32 years. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 357(4), 370-379.

Ulrich, R. S. (1984). View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. *Science*, 224, 420-421.

Norman, D. (2013). *The Design of Everyday Things. Chapter 1, The psychopathology of everyday things.*

Sept. 8 (Week 2)

Research Methods in Environmental Psychology

Assignment to groups and discussion of action project

Sept. 13 and 15 (Week 3)

Research Methods in Environmental Psychology

Assignment to groups and discussion of action project

Sept. 20 and 22 (Week 4)

Ecology and a Multi-Level Perspective

Readings:

Milgram, S. (1970). The experience of living in cities. *Science*, 167, 1461-1468.

Argyle, M. & Dean, J. (1965). Eye-contact, distance and affiliation. *Sociometry*, 28, 289-304.

Sept. 22 – Discussion of Projects

Sept. 27 and 29 (Week 5)

Sept. 25 – Take-home Essay posted on Blackboard by NOON

Perception, Cognition and the Environment

Readings:

Carpman, J. R. & Grant, M. A. (2002). Wayfinding: A broad view. In R. B. Bechtel and A. Churchman, *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons. (e-book) (Chapter 28)

Anooshian, L. J. (1996). Diversity within spatial cognition: strategies underlying spatial knowledge. *Environment and Behavior*, 28, 471-493.

Oct. 2 – Take-home essay response submitted via Blackboard by NOON

Oct. 4 and 6 (Week 6)

****Oct. 4 (Tues.) Exam 1 (Covering Weeks 1 through 5)****

Personality and Socio-cultural factors in Attitudes Toward the Environment

Readings:

Kaiser, F. G. & Byrka, K. (2011). Environmentalism as a trait: Gauging people's prosocial personality in terms of environmental engagement. *International Journal of Psychology*, 46, 71-79.

Markowitz, E. M., Goldberg, L. R., Ashton, M. C., & Lee, K. (2012). Profiling the "Pro-Environmental Individual": A personality perspective. *Journal of Personality*, 80, 81-111.

Pelletier, L. G. Dion, S., Tuson, K., & Green-Demers, I. (1999). Why do people fail to adopt environmental protective behaviors? Toward a taxonomy of environmental amotivation. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29, 2481-2504.

Oct. 11 and 13 (Week 7)

Determinants of Pro-Environmental Behaviors

Readings:

Frantz, C. M. & Mayer, F. S. (2009). The emergency of climate change: Why are we failing to take action? *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 9, 205-222.

Tobler, C., Visschers, V. H. M., & Siegrist, M. (2012). Addressing climate change: Determinants of consumers' willingness to act and support policy measures. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 32, 197-207.

Whitmarsh, L. (2009). Behavioral responses to climate change: Asymmetry of intentions and impacts. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 29, 13-23.

Oct. 13 – Discussion of Projects

Oct. 18 and 20 (Week 8)

Behavioral, Social and Health Effects of Environmental Stressors

Readings:

Jones, D. M., Chapman, A. J., & Auburn, T. C. (1981) Noise in the environment: A social perspective, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 1, 43-59.

Leather, P., Beale, D., & Sullivan, L. (2003). Noise, psychological stress and their interaction in the workplace. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 23, 213-222.

Moser, G. (1988). Urban stress and helping behavior: Effects of environmental overload and noise on behavior. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 8, 287-298.

Oct. 20 – Discussion of Project

****Oct. 18 – Group readings submitted in PDF format by noon. ****

Oct. 25 and 27 (Week 9)

Oct. 23 – Take-home Essay posted on Blackboard by NOON

Sustainability & Human behavior and environmental problems

Readings:

Hanss, D. & Böhm, G. (2012). Sustainability seen from the perspective of consumers. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 36, 678-687.

Hirsh, J. B. (2014). Environmental sustainability and national personality. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 38, 233-240.

Nov. 1 and 3 (Week 10)

Oct. 30 – Take-home essay response submitted via Blackboard by NOON

****Nov. 1 (Tues.) Exam 2 (covering Weeks 6 through 9)****

Nov. 03 – Group 1

Nov. 8 and 10 (Week 11)

Nov. 08 – Group 2

Nov. 10 – Group 3

Nov. 15 and 17 (Week 12)

Nov. 15 – Group 4

Nov. 17 – Group 5

*****PAPER DUE Nov. 17 (IN CLASS)**

Nov. 22 and 24 (Week 13)

Film

Nov. 29 and Dec. 1 (Week 14)

Nov. 29 – Film

Dec. 01 – Group 6

Dec. 03 Take-home essay for final exam posted

Dec. 6 and 8 (Week 15)

Dec. 6 – Group 7

Dec. 8 – Group 8

Dec. 10 – Take-home portion of final exam due by NOON.

Dec. 14 Final exam (CUMULATIVE) noon-1:50pm