



The General Education Program prepares students for informed citizenship, leading to responsible participation in local, national, and global communities.

PSY 101 Introductory Psychology

Foundations - Social and Behavioral Sciences

Knowledge Student Learning Outcomes

1. Explain how knowledge in the social and behavioral sciences is created and applied.
2. Explain major approaches, methods, theories, and substantive findings of the field.
3. Evaluate and apply concepts and theories from the social and behavioral sciences to real-life examples.

Skills Student Learning Outcomes

1. Critical Thinking: Comprehensively evaluate issues, ideas, artifacts, or events before forming a conclusion.
 - States an issue clearly and describes it comprehensively.
 - Uses appropriate evidence that includes relevant context(s), which facilitates a comprehensive analysis or synthesis of the issue.
 - Develops a position that thoroughly takes into account the complexities of an issue, limits of the position, and synthesizes others' points of view.
 - Develops conclusions, implications, and consequences that are logical and reflect an informed evaluation based on strength of evidence.
2. Ethical Reasoning: Apply ethical principles and codes of conduct to decision making.
 - Recognizes ethical issues when presented in a complex, multilayered (gray) context and can recognize interrelationships among the issues.
 - Names the major ethical theory or theories used, presents the gist of said theory or theories, and thoroughly and accurately explains the details of the theory or theories used.
 - Applies ethical theories to a complex issue accurately and considers the full implications of the application.
 - States a position in-depth and effectively defends against other ethical perspectives.

Grand Valley State University
Syllabus
PSY 101-01, Introductory Psychology, Fall Semester, 2025

Instructor Information

Name: Benjamin Swets, Ph.D., Professor
Office hours: MW 1:00-1:50 pm, or by appointment. Please email me to make appointments.
Office location: 2317 Au Sable Hall
Email: swetsb@gvsu.edu. Reaching me by email is generally easier than reaching me by phone.
Phone: (616) 331-2169

Class Time and Place

MWF 9:00am – 9:50pm 174 LSH

Note: This is a hybrid course for which parts of the course will be administered online. You should plan to attend class in-person every Monday and Wednesday. Friday classes will sometimes meet in person, but will most often be replaced by asynchronous content found online in Blackboard.

Course Description (from GVSU)

“General survey of psychology, the scientific study of behavior and experience, including overt actions and mental activity. Covers how psychologists think and act as scientists and how the study of its subject matter may be integrated at the biological, psychological, and social levels of analysis. Fulfills Social and Behavioral Sciences Foundation requirement.”

Course Description (mine)

This course serves as an overview of the scientific study of psychology from many different perspectives. We will cover such topics as learning, perception, emotions, psychological disorders, and social processes. I have a simple philosophy for the teaching of this course: to match student goals with instructor goals. My goal in teaching this course is to have students learn the essential skills, concepts and information that any student in Introductory Psychology ought to learn. I hope that one of your main goals is to get a good grade. By ensuring that the concepts and skills I want you to learn comprise the basis of evaluation for your grade, our goals become one and the same.

Why Should You Take This Course?

This course will provide you with fascinating insights into human thought and behavior. If that isn't enough, this course also satisfies a departmental requirement for Psychology majors and is a prerequisite for almost every other Psychology course. Introductory Psychology is also part of the Social Sciences General Education Foundation Category.

Course Objectives

- To demonstrate an understanding of the scientific process in Psychology. I consider this course to be an opportunity to teach more than just WHAT we know about psychology. It is an opportunity to also teach HOW psychology is studied. Psychology is a science, and this course will emphasize that point.
- To identify major psychological theories and use psychological terminology correctly.
- To critically evaluate the findings of psychological research. Be prepared to think skeptically in this class.
- To recognize examples of how psychological concepts are applied to daily life.

Required Text

Textbook: Pomerantz, A. M. (2023). *My Psychology* (3rd edition) with Achieve access. You will complete required assignments in the Achieve software, and the online textbook is included with this package. This software/textbook combo is automatically charged to your student account and is available in Blackboard Ultra at the start of the semester. (Note that this charge will be reversed if you opt out to purchase the software on your own before Sept. 7, or if you drop the course.) *Make sure to register for Achieve through Blackboard—if you register through Achieve, your grades will not be counted.* There is more information about Achieve Registration under a module with that title in Blackboard Ultra, and the following link gives you more instructions about Achieve registration as well: <https://mhe.my.site.com/macmillanlearning/s/article/Students-Register-for-Achieve-courses-via-your-school-s-LMS#blackboardUltra>.

Course Webpage

The instructor will maintain a course webpage using GVSU's Blackboard Ultra system. The webpage will contain pertinent course information, reading assignments, grades, lecture slides, announcements, etc. The webpage is meant to supplement the lectures, not replace them. Students are responsible for all information provided in the lecture that may, or may not, be included on the web page.

Course Requirements

Quizzes/In-Class Assignments (35 points total): Throughout the semester, short quizzes on the assigned reading will be given during lecture. The dates of these quizzes will be determined randomly. *No make-up quizzes will be administered*, but students may miss 1 quiz/in-class assignment without penalty. It is a good idea to do the reading assignments before the date on which they are listed.

Reading Assignments (70 points total): To help encourage students to read the textbook carefully before class and foster learning, they will complete reading assignments before class. The reading assignments can be found in Blackboard under Modules, and will be completed through the Achieve access that is described above. Students can miss 1 of these reading assignments without penalty.

Enrichment Activities (20 points total): As a part of an enriched academic experience, you are required to participate in four (4) hours of psychology studies or alternative activities (see attached).

Midterm Exams (120 points total): There will be three midterm exams worth 40 points apiece. Exam dates appear on the Course Schedule, below. Midterms will consist of multiple choice questions that engage your understanding of course concepts. Questions may cover any information provided by the lecture, textbook, and supplementary classroom activities such as videos. Midterms will not be cumulative.

Final Exam (75 points): The final exam will consist of multiple choice questions. Some of the points on the final exam will come from the final course unit, and the remaining questions could be on any topic from any time in the course. Therefore, some of the final exam will be cumulative, and some will be like a Midterm Exam.

Grading

The Quizzes, Enrichment Activities, Midterm Exams, and Final Exam will collectively be worth 320 points. Based on your cumulative point score the following grades will be assigned:

<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Grade</i>		
93 – 100%	A	73 – 76.99%	C
90 – 92.99%	A-	70 – 72.99%	C-
87 – 89.99%	B+	67 – 69.99%	D+
83 – 86.99%	B	60 – 66.99%	D
80 – 82.99%	B-	59.99% or less	F
77 – 79.99%	C+		

THE GRADING SCALE AS PRINTED ABOVE IS *FINAL!* Any changes in grading policy will be announced in class and on the course website.

Attendance

There is no attendance requirement, but I strongly recommend attending class, for several reasons: 1) There will be material covered in class that will not be found in the textbook, but will be found in exam questions. 2) Surprise quizzes/in-class assignments comprise part of the grading of this course. 3) Repeated and varied exposure to course material results in better memory and understanding of that material.

Tentative Course Schedule

Learning Modules: The learning modules in Blackboard are a foundational part of this course. Modules are where you will find instructions for each segment of the course including reading assignments, lecture slides, and review sheets. Modules will open up every three to four weeks and various assignments will be due during those windows.

	DATE	TOPIC(S)	READING
Module 1: Psychological Foundations	Aug 25	Syllabus, Introduction	
	Aug 27	History of Psychology I	Chapter 1 (1 st half)
	Aug 29	History of Psychology II	
	Sep 1	NO CLASS LABOR DAY RECESS	
	Sep 3	Research Methods I	Chapter 1 (2 nd half)
	Sep 5	Research Methods II	
	Sep 8	Evolutionary Theory	See Blackboard
	Sep 10	Brain I	Chapter 2
	Sep 12	Brain II, Review	
Module 2: Learning and Cognition	Sep 15	EXAM I	
	Sep 17	Learning and Behavior Analysis I	Chapter 6
	Sep 19	Learning and Behavior Analysis II	
	Sep 22	Perception I	Chapter 3
	Sep 24	Perception II	
	Sep 26	Perception III	
	Sep 29	Memory I	Chapter 5
	Oct 1	Memory II	
	Oct 3	Memory III	
	Oct 6	Memory IV	
	Oct 8	Memory V	
	Oct 10	Review	
Module 3: Development, Emotion, and Disorders	Oct 13	EXAM II	
	Oct 15	Development I	Chapter 9
	Oct 17	Development II	
	Oct 20	NO CLASS: FALL BREAK!	
	Oct 22	Emotions, Stress and Health I	Chapter 8
	Oct 24	Emotions, Stress and Health II	
	Oct 27	Emotions, Stress and Health III	Chapter 11
	Oct 29	Emotions, Stress and Health IV	
	Oct 31	Psychological Disorders I	Chapter 14
	Nov 3	Psychological Disorders II	
	Nov 5	Psychological Disorders III	
	Nov 7	Treatment of Disorders I	
Module 4: Social Psychology	Nov 10	Treatment of Disorders II	
	Nov 12	EXAM III	
	Nov 14	Treatment of Disorders I	
	Nov 17	Treatment of Disorders II	Chapter 15
	Nov 19	Social Cognition I	
	Nov 21	Social Cognition II	
	Nov 24	Social Cognition III	Chapter 13 (1 st half)
	Nov 26	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING RECESS	
	Nov 28	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING RECESS	
	Dec 1	Social Processes I	Chapter 13 (2 nd half)
	Dec 3	Social Processes II	
	Dec 5	Social Processes III, Review	

The above schedule is tentative. Any changes in the schedule will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, December 10, 8:00 am - 9:50 am

Caveat

All of the information included in this syllabus, including the course schedule, assignments, and grading procedure, is subject to change. Any changes to this schedule will be announced in class and on the course webpage. In addition, this course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>.

Emergencies and Schedule Conflicts

Absences *from exams* related to participation in a university-sanctioned event, a personal illness, a family emergency, or a major religious holiday will be excused provided that you a) give the instructor at least one week advance notice (when the conflict is foreseeable) or a timely explanation upon your return (when the conflict is unforeseeable) and b) give the instructor written documentation. You may take a make-up exam either at another time on the normal exam day, or on the soonest possible date thereafter. An unexcused absence from an exam will constitute a score of 0.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of learning, physical or other disability, please contact Disability Support Resources (DSR) at (616) 331-2490. I would be happy to help, but DSR is the proper channel. If you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.

Academic Integrity

Section STU 4.0 of GVSU's Student Code contains very specific information about maintaining academic integrity.

It states: "The principles of academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to a community of scholars. The University expects that students will not engage in acts of academic dishonesty in curricular and non-curricular academic activities. Engaging in academic dishonesty compromises the integrity of university grades, and scholarship and research.

Academic dishonesty is defined as actions or behaviors that misrepresent one's contributions to or the results of any scholarly product submitted for credit, evaluation, or dissemination. This definition includes, but is not limited to, fabrication, falsification, cheating, and plagiarism. Terms are defined as the following:

- Cheating is defined as attempting to use materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise that have not been allowed by the instructor.
- Plagiarism is defined as offering the work of someone else as one's own. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, speeches or the writings of other students. Academic dishonesty compromises the integrity of grades, meaning that all academic work should be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid.

Students will comply with the following rules, when engaging in coursework:

1. No student shall knowingly, without authorization, procure, provide or accept any materials which contain questions or answers to any examination or assignment.
2. No student shall, without authorization, complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person.
3. No student shall, without authorization, allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, by another person.
4. No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his/her own.
5. No student shall submit work that has been previously graded, or is being submitted concurrently to more than one course, without authorization from the instructor(s) of the class(es) to which the student wishes to submit it.

PROCEDURES

When the instructor feels that action beyond a failing course grade is warranted, the instructor will report the incident at www.gvsu.edu/conduct and request additional action via the University Conduct Process. When the alleged violation is related to the Academic Honesty - Integrity of Scholarships and Grades, the Hearing Body shall be composed of faculty members.

It is the instructor's responsibility to establish a classroom atmosphere that fosters academic honesty on the part of the students. If any instance of academic dishonesty is discovered by an instructor, they will notify the student and discuss the incident. After discussing the instance with the student, the instructor will make a decision. Depending on the instructor's judgment of the particular case, they may do nothing, impose additional course requirements, ask the student to repeat the work in question, or give a failing grade for the assignment, examination or the entire course. Any time an instructor addresses a violation of Academic Honesty with a failing grade on an assignment or in a course, they must report the incident at www.gvsu.edu/conduct. Other incidents may be reported for tracking purposes. Reporting the incident will notify the Department Chair, the Dean of Students, and the Dean(s) of the Instructional Colleges. Reporting the incident does not

automatically initiate additional action, but keeps record of the incident. Students may utilize the Academic Grievance Process to appeal a faculty initiated decision.”

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 email questions to psychfriends@gvsu.edu.

APPENDIX #1:

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, by participating in a brief online study (30 minutes or fewer) you would earn ½ of an EA credit whereas 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. You may complete the EA requirement using any combination of EA types.

Enrichment activities are scheduled and offered through the Sona Study Scheduling System. You will receive an email from Study Scheduling System 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 end of day on Wednesday, September 3rd, please check your spam folder. Should the email still not appear, please contact the Lab Manager, Hannah Todd, at psychlab@gvsu.edu.

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/psy-101-participation-in-research-sona-435.htm>

Screening Instrument: Once you receive your User ID and password, you will be able to immediately earn .5 credits by completing an online prescreening questionnaire. This is a short questionnaire used by some researchers to determine your participation eligibility for studies carried out throughout the semester. You must be 18 or older to complete the prescreen survey. You are not required to complete it, but doing so increases the number of studies you will be able to choose from during the semester. You can complete the prescreen at any time from the My Profile tab on the blue bar at the top of the page, however, completing it early (within the first two weeks of class) ensures that you will have access to the widest variety of EA activities within the Sona System.

Enrichment Activity Deadline

The last day to complete your EA requirement is **Friday, December 5th @ 5:00pm**.

If you have questions regarding any aspect of the Enrichment Activities, please contact the Lab Manager Hannah Todd, who can be reached in the Psychology Department Office (2224 Au Sable Hall, 616-331-2427) or by sending an email to psychlab@gvsu.edu.