

General Psychology
Psychology K111
Spring 2009

Instructor: Dr. Robin McGovern

Office Location: Adjunct Office

Office Hours: By appointment only, immediately before or following class

Phone Numbers: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: (860) 679-6079
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Class Location: Three-Rivers Campus: Room D226

Class Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00am- 9:50am

Required Text: Psychology (6th Edition). Meyers, Worth Publishers, 2007

Course Description:

This course is designed to expose the student to a wide range of concepts and problems in the field of psychology as a behavioral science. Emphasis is placed on the following areas and topics: the science of psychology, biological psychology, sensation and perception, learning theory and memory, emotion and motivation, thought and behavior. This class has been divided into 7 parts or units, in each unit; you will have 1 quiz, 1 homework assignment and 1 exam.

EVALUATION

Course Evaluation: *Your final grade will be based on the total number of points you accumulate out of 1000*, which can easily be converted to a percentage and letter grade. Your grade will come from a combination of scores from 1 out of class quiz, 7 in class quizzes, 2 homework assignments, 1 methods paper, 7 exams and class participation and attendance. The breakdown will be as follows:

Task	Points per Task	Total Points	% of Total Grade
Plagiarism Quiz	10	10	1%
7 In Class Quizzes	20	140	14%
2 Homework Assignments	25	50	5%
One Research Methods Paper	50	50	5%
7 In Class Exams	100	700	70%
Class Participation and Attendance	50	50	5%
TOTAL		1000 points	100%

What do I have to do to get and A?

For this class: A: 92.5-100%
A-: 89.5- 92.4%
B+: 87.5-89.4%
B: 82.5-87.4%
B-:79.5-82.4%
C+: 77.5-79.4%
C: 72.5-77.4%
C-: 69.5-72.4%
D+: 67.5-69.4%
D: 62.5-67.4%
D-: 59.5-62.4%
F: below 59.4%

The following criteria will be used to grade more subjective assignments:

“A” Work: Work of a consistently high standard, showing distinction in such qualities such as organization, accuracy, originality, understanding and insight.

“B” Work: Work that is decidedly above average. "B" grades generally imply that the student: a) exceeds average requirements, b) is usually alert and active in class discussions and gives evidence of some critical attitude and good judgement, c) exercises noticeable care in preparing assignments, and gives evidence of doing some independent reading, d) is eager to learn and willing to profit from direction and criticism, e) has some ability to transfer the general principles of the course to other situations.

"C" Work: Work that fulfills essential requirements in quality and quantity, and meets the acceptable minimum standard for satisfactory progress at UConn. A "C" grade of some kind implies that the student: a) performs the required assignments regularly from day to day, b). is attentive during class and gives adequate answers, c). is usually careful, neat, and accurate in all work, d) masters the facts of general significance, e). uses, at least occasionally, material from preceding sources, when appropriate, but needs additional assistance.

"D" Work: Work that falls below the minimum standard acceptable for satisfactory progress at UConn.

"F" Work: Work that is unsatisfactory.

** The instructor reserves the right to grade on a curve if the class distribution requires it. However, I have not and would prefer not to grade on a curve. The reason your grade is not based on exam grades alone is to give students many opportunities to help their grades if they should do poorly on an exam. **

Quizzes: You will have 7 in class quizzes throughout the semester. The dates of the quizzes are on the syllabus, so you will know about them ahead of time. The material on each quiz will cover topics pertaining to each unit that we have already discussed in class or that we will be discussing on the day of the quiz. The quizzes are designed to help you stay up to date with your reading and help your grade should you do poorly on exams. Quizzes should take no more than 10-15 minutes of class time. Occasionally we will go over the answers to the quiz in class. You will have your graded quizzes returned within 2 class periods (i.e., if we have a quiz on Monday, I will return them to you by Friday). No makeup quizzes will be given, please see the *make-up quiz* policy for more details.

Homework Assignments: You are required to complete 2 homework assignments, worth 25 points each and due at the beginning of class on the date specified on the syllabus. Assignments for the homework will be given by the instructor throughout the semester. Late homework assignments will not be accepted unless prior arrangements (at least 24 hours before the assignment is due) are made with the instructor.

Exams: Your exam grade will be based on the number of points you earn during 7 non-cumulative exams. All exams will consist of objective questions (i.e. multiple choice, true/false and matching), fill in the blank, and short answer essays. A week or so prior to each exam, you will receive a list of possible essay questions that will appear on upcoming exam. *I strongly encourage you to complete these essay questions in the course of your studying for each exam. I have found that students who do this receive far better grades on the essays than those who do not complete the essays.* The exams will cover material from the text (not necessarily covered in class), lectures, class room discussions, guest lecturers, films/movies, and other assigned readings. Exams will not be timed however; you should be able to complete the exam within 50 minutes. If you need additional time to complete the exam, please let the instructor know and arrangements will be made.

Research Methods Paper: In General Psychology, we are examining the field of psychology as a science. As we have learned, the primary component of scientific study is empirical investigation. A familiarization with the techniques used by those who empirically investigate psychology will be extremely beneficial to you and make your educational experience better-rounded. This assignment is designed to make you to think critically and will likely be somewhat challenging. I will be available to help as much as I can, within reason (i.e., I won't write your paper for you!).

Each student will submit a paper detailing the investigative technique they selected from the list provided by the instructor. No more than 2 students may write on the same technique. Your paper must include an overview of the general protocol/procedure/experimental design for studies using your technique, the types of questions that can be answered using your technique, a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of this technique compared to other techniques used to answer similar questions and a brief description of a recent study (since 2005) that has used this technique.

The paper is to be 4-5 double spaced pages (not including references), using 12-point font and appropriate citations. The paper is worth a maximum of 50 points and will be due **Monday, May 11, 2009**. Material from this assignment will not be on the final exam.

Note: This assignment will require considerable time and effort. I would strongly suggest that you do not wait until the last minute to begin your papers....especially if you expect the instructor to help and provide guidance.

Extra Credit: I will try to come up with ways for you to get extra credit throughout the semester...although I hope it is not needed and extra credit opportunities are not guaranteed.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Email: I will be communicating with the class via email. You should all have a TRCC email account that you check regularly (i.e., at least once a day); this is the only email that I will use to communicate with you. If you do not have a TRCC account, please contact the Educational Technology Department. Email is also the best way to get in touch with me. If you email me, I will respond to your email within 24 hours.

Participation: You are expected to actively participate in classroom discussions. The class will be much more enjoyable if we can all engage in thoughtful discussion about the topic. This will be greatly facilitated if you are prepared for class and keep up with reading the text book and other materials.

Attendance: Attendance to class is mandatory and attendance will be taken every class. If you must miss a class for a legitimate reason (i.e., illness, emergency) please do your best to provide documentation. More than 6 unexcused absences will put you at risk of failing the class, i.e., you will receive 0 points for class participation, which could make or break your grade. Classroom participation is expected and it is impossible to participate in class if you are not there. **If you should miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate (it would be best if you got notes from a number of different students).** I suggest that within the first few days of class you befriend a number of your classmates and exchange contact information.

General Classroom Behavior: You will be expected to treat me, your fellow students and the topic we are studying with respect. It is my desire to have my classroom be a safe haven where students feel free to express their ideas and opinions. I ask that you respect the ideas and opinions of others and keep an open mind.

You are expected to be quiet unless called upon to ask or answer a question. Whispering/chattering with classmates while the instructor is lecturing or your classmates are speaking is rude, disrespectful and will not be tolerated.

Electronic Devices: If you are using a computer to take class notes, all sounds must be silenced. Additionally, you are not to use your computer for any activities other than those directly related to class during class time. If you are caught using your computer for “recreational” purposes during class time, you will no longer be permitted to use it during class to take notes.

No headphones or portable listening devices are to be used during class.

Cell Phone Policy: Cell phones, pagers and Blackberry’s must be kept on silent and put away during class. You are also not to text message during class. If you are caught texting during class, you will receive 1 warning, if you are caught again, you will be prohibited from completing any extra credit assignments. Each subsequent infraction of this policy will result in loss of 10 points for class participation.

Cancelled Class: I do not anticipate having to cancel class, however, in the event that I must cancel class I will try to let you know ahead of time via email. In the case of inclement weather, please call the college’s main phone number 886-0177 or visit the website www.trcc.comnet.edu to find out if campus has been closed.

Missed Exams: Make-up exams will only be given in extreme circumstances and only if arrangements are made ahead of time (no later than 8 pm on the day before an exam); and then at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Missed Quizzes: No make-up quizzes will be given. If you must miss class on the day of a quiz, your grade for the missed quiz will be made up from the average score from the other quizzes you have taken.

Late Assignments: You are expected to turn in all assignments on time. Late assignments will only be accepted if arrangements are made ahead of time (no later than the end of class the day before the assignment is due); and then at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Academic Dishonesty: All students should familiarize themselves with TRCC Academic Integrity Policy and be aware of the possible ramifications of academic dishonesty. *Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form.* Academic dishonesty can be defined as “An intentional act of fraud, in which a student seeks to claim credit for work or effort of another without authorization, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic exercise,” (Gehring, Nuss, & Pavela, 1986). Academic dishonesty falls into 6 categories:

- Plagiarism: The adoption or reproduction of ideas or words or statements of another person without due acknowledgment. When in doubt, cite it!
- Fabrication: The falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise.
- Deception: Providing false information to an instructor concerning a formal academic exercise- *e.g.*, giving a false excuse for missing a deadline or falsely claiming to have submitted work.
- Cheating: Any attempt to give or obtain assistance in a formal academic exercise (like an examination) without due acknowledgment.
- Sabotage: Acting to prevent others from completing their work. This includes cutting pages out of library books or willfully disrupting the experiments of others.
- Facilitation: Knowledge of academic dishonesty that is not reported to instructor or other university official. Reports of academic dishonesty will be handled with the utmost discretion; the reporting party’s identity will be protected and he or she will not be subject to ridicule or retaliation.

Anyone caught in any one of these forms of academic dishonesty will receive a “zero” for that assignment or exam with no opportunity to make up those lost points. Any subsequent violations will result in a grade of “F” for the course and the dean and department chair will be notified of this behavior.

Online Plagiarism Quiz: Visit the following website: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/> (also provided on Blackboard), complete the tutorial on plagiarism and the subsequent quiz. Once you have successfully completed the quiz, print out the certificate. Proof of successful completion of this assignment (i.e., the certificate) is due by **Monday, January 26, 2009.**

CLASS ORGANIZATION

Class will start promptly at 9:00am

IMPORTANT NOTE: *It is your responsibility to print the outline and PowerPoint slides for each class.* I will post material for each class on Blackboard by 10 PM the evening before each class. I will not have copies of the outline or slides with me in class.

For lectures, I will provide an outline for what is to be covered in each class. I strongly encourage you to take notes during lectures. I will also supplement my lecture with PowerPoint slides as needed, usually for concepts that are better described by a schematic or diagram, and again will provide these materials as needed.

I will do my best not to lecture for the entire class period however; there may be days when this is unavoidable. I think we will all enjoy class much more if we can incorporate some discussions into our time together. This will be greatly facilitated if you come to class prepared and have interesting, thought provoking questions to ask and stimulate discussion.

Tips:

It goes without saying that you will benefit greatly by reading the assigned material before class; especially since you have 7 quizzes throughout the semester. What I will say is that the material in this class can be pretty dense at times. If you read the assigned material before lecture and you are confused, please bring your questions to class. If you read the material after a lecture and are confused, see me as soon as possible. Whatever you do, don't wait until the night before an exam to crack the books and figure out that you are confused....that would just be plain silly! I think you will find that while this class will not be easy, I am extremely fair and willing to work with students who are struggling. The caveat to this is that you must be willing to help yourself too and meet me part way.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: I will do my best to stick to this schedule, but changes may be made depending on how the students and instructor feel about the material. Students will be made aware of what topics will be covered on each Exam.

Date	Topic	Chapters in Text	Assignment
January 21	Intro to General Psychology		Plagiarism Quiz Due by January 26
Part 1: Psychology as a Science			
January 23	History of Psychology Schools of Thought	Module 1	
January 26	Psychology as a Science	Module 2	Plagiarism Quiz Due
January 28	No Class Snow Day		
January 30	Research Strategies	Module 3	
February 2	Review Exam 1		
February 6	EXAM	Modules 1-3	Exam 1
Part 2: Biological Basis of Behavior			
February 9	Organization of the Nervous System	Module 4	
February 11	Communication in the Nervous System	Module 4	
February 13	Neurotransmitters	Module 4	
February 16	No Class		
February 18	Neurotransmitters	Module 4	
February 20	Neuroanatomy	Module 5	Quiz 2
February 23	Neuroanatomy Language	Module 5	Homework 1 Due
February 25	Split Brain	Module 5	
February 27	Imaging Techniques	Modules 5	
March 2	NO CLASS		Snow Day
March 4	EXAM	Modules 4-5	Exam 2
Part 3: Sensation and Perception			
March 6	Intro to Sensation and Perception	Module 12	
March 9	Vision	Module 13	
March 11	Perception	Module 16	Quiz 3
March 13	No Class!!	No Class!!	No Class!!
March 16-20	NO CLASS- Spring Break		
March 23	Perception	Module 16	

March 25	Perception	Module 16	
March 27	EXAM	Modules 12, 13, 16	Exam 3
Part 4: Learning			
March 30	Classical Conditioning	Module 21	
April 1	Classical Conditioning Operant Conditioning	Module 21 Module 22	Quiz 4
April 3	Operant Conditioning	Module 22	
April 6	Operant Conditioning	Module 22	
April 10	No Class- Spring Recess		
April 13	EXAM	Modules 21-22	Exam 4
Part 5: Memory			
April 15	Intro to Memory Encoding	Modules 24-25	
April 17	Storage	Module 26	
April 20	Retrieval	Module 27	Quiz 5
April 22	Forgetting	Module 28	Homework 2 Due
April 24	Forgetting	Module 28	
April 27	EXAM	Modules 24-28	Exam 5
Part 6: Motivation			
April 29	Intro to Motivation Hunger	Module 34 Module 35	
May 1	Sexual Motivation Social Motivation	Module 36	
May 4	Sexual Motivation Social Motivation	Module 36	Quiz 6
May 6	Sexual Motivation Social Motivation		
May 8	EXAM	Modules 34-37	Exam 6
Part 7: Emotion			
May 11	Intro to Emotion	Module 38	
May 13	Expressed Emotion Experienced Emotion	Modules 39-40	Methods Paper Due
May 15	Expressed Emotion Experienced Emotion	Modules 39-40	
May 20	EXAM	Modules 38-40	Exam 7