

Three Rivers Community College

Fall 2010

PSY 111: General Psychology I

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| Stephen Weiss, Ph.D. | Office: D 205W |
| Office Phone #: 860-823-2819 | Office Hours: M 5:00-6:00PM; TU8:30-9:30AM; W 5:30-6:30; TH 4:00-6:00; and by appointment |
| E-Mail: stephenweiss@adams.edu | Class Room: E 206 |
| Class Schedule: TUTH 9:30-10:45AM | Website: http://smw15.org/ |

Course Description: This introductory course provides an overview of the theories and research findings pertaining to scientific psychology with an emphasis on: the origins of psychology, theoretical models, research methodology, biological bases of thought and behavior, learning theory, sensation and perception, memory, stress and health as well as emotion and motivation.

Student Learning Outcomes: At the completion of this course, students should have accomplished the following major objectives:

Critical Thinking: Utilize critical thinking skills to analyze psychological theories and research data

- Describe human behavior and mental processes from various theoretical perspectives in the field of psychology
- Identify the interrelationship between human biology and psychology
- Identify the manner in which psychological research on memory relates to college study skills

Information Literacy: Assess what information is needed to answer questions as well as evaluate the quality of information

- Demonstrate the skill of identifying information needed to answer questions pertaining to psychological terms and concepts
- Recognize and evaluate information sources for a specified purpose
- Develop an understanding of psychology as an ever-changing discipline, based on contemporary research data

Communication: Understand and express ideas about psychology through reading and writing

- Demonstrate the ability to comprehend and interpret written passages
- Write clearly
- Develop the ability to articulate one's viewpoint in verbal or electronic discussions

Systematic Inquiry: Understand social science research methods used in psychological research

- Demonstrate the ability to describe the science of psychology
- Describe different research methods used in psychology
- Acquire knowledge about men and women whose research endeavors made significant contributions to the field of psychology
- Develop an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of different psychology research methods

Required Text: *Psychology*: Ninth Edition in Modules by David G. Myers

Students have two choices for their required text. The choices are 1) print textbook plus PsychPortal access cards or 2) PsychPortal access card which includes the eBook (electronic version of the print text).

See website for more information concerning these options.

| <i>Grading Criteria</i> | <i>Points</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| 5 Tests (lowest dropped; other four worth 100 pts each) | 400 | 71.4 % |
| Research Papers (each worth 75 points) | 150 | 28.6 % |
| Extra Credit (Total extra credit points x .10) | | |
| Total | 550 | 100 % |

Note: Above grading criteria is not subject to change.

Grading System:

| Grade | % | Total Points |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|
| A | 93+ | 511+ |
| A- | 90-92 | 495-510 |
| B+ | 87-89 | 478-509 |
| B | 83-86 | 456-508 |
| B- | 80-82 | 440-455 |
| C+ | 77-79 | 423-439 |
| C | 73-76 | 401-438 |
| C- | 70-72 | 385-400 |
| D+ | 67-69 | 368-399 |
| D | 63-66 | 346-367 |
| D- | 60-62 | 330-366 |
| F | -60 | -330 |

Notes:

- (1) While class attendance will not be calculated into the above grades, excessive absences (6-7) will result in a decrease of a full letter grade (for example from C to D). 8-9 absences will cause your grade to be reduced by two full letters (for example from B to D). 10 or more absences will result in failure of the course.
- (2) If you **DO NOT** complete this course, you must formally withdraw at the registrar's office by DEC. 9th. Failure to do so will likely result in you receiving an F on your transcript for this course.

Extra Credit:

- **Experiment Participants:** There will be several extra credit points given for involvement as research participants in my motor learning/sport psychology experiments. Your participation in these experiments is voluntary. If you choose to participate, extra credit points will be distributed as follows: In-class short survey research: 2-3 points; Out-of-class experiments: 5-10 points.
- **Class Attendance/Participation:** A maximum of 5 extra credit points will be given for good attendance/class participation.
- **There will be no individual extra credit opportunities.**

Total Extra Credit: The total number of extra credit points earned multiplied by 10% will increase your overall grade. For example: If you earn 30 extra credit points this will give you three points added to your final average ($30 \times .10 = 3$).

Tests: All tests will be part multiple choice, true/false and short answer format. There will be **no make-ups** for these exams - since I am dropping the lowest, if one is missed it will count as your low grade (unless, there is an emergency and I am informed immediately).

Reading Assignments: The majority of the readings will come from the textbook. Additional readings will be assigned as well.

Research Papers: You will be required to write two 2-3-page papers (maximum) during this semester. Choose any topic that we will be covering in this course. Check last page of this syllabus for broad topics we are covering. There are several possible choices for each of these topics. Paper 2 is a continuation of Paper 1. You will need to find **one** journal article (experiment) to be analyzed. Papers must be written in APA format. Any experiment already discussed in class cannot be used. I will be available to meet with anyone individually to discuss or review these papers before due dates. Since you have this assignment well in advance of the due date, I will strictly enforce a 10-point penalty for each day a paper is late (including weekends). Attached to this syllabus are guidelines for both papers.

Copy of article: A copy of your journal article must be handed in (for my approval) no later than September 21st. There will be a five-point penalty attached to Paper 1 if this is handed in late.

Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism: If I believe that you have copied from another student or other source, you will receive a grade of zero on that assignment or exam. This zero cannot be counted as your lowest exam grade (it cannot be dropped). A second offense will result in failure of the course. Please see your student catalog for additional information.

Schedule of Classes

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Tentative Topics</i> | Modules |
|----------------------|--|----------------|
| Aug 26 | Syllabus; What is Psychology? Person vs. Situation debate. Perspectives of Psychology. Types of Psychologists. | Module 1 |
| Aug 31, Sep 2 | Research Issues and Techniques | Modules 2-3 |
| Sep 7, 9, 14 | Physiological Psychology: Neural and Hormonal Systems; The Brain; Split Brain Phenomenon/Synaptic Plasticity | Modules 4-6 |
| Sep 16 | TEST 1: Modules 1-6 | |
| | Reminder: Copy of Journal Article is due Sep 21st! | |
| Sep 21 | Perception - Subliminal Stimulation | Module 17 |
| Sep 23 | Vision, Hearing | Modules 18-19 |
| | | |
| Sep 28 | Pain/Pain Control | Module 20 |
| Sep 30 | Gestalt Psychology; Depth Perception | Module 21 |
| Oct 5 | Perceptual Interpretation | Module 22 |
| Oct 7 | TEST 2: Modules 17-22 | |
| Oct 12, 14 | Learning - Classical Conditioning | Module 23 |
| | Reminder: Paper 1 is due next class (Oct 19th)! | |
| Oct 19 | Learning - Operant Conditioning | Module 24 |
| Oct 21 | Learning - Social Learning Theory | Module 25 |
| Oct 26 | TEST 3: Modules 23-25 | |
| Oct 28 | Introduction to Memory; Encoding, Information Processing | Modules 26-27 |
| Nov 2, 4 | Memory Storage and Retrieval | Modules 28-29 |
| Nov 9 | Forgetting, Memory Construction | Module 30 |
| Nov 11 | Veteran's Day - No Class – Enjoy! | |
| Nov 16 | TEST 4: Modules 26-30 | |
| Nov 18 | Theories of Motivation | Module 36 |
| | Reminder: Paper 2 is due Nov 23rd! | |
| Nov 23 | Hunger Motivation/Eating Disorders | Module 37 |

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Tentative Topics</i> | Modules |
|---------------|---|----------------|
| Nov 25 | Thanksgiving Break – No Class – Enjoy! | |
| Nov 30 | Sexual Motivation | Module 38 |
| Dec 2 | Motivation at Work | Module 39 |
| Dec 7 | Emotions | Modules 40-42 |
| Dec 9 | Stress & Health | Modules 43-44 |
| Dec 14 | TEST 5: Modules 36-44 | |
| Dec 16 | Extra Credit Options | |

Paper #1: Title Page/Introduction/References – Due Oct 19th

- **Title Page**
 - Includes running head (both written at top left of title page and autotext it with page number on every page).

- **Introduction**
 - After title page your Introduction will start on the top of page 3. This is the beginning portion of your introduction.
 - Opening paragraph should include full names of authors whose experiment you are analyzing and the institutions (universities) where they conducted their investigation. Afterwards, use APA format (last name of author, yr).
 - Brief review of literature from your references should be included here. You are laying the foundation here. Inform reader of past research relating to investigation of the article you are analyzing.
 - Paragraph or two stating why this experiment you are analyzing was run (the purpose of the study you are analyzing).
 - Clearly state the researcher's hypothesis/hypotheses. Very important!
 - Clearly state the dependent and independent variables in the study. Very important!
 - Paragraph or two briefly summarizing Method section (participants used; procedure, etc.).

- **References**
 - Must start at top of new page.
 - You are required to include here the journal article being analyzed and at least one additional reference (this must also be a peer reviewed journal article). Put in bold type the journal article that is being analyzed. You can access many of these off the Internet but I want documentation from original source (no web addresses). Only original sources accepted – no summaries from websites, etc. Have each listed in APA format in this section.

Paper #2: Abstract/Results Section/Discussion/References – Due Nov 23rd

- **Abstract:**
 - Last part of paper to be written as it is a brief summary of your entire paper. This will start on the top of page 2 and will be a maximum of 120 words.

- **Results**
 - What were the results of the experiment? Make it clear that you understand what the p-values mean.
 - One table or figure must be included in this section. Each table or figure must be inserted by use of Word (Word Perfect, etc.) program or exported from another program but must be developed by you. For example, no "cut-outs" or "drawings" or scans accepted.

- **Discussion**
 - Were there any limitations, confounding variables or flaws in the study?
 - Can the findings be applied to the real world? Explain how or why not
 - What would you have done differently to make this a more effective study? Much critical analysis is required in this section. Elaborate on your points in this section – make these very clear to the reader.

- **References**
 - Must start at top of new page.
 - Revise any errors from Paper 1 both in reference section and in-text citations