

830:101-B6 INTRODUCTORY PSYCHOLOGY SUMMER I 2014
TUES & THURS 6:00 - 9:40PM
ROOM: LIVINGSTON CAMPUS, LUCY STONE HALL A143

PROFESSOR: DR. CARL PERSING

OFFICE HOURS: BY APPT

EMAIL: CARL.PERSING@RUTGERS.EDU

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Kosslyn & Rosenberg 4th Ed. (2011). Introduction to psychology: Brain, person, group (4th Ed.). Pearson.
- Handouts or article Distributed in Class or distributed via Sakai or email

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS:

Psychology is the science that studies human mental processes and behavior—a large and complicated task, but also fascinating and useful. Many students taking introductory psychology are surprised when they find out how broad the field is and how extensively psychology can inform their daily lives. Students in this class will learn about many interesting aspects of psychology—from how the study of human thought and behavior has historically been approached to the state of modern psychological knowledge. In this class you, the student, will learn about the main topics studied by psychologists, for example, personality, social behavior, cognition, learning, memory, intelligence, neuroscience, human development, psychopathology and its treatment, law, business, etc.

My overarching goal is to expose you to the various areas of study within psychology and teach about them in a way that emphasizes their relevance to everyday life. Knowing about psychology **can** help you understand your self and your social world, as well as the behavior of people you'll find in the businesses and organizations in which you work. Rarely will there be a lecture that I don't point out how psychology relates to real world concerns and how it can be used to find solutions for a variety of "real-life" problems!

I also have some specific goals for this class, namely that students learn: how to apply psychological knowledge and theories to practical questions; the historical background of psychology; the neurological and physiological processes that affect behavior, consciousness, sensation, perception, and motivation; the mechanisms through which the environment can shape individual behavior; how human memory and cognition have been studied and some of the foibles thereof; how human physical and cognitive development unfolds and how it can be favorably or adversely affected by environmental factors; how personality is formed; how the social milieu affects individuals' thoughts and behaviors; how psychopathology is defined, its symptoms, how it develops, and how it is treated; and finally, how psychological knowledge is created through participation in various experiments conducted at Rutgers.

Often, non-psychology majors think that this course is (or should be) an easy "A" or a "blow off" class. This class is not easy, and although many students do get high grades each semester, many do not do as well as they anticipate. Learning about psychology in one semester is like learning a new language in one semester—not easy. **YOU NEED TO READ YOUR BOOK AND YOU NEED TO TAKE EXTENSIVE, DETAILED NOTES** to do well. I am very enthusiastic about

the subject matter that I teach and about helping students to do well, but often I am not approached until the student has failed two tests—don't be this person!! Come to me right away to see where you are going wrong if you do not do well. I have a variety of resources available to help you. I value the time I spend with my students, helping them to understand material and to get as much out of their course experience as possible. I encourage all students to meet with me as the need arises to talk about issues that concern you.

CLASS FORMAT:

ATTENDANCE

As it is with a job, ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED IN THIS CLASS. Attendance will be taken regularly. A total of one unexcused absence will be permitted for the entire semester. **Each** unexcused absence after the 1st will result in a reduction of 20 points from the overall grade. An **excused** absence is a written notice from the Dean's office or a written medical statement. The lecture material and announcements made in class are the student's responsibility. Due to my work constraints, I will need to travel on business on some occasions—in that case, there will be modules or other university approved assignments that are just as important as lecture and they must be completed—a good practice is to complete them during the time that class would have been held.

LECTURE / MEDIA PRESENTATIONS

Psychological research suggests that one will learn better if they have a pre-existing structure in which to place newly acquired knowledge. Therefore, it is required that you read the text chapter **BEFORE** the week in which its topic is presented. The reason that quizzes are used in this course is to ensure that you read the chapters **BEFORE** the topic of that chapter is discussed. Lectures will serve to clarify and expand upon important concepts from the textbook **AND** present much information beyond that which is provided in the text. I will also include media presentations that I feel will enhance your understanding and appreciation of the science of psychology.

TESTS

There will be three 50-75 item in-class exams in a multiple-choice format. Each test item will be worth 1 point. Questions will assess the knowledge of, and the ability to apply, information and concepts presented via reading(s), lecture, discussions, and media presentations. Additionally, there will be a semi-cumulative 100 item final exam. You are responsible for material from all readings, lectures, discussions, and announcements. In case of University closing due to weather, the test will be administered during the following class. **In the case of a missed test, make up tests are only allowed in the case of emergency or illness.** If either prevents you from taking an exam, you must notify me via email **BEFORE** the test. You must bring documentation of your absence and must take the make up exam as directed. University guidelines will be followed in the case of a missed final.

QUIZZES

Each class, a 10 item quiz will be given at the beginning of the class. The reason for this quiz is to make sure that you read the book chapters and have some structure from which to understand and remember the lecture material **BEFORE** The **LECTURE**. Thus, all quiz questions will be from the book. Because of the large amount of material that needs to be covered in this

class, quizzes will only last 10 minutes. **Latecomers who do not arrive in time for the quiz will not be permitted to take the quiz over and will receive a zero.** There will be a total of approx. 9 quizzes (actual number may vary with the number of our scheduled meetings); however, I will drop the lowest quiz grade. **Because I am dropping the lowest quiz, any missed quizzes will be counted as the dropped grade, and you will NOT be allowed to make up those quizzes. Any missed quiz beyond the 1st will be entered as a zero.**

HOMEWORK

From time to time there may be homework given. These may be simply watching a video (to save valuable instruction time in the classroom), looking up something on the internet, or writing a short paper, a longer paper, or series of short papers. The point value of each assignment assignments will be announced when assigned, if they are assigned.

One assignment will be a journal article critique-details will be given in class and articles will be provided to you.

Another assignment may be a references look-up and description. Again, details will be given in class on how to do this assignment.

EXTRA CREDIT

It may be possible to earn points by doing extra credit by participating in research, by filling out in or out of class surveys or other research based activities. **Extra credit is entirely at my discretion and with my permission ONLY.**

CLASS DISCUSSION / PARTICIPATION

The class size allows the opportunity to have interaction with your professor and classmates, the opportunity to ask questions about anything that is confusing you, and to learn from each other during class discussions. You therefore are expected to attend and meaningfully participate in all class sessions. Meaningful participation means that you have **read and thought about** the assigned reading prior to class. It also means that, during discussions, you actively engage the material by posing questions, sharing insights, drawing connections, generating ideas, and discussing relevant issues. Those who **consistently participate in an outstanding manner** may earn additional points above their earned grades, at my discretion.

SPECIAL NEEDS

If you are legitimately having problems with your performance in this class, please talk to me about the difficulties you are experiencing. I have a great deal of experience helping many intro psych students, and I will do what I can to help you to succeed!!

WILDCARDS

I reserve the privilege of changing dates of quizzes or tests, quiz or test point values, grading criteria, changing or adding topics, materials, tasks, activities, homework activities, requiring written reactions to films and discussions, etc. Students should not expect curving of grades. Additionally, scheduled dates (including test dates) are subject to change. Notice of any such changes will be given in class as far in advance as possible.

WEATHER

Please use good judgment when encountering adverse weather conditions. Cases of bad weather will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, but please do not endanger yourself to get to class.

EVALUATION: PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE

FINAL grades are based on the following percentages of the total points that are possible (which may vary from above):

95-100%:	A
91-94%:	A-
87-90%:	B+
83-86%:	B
80-82%:	B-
77-79%:	C+
74-76%:	C
70-73%:	C-
68-69%:	D+
65-67%:	D
0-64%:	F

In grading your written assignments, I will adhere to a “C” standard; in essence, satisfactory work, work that is done acceptably, earns a grade of C. Unsatisfactory work can receive *at best* a C- (or worse, as the paper deserves). This means that if your work does not fulfill the assignment, if your statements are flawed, or if the writing contains excessive mistakes, it will receive a grade of D or F as merited. In order to receive a B, the work must be well done, and the A will be truly excellent, with sophisticated critical thinking and smooth expression. Graduate students can get poor grades sometimes. In order for me to certify that you have a working knowledge of psychology, that is, give you a passing grade, you need to show that you have command of the material. I believe that all of you are capable of excellence, but to give out high grades that aren’t earned is an insult to you, to those who worked hard to earn high grades, and to Rutgers. However, I also believe that my role is to assist you as much as possible in the quest for excellence, and so I strongly encourage students to come see me with questions as early in your writing process (i.e., more than 5 days before the due date!). The key to doing well is to have your materials early, read them thoroughly, assess your knowledge and understanding of the material well BEFORE the paper is due and to write a little each day. Note that all grading will ultimately be in accordance with university guidelines.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Overview, ice-breakers, taking good notes, what the tests will be like, “Kinds of Psychologists”.

History & Research Methods of Psychology

WEEK 1: BIOLOGICAL BASES OF BEHAVIOR

WEEK 2: SENSATION & PERCEPTION

TEST 1

WEEK 2: LEARNING

WEEK 3: EMOTION AND MOTIVATION

WEEK 3: MEMORY

WEEK 4: LANGUAGE, THINKING & INTELLIGENCE

WEEK 4: DEVELOPMENT

TEST 2

WEEK 5: PERSONALITY

WEEK 5: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

WEEK 5: INDUSTRIAL/ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

TEST 3

WEEK 6: STRESS, COPING, & ADJUSTMENT

WEEK 6: PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS

WEEK 6: TREATMENT

FINAL EXAM—100 Questions—Semi-Cumulative