

General Psychology
01:830:101:13 [Index: 67105]
Spring 2012

Instructor: Dr. TJ Musumeci-Szabó	Office: 633 Tillett Hall, Livingston Campus
Email: tmusumec@rci.rutgers.edu	Office Hours: Monday 10:30-12:30 p.m. & Wed. by appt.

Teaching Assistant: Jeff DeWitt	Office: Room 124, Psychology Bldg., Busch Campus
Email: jrd202@rci.rutgers.edu	Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00-3:00 p.m. & by appointment

Class Location: Lucy Stone Hall Auditorium, Lucy Stone Hall, Livingston Campus
Class Meetings: January 17th - May 9th, Monday and Wednesday, 6:40-8:00 p.m.

Text: Huffman, K. (2009). *Psychology in action* (9th ed.). New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons.

Your textbook is available for purchase from the Rutgers Bookstore (Livingston Campus) and NJ Books. Note: While it is available in many formats (hardcover, loose-leaf, etc.,) you only need 1 copy. Copies are also on reserve at Kilmer Library, Livingston Campus: Available for 2 hour in-library use. **ISBN-13: 978-0-470-37911-0**

Course Web Page: <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>

Course Description and Objectives:

I am happy to welcome you to General Psychology: a course chock full of information you will be able to use in everyday life, starting right now. Within the next 16 weeks you will learn why it is so hard to keep New Year's resolutions, whether the SAT is a "good test," and why we shouldn't trust everything Dr. Phil has to say. Along the way to answering these questions you will be provided with opportunities to participate in research, improve your writing, as well as sharpen your library and web browsing skills.

Psychology is a very diverse field covering everything from the working of nerve cells to the influence of groups on behavior. A survey course such as this can't cover any of the subfields in great depth, and so the goal of this course is to briefly expose you to each of the subfields so that you can leave with a basic understanding of the breadth of psychology. If at the end of the term your curiosity gets the better of you and you are hooked on psychology, we can discuss upper level psychology courses you can take after this one to explore your unresolved questions.

How to succeed in this course:

a) **(When) should I read the text?**

Start reading now. Class discussion and lecture will begin each day with the assumption that you have read the text assigned for the day. Lecture will supplement and NOT replace the text. For best results, read the assigned chapters BEFORE the session for which they are required. Be sure to consult the syllabus for specific page numbers **before you read** as the order of the readings for class does not always match the order in which they appear in your text.

b) **(When) should I come to class?**

Skip at your own risk. I won't grade you on attendance, but I often cover material not found in the text. Since this information usually turns up on exams, you would be well advised to come to class as often as possible. If you must miss class, make arrangements to copy class notes from one of your classmates. Note: Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website [//https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/](https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

c) **What should I do if I have a question? Miss class? Don't know anyone?**

One of the concepts we will discuss in this course pertains to the quantity and quality of help that is available to people when facing a stressful life events. In the event that YOU face a stressful life event (*i.e., the only reason that would cause you to miss one of our sessions*) please contact your social support. On the first day of class we will create a form of course-specific social support for you: 4 people you don't already know with whom you will exchange contact information and who you can contact to get missing notes, call to study for exams, discuss lecture, review classroom activities, etc. I encourage you to make use of this valuable resource early and often!

d) **How do I get in touch with you or the TA?**

If you have questions about the readings, want to review your exams and study habits, or need clarification of an assignment—please feel free to come to our office hours. You do not need an appointment to attend office hours—just come! If you cannot come to office hours and/or decide to send an email, be sure to use the following format:

To: tmusumec@rci.rutgers.edu OR jrd202@rci.rutgers.edu

Subject Line: “General Psychology 13, MTh: _ (insert your topic here) _”

From: Your full address

Dear Dr. Musumeci-Szabó [or our TA],

Hello, my name is (your full name here) and I am a student taking General Psychology, Section 13. I have a question regarding (insert your question here).

(Considerate closing of your choosing),

Your full name

A word of caution: since there are ~430 students in this class, 1 instructor, and 1 TA, we may not be able to respond to your emails immediately. We'll do our best to reply within 48 hrs. Depending on the nature of your question, our answer may be posted as a general announcement on Sakai. Please hold off on re-sending a message until 48 hours have passed.

e) **How should I handle problems? Be proactive.**

The day before the final exam is TOO LATE to begin worrying about your grade. It is your responsibility to seek help. If you do not do well on the first exam, see me IMMEDIATELY. Problems in the course can often be corrected if they are identified EARLY enough in the semester.

Research Participation:

All General Psychology sections require either research participation (option #1) or an alternative paper assignment (option #2). Descriptions of experiments and sign-up opportunities are all done via on-line registration.

To read about and sign up for experiments and/or to read specific details about the written assignments, go to:

<http://psych.rutgers.edu/undergrad/rpurules>

If you have questions regarding participation, be sure to review the RPU FAQ provided by the department:

<http://psych.rutgers.edu/undergrad/signup-rules-1>

If you pick the written assignment, please note while experiments occur throughout the semester, the papers have set deadlines: Research Participation Paper #1 Due: 2/27; Research Participation Paper #2 Due: 4/23

You should visit the Research Participation website **immediately** so you can decide how you will complete this requirement (participation or writing assignment) and get started. Note: While you do not earn points in the course for completing this component, failure to participate will result in a reduction of your course grade.

Class Participation: What it is and isn't

There is no question too small to be asked in a class, and no class too big for a question to be asked. If you fear your question is too involved to be answered during class time, stop by office hours or arrange an appointment to talk with me. We will have several opportunities via class discussion and small group discussion for you to speak your mind—be sure to take advantage of them! Bear in mind, the potential exists that there will be at least one person in the room personally affected by the topic and therefore, your comments—please be sure to consider this **before** you make remarks.

As discussed on the first day: Participation does not include frequent trips to the bathroom, making phone calls, texting, playing games, surfing the internet, or otherwise annoying your neighbors. Out of respect for those who are seriously participating in the course, I will ask students who engage in disruptive behaviors to leave our classroom.

Note: In a large classroom such as this, it is important to be considerate of your fellow students at all times. You are expected to **turn off** cell phones, pagers, etc. when you enter the classroom. If you must leave early or use a laptop during lecture, be sure **to sit in the last five rows of seats**.

Grading:

This course will operate on the total points system. This means that there are clearly stated, *a priori* standards for achievement, and your grade depends only on **your own** performance, not on the performance of your class as a whole. This also means that *there will be no "curving" of grades.*

The distribution of possible points is as follows:

Exams	Best 3 of 4	@	60 points each	=	180 points
					180 Total Points

Grades will be assigned as follows:

(90%) A	=	162-180 pts	(70%) C	=	126 - 139 pts
(88%) B+	=	158-161 pts	(65%) D	=	117 - 125 pts
(80%) B	=	144-157 pts	F	=	≤ 116 pts
(78%) C+	=	140-143 pts			

Note: Percentages apply to the final point total **only**. Letter grades are not assigned to individual exams.

Testing:

There will be four exams, all equally weighted. Exams are multiple choice format with electronic scoring. You must **bring your own #2 pencil and your 9-digit RU ID to all exams**. The lowest of the four exam scores will be dropped (i.e., only three will count in your final grade). Please review the course schedule for material included on each exam.

NOTE: Although Exam 4 (the final) may be dropped; 1 extra rule applies:

1) You **MUST** take Exam 4 (the final), **AND** you **MUST** pass it (with at least a 59.5%) to drop it.

How can I prepare for the exams? (*a.k.a., Why attending class is a good idea*)

My general answer to the question: "What will be on the exam?" is as follows:

- 1) If it's in the book, and we talked about it in class = VERY likely to be on the exam
- 2) If it's not in the book, but we talked about it in class = VERY likely to be on the exam
- 3) If it's in the book, but we did not talk about it in class = less likely to be on the exam **BUT** still fair game

What if I miss an exam; Have an exam conflict?

Exam dates are specified in the course schedule. If know now that you have a problem making an exam, see me **IMMEDIATELY**. If you miss an exam, contact me via email as soon as you are able. You will be allowed to take a make-up exam if, within one week of the exam, you present appropriate documentation to verify your absence. Any make-ups must be completed prior to the next exam. Be aware that make-up exams are likely to be in 100% essay format.

Our final exam: University regulations set the time and date of all final examinations and specific guidelines that define conflicts: <http://nbregistrar.rutgers.edu/facstaff/examrules.htm> If you have a legitimate medical excuse for missing the final exam, you will receive a TF in the course until the make-up has been completed. You should check your entire final exam schedule now so you know what your schedule will be at the end of the semester. <http://finalexams.rutgers.edu/>

When will I know my grades?

Every effort will be made to post exam grades within a week of your exam. You may request your grade **AFTER** 1 week has passed if you do not see it posted. Grades will appear on SAS Gradebook:

<https://secure.sas.rutgers.edu/apps/gradebook/>

Extra Credit:

A popular question at the end of the term goes something like this: “Is there anything I can do for extra credit?” In this course you get 2 official shots at extra credit. The opportunities will take the form of written assignments and will be described in detail on our Sakai page after our first exam.

Note: Asking for additional points at the end of the term is as bad as picking your nose in public. If you are concerned that you “might be close but not quite earn enough points for the grade you most desire,” be proactive and consider completing one of the extra credit options.

How can I communicate with you beyond office hours and email?

Periodic Evaluation: At the end of selected sessions I will ask you to provide written answers to three questions:

- 1) What was the most important thing you learned today?
- 2) What is the biggest question left in your mind after today’s lecture?
- 3) Are there other things I should know?

The purpose behind this is to ensure that everyone is on the same page and to give me an opportunity to get feedback from each member of the class. This course is for your benefit and I aim to tailor it to your interests and curiosities as much as possible. This is also a chance for you to anonymously voice any concerns with regard to upcoming assignments, exams, etc. Please make the most of these opportunities as they arise.

Academic Accommodations:

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that all qualified persons have equal opportunity and access to education regardless of any disabling condition. If you need academic accommodations in this course, please make an appointment with the Office for Disability Services. The phone number is (848)445-6800.

See <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu> for further details.

Once you have a letter of accommodation, please let me know as soon as possible and feel free to come to office hours or make an appointment to discuss the situation with me privately. Begin this process immediately to ensure we can provide accommodations in time for the first exam.

Academic Honesty:

You’ll be expected to adhere to the university’s policy on academic honesty for exams, writing assignments, and homework (i.e., don’t cheat). Improper acknowledgement of sources and inadequate paraphrasing are often costly problems in student papers; they are mistakes that you definitely need to guard against.

You’ll find the RU policy on academic honesty here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Meeting	Date	Topics <i>(For best results, read in small doses PRIOR to lecture)</i>	Readings & Assignments <i>(Due start of class, date listed)</i>
1	1/18 W	Introductory Remarks/Informed Consent <i>Why are we here? Just what exactly is psychology?</i>	Introductory Online Survey [sakai] <i>Due 1/20 (Friday) by 11:59 EST</i> Read Syllabus, Review Research Participation [RPU] Website (<i>See link in Syllabus</i>)
2	1/23 M	History and Intro to Methods: <i>So, it's not all about couches?</i>	Chapter 1
3	1/25 W	Methods/Intro to Biological Basis of Behavior: <i>How do we "do" psychology?</i>	Chapter 1 Signed Memorandum of Understanding DUE (in class)
4	1/30 M	Biological Basis of Behavior: <i>What do your brain & Energizer batteries have in common? When is it <u>good</u> to have wrinkles?</i>	Chapter 2
5	2/1 W	Biological Basis of Behavior Pt II. Intro to Sensation and Perception: <i>Can you hear me, now? Why do some like it hot?</i>	Chapter 2; Chapter 4 (first ½)
6	2/6 M	Sensation and Perception: <i>When is a duck not a duck?</i>	Chapter 4
7	2/8 W	Health: <i>Why do you get sick around mid-terms and finals?</i>	Chapter 3
8	2/13 M	EXAM 1 (<i>Chaps. 1, 2, 3, 4, & Syllabus</i>)	***
9	2/15 W	Memory: <i>Why is reading a lousy way to study?</i>	Chapter 7
10	2/20 M	Consciousness: <i>What does sleep have to do with alcohol?</i>	Chapter 5
11	2/22 W	Consciousness Pt. II Intro to Learning: <i>Why does the sound of a dentist's drill make you cringe?</i>	Chapter 6
12	2/27 M	Learning: <i>How do you housebreak a puppy?</i>	Chapter 6 RPU Option #2 PAPER #1 DUE
13	2/29 W	Learning and Intro to Cognition: <i>What not to do at the casino...</i>	Extra Credit Assignment #1 DUE Chapter 8—You are not responsible for pgs. 291-296
14	3/5 M	Cognition: <i>Is the SAT a good test?</i>	Chapter 8—You are not responsible for pgs. 291-296
15	3/7 W	EXAM 2 (<i>Chaps. 5, 6, 7, 8</i>)	***
***	3/10-3/18	<i>Have a healthy Spring Break!!!</i>	

Meeting	Date	Topics <i>(For best results, read in small doses PRIOR to lecture)</i>	Readings & Assignments <i>(Due start of class, date listed)</i>
16	3/19 M	Developmental: <i>What is childhood and are we losing it?</i>	Chapter 9
17	3/21 W	Developmental: <i>Why cuddling is important...</i>	Chapter 9/10
18	3/26 M	Developmental: <i>"Will you still need me? Will you still feed me?"</i>	Chapter 10
19	3/28 W	Gender and Sexuality <i>Sugar and spice or snips and sails?</i>	Chapter 11
20	4/2 M	Motivation and Emotion: <i>Why do we get out of bed in the morning?</i>	Chapter 12
21	4/4 W	Motivation and Emotion: <i>How can you say "I'm happy" in 100 languages?</i>	Chapter 12
22	4/9 M	EXAM 3 (Chaps. 9, 10, 11, 12)	***
23	4/11 W	Personality: <i>Who are you and why?</i>	Chapter 13
24	4/16 M	Clinical I: Psychological Disorders: <i>What does it mean to be insane?</i>	Chapter 14
25	4/18 W	Clinical II: Psychological Disorders & Treatment: <i>Why did the cure used to be worse than the illness?</i>	Chapter 14/15 Extra Credit Assignment #2 DUE
26	4/23 M	Clinical III: Treatment <i>Is Dr. Phil always (ever?) right?</i>	Chapter 15 RPU Option #2 PAPER #2 DUE
27	4/25 W	Social Behavior: <i>Are you what you wear?</i>	Chapter 16
28	4/30 M	Social Behavior: <i>How do you win friends and influence people?</i>	Chapter 16
OFFICE HOURS	5/2 W 10:30-1:30	Dr. M-S's Final Office Hours for Spring 2012 term	Have an exam conflict? Today is the final day to bring documentation to Dr. M-S's OH to request a make-up. Review RU's rules (pg. 3) first.
FINAL EXAM	May 9th	EXAM 4 (Chaps. 13, 14, 15, 16)	Location: Our classroom Time: 8:00-11:00 p.m.
<i>Have an excellent Summer Break!!!</i>			

Please check here **FIRST**, prior to emailing—your answer could be just a few inches away!

Contact/Meeting with Dr. M-S or our TA:

Q: “I can’t make the official office hours, is there any other way to meet/ask questions/review exams?”

A. Meeting: Absolutely! If you have class during my regular office hours, I typically arrive early to class and am available for quick Q & A at that time. I am also happy to make an appointment to meet with you at another time. Send me a list of days and times that you are available and I am sure we can find a way to meet.

A. Reviewing exams: 1) Meet with our TA to determine your pattern of responding: Write down your test version and the item numbers that gave you difficulty. 2) Bring this information to my office hours and we can review the items and discuss specific study strategies.

Exams:

Q: “How can I see whether I am going to earn the grade I want?”

A. Your final grade is based on your three highest exams. If your highest exams are 1, 2 and 4, those are the exams that will count. Once we take two exams, you can estimate what you would need to earn on the third in order to earn the grade you desire. As past behavior is a strong indicator of future performance, it is wise to use an average of your scores on Exams 1 and 2 when estimating your scores on Exam 3 and 4.

Assignments:

Q: “How do I turn in assignments?”

A. Assignments are due **at the beginning of class** on the date listed on the course outline. Resist the urge to turn in your assignment until I collect it (i.e. do not leave it in a tangled pile in the front of class-this is how assignments get lost).

A. If you miss class the day an assignment is due: Bring it to my mailbox ASAP. Any course-related materials turned in to the instructor’s mailbox (Tillett Hall, Room 101) must be initialed and dated by one of the secretaries. Emailed assignments **are not acceptable** without prior permission from the instructor. Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day they are late. Work more than 1 week late will not be accepted.

Q: “Is there anything I can do to improve my assignments?”

A. YES! For every assignment, be sure to proofread and edit your work—it’s amazing what Spell-check will do to your paper when you aren’t looking, and the mistakes that Spell-check will not catch, but I will (e.g., their/they’re/there)! For even better results, read your assignment to yourself out loud and then give your assignment to a friend to read over *before* you turn it in. This is a great way to check whether you are getting your desired message across. Kudos--if you have read this far in the syllabus, you have earned the right to email me using the address on the first page by 6:39 p.m. 1/22/2012 to earn ½ point extra credit. To claim the credit: Send me an email with “Huffman Rocks: Reading the syllabus was rewarding” in the subject line. For the safety of your assignment, in the event that it spans more than a single page, do use a STAPLE to keep it together. While multi-colored paperclips, shiny plastic covers, and intensive origami folds may be tempting options, resist them you must! Points can be earned/lost for both grammar and style.

Resources:

Q: Where can I learn more about the science and practice of psychology?

A. After our department page [<http://psych.rutgers.edu>], two excellent starting points are the primary professional organizations for psychology:

American Psychological Association (APA): www.apa.org

Association for Psychological Science (APS): www.psychologicalscience.org

Q: “I have a friend/roommate/romantic partner at Rutgers who ‘needs to talk to someone’...”

A. Rutgers offers free counseling services to students and staff through the division of Counseling, ADAP and Psychiatric Services. They can be reached (732) 932-7884 and are located at 17 Senior Street, College Ave. Campus. Further information is available through <http://health.rutgers.edu>

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: STUDENT COPY [Yours to keep]

General Psychology

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Spring 2012

Too many times in courses students and instructors misunderstand crucial expectations. This misunderstanding can compromise learning, cause frustration for both students and instructors and result in poor outcomes for both. While the syllabus is a useful tool that can help minimize misunderstandings, it is only useful if it is read and understood. This Memorandum of Understanding reiterates course expectations by summarizing key points from the syllabus.

You are encouraged to print two copies of the MOU:

1 to keep for your records and 1 to sign and return to me at the beginning of our 3rd class.

If you have any questions please see me during office hours OR contact me via email by 1/24/2012.

INSTRUCTOR:

- I will come to class ready to provide you with an overview of the field of psychology.
- I will make you aware of any changes to the syllabus within a reasonable amount of time, i.e., you will be made aware of any changes that will result in a potential **increase** in your workload a minimum of 1 class in advance. I reserve the right to **decrease** your workload at any time.
- I will make every effort to respond to all emails within 48 hours (2 business days).

STUDENT:

I have read and understand the syllabus.

I understand that this syllabus represents the expectations for this course including but not limited to the following:

- I will abide by the RU academic integrity policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>
- I am responsible for all material covered whether or not I am present in class.
- Although I may not agree with all opinions expressed within this classroom, I am expected to show tolerance for my fellow classmates and instructor at all times.
- While note-taking is strongly encouraged, digital or audio recording of lecture is strictly forbidden without express written permission of the instructor.
- Office hours are an excellent time to ask questions about assignments, exams and course material, careers in psychology, and psychology in general.
- I understand that side conversations, using my cell phone/laptop computer in any way, and leaving class early can negatively impact my ability to learn and/or compromise my classmates' ability to learn. Therefore, I will not engage in side conversations or use my cell phone during class and I will sit in the last 5 rows of class if I need to leave early or use a laptop to take course notes.
- Make-up exams are not a right but a privilege and may be available for me if I: 1) Speak to/email the instructor ASAP, 2) Present appropriate documentation, AND 3) Complete the make-up prior to the next exam.
- Assignments are due in hard copy at the beginning of class on the due date listed on the course outline and late assignments will be penalized by 10% per day it is late.
- I understand that emailed assignments **are not acceptable** without the prior permission of the instructor. Assignments emailed without prior permission will not be accepted.

Name: _____

(print your name here)

Date: _____

I, _____ have **read** the syllabus and will adhere to the policies stated above.

(sign your name here)

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