

Introduction to Psychological Science – Fall 2011

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Class Information

Class meeting: Tuesday/Thursday 9:30 – 10:50am, RMSC; Lab: Wednesday, 2-5pm

Office hours: Wednesday 10-12 or by appointment

Textbook: Nairne, J. S. (2009). Psychology (5th edition). Thomson Wadsworth; USA.

Course Description

This course will provide students with a broad knowledge base of the major concepts and findings in the field of psychology. A scientific approach will be taken to examine these topics so that the students will be able to apply knowledge of basic research methodology. Emphasis will be placed on the use of critical thinking. Students will apply psychological principles to their everyday lives. They will also develop written communication skills through APA style reports of their laboratory work.

Format: This is a lecture-based course with a lab component on the fundamental aspects of the scientific study of human behavior and cognition.

Course Goals

1. **Knowledge base of psychology:** Students will demonstrate familiarity with major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.
2. **Research methods:** Students will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis and interpretation.
3. **Critical thinking:** Students will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.
4. **Application of psychology:** Students will understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.
5. **Values in psychology:** Students will be able to weigh evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and demonstrate cultural awareness.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to exhibit honesty in all academic endeavors and adhere to the college Honor Code (<http://www.wofford.edu/studentLife/honorCode.pdf>). Any instance of cheating/plagiarism on exams/assignments will be reported. I encourage collaboration when studying in order to increase understanding and learning of material. However, it is expected that all work you complete and submit is your own.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA requires that all qualified persons have equal opportunity and access to education, regardless of the presence of any disabling conditions. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the necessary documentation from Health Services and to inform the instructor of any special accommodations needed. This needs to be completed prior to the first examination in the course.

Technology Skills

All students in the course are expected to be familiar with word processing software and the use of internet browser technology. Students will also learn how to use computer-based lab equipment, statistical software, and a library-based database. Through these exercises, students in the course will develop research and scientific writing skills.

Cell Phone Policy

The use of a pager, cell phone, or any other communication device during class is strictly prohibited. Any student caught using any of these during class will be asked to leave the class immediately and an unexcused absence will be recorded for that class.

Extra Credit

Extra credit is not available for this course. Special arrangements will be made in advance of exam or assignment dates only in the case of medical necessity or personal hardship. If you have concerns about your progress, please talk to me as soon as possible. TAs will be available to help as well.

Teaching Assistants (TAs)

Two psychology majors will be available as your TAs throughout the semester (day/time TBA). You should make every effort to meet with them regularly, especially if you are struggling with material from lecture. It will be required that you use the TAs feedback on the first lab report. If you receive an A on the first, you will not be required to see the TA for the next lab report (same procedure for the second to third lab report).

Reading the Textbook

In order to fulfill the goals of this course, it will be necessary for you to learn many definitions, names, findings, theories, as well as critically analyze what you will be learning. Survey courses inherently require a great deal of memorization; therefore it is important you stay up to date with material by reading the textbook and attending class. You are expected to read the appropriate chapter before class to familiarize yourself with the material. After we cover the material in class, re-read the textbook chapter before the next class, so that you can ask questions before we move on to the next topic.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Class Participation. Regular attendance is important, expected, and critical to performing well. Wofford College's policy is that class attendance is required. In the case of excused absences, every reasonable effort will be made to help you make up missed work, but you are still responsible for the material and experience covered during the absence. If you have more than 2 unexcused absences it is an automatic WF for the course. Arriving to class late also counts as an unexcused absence. If you miss class, please contact me by phone or email as soon as possible.

Class participation includes being prepared for class and contributing to class discussions. Classes will be more understandable and enjoyable for everyone if you have completed the assigned readings and *thought* about them before class. All students are expected to actively engage in class discussion by making insightful comments, asking questions, and responding to other students' questions in a respectful manner. It is expected that you will contribute to a

comfortable class atmosphere in which class members thoughtfully listen and respond to each other. Class discussions may touch on topics that are personally sensitive; we will all need to be considerate of each others' privacy both in and out of class.

2. **Exams.** Three exams will cover the material from class and the textbook for each unit. Exams may consist of a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Exam format will be discussed before each exam, as I reserve the right to modify as necessary. The final cumulative exam will follow a similar format as previous exams, but will also include questions that will require you to integrate the material you have learned over the course of the semester. Make-up exams will not be given. If you need to reschedule an exam due to a legitimate excuse or illness, please talk to me before the exam (proof will be necessary). The schedule for the exams is as follows:

Exam	Chapters	Date
1	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	Tuesday, October 4, 2011
2	4, 7, 8, 9	Thursday, November 3, 2011
3	12, 13, 14	Thursday, December 1, 2011
Final	Comprehensive, 16	Thursday, December 15, 9am

3. **Lab reports and presentation.** There will be three laboratory experiences that require your participation. You will complete three lab reports and a presentation for grades. Detailed descriptions of each assignment will be given during lab. Each student will be independently responsible for writing each lab report. Labs need to be turned in at the beginning of class on the day they are due (printer errors are counted as late). An electronic copy of the assignment is also required to be emailed to me in order to receive a grade on the assignment so that the lab can be entered into TurnItIn.com, an anti-plagiarism program. Any assignment handed in past the deadline will be marked down 10% of the potential points, with an additional 10% mark down every 24 hours. Assignments turned in more than 4 days late will receive a grade of zero. If you have any questions about assignments, please see me before the assignment is due. The presentation will include the use of PPT slides and follow the general pattern of a laboratory report. The presentation will be evaluated by the professor and other students in the course.

Lab 1	Biological Psychology	Due Wednesday, October 12, 2011
Lab 2	Cognitive Psychology	Due Wednesday November 2, 2011
Lab 3	Social Psychology	Due Wednesday, November 23, 2011

Grading: The below grading system will apply. I reserve the right to modify as necessary.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>
Exam 1, 2, 3	15% each
Comprehensive exam 4	20%
Lab report 1, 2, 3	10% each
Lab presentation	5%
Total	100%

General Schedule

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Labs</u>	<u>Readings/ Due /Exams</u>
Unit 1			
9/5	Introduction and research methods	Ethics and APA style	Ch 1 and 2
9/12	Biological processes	Statistics and graphing	Ch 3
9/19	Consciousness	Biological lab	Ch 6
9/26	Sensation and perception	Biological lab	Ch 5
			<i>Exam 1: Tuesday 10/4</i>
Unit 2			
10/3	Learning	Biological lab	Ch 7
10/10	Learning / Memory	Cognitive lab <i>Lab 1 due</i>	Ch 7 and 8
10/17	Memory / Language	Cognitive lab	Ch 8 and 9
	<i>Fall break Friday 10/21</i>		
10/24	Language and thought / Human development	Cognitive lab	Ch 9 and 4
10/31	Human development	Social lab <i>Lab 2 due</i>	Ch 4
			<i>Exam 2: Thursday 11/3</i>
Unit 3			
11/7	Personality	Social lab	Ch 12
11/14	Social psychology	Social lab	Ch 13
11/21	Psychological disorders	<i>Lab 3 due</i> <i>No lab this week</i>	Ch 14
	<i>Thanksgiving break 11/23 – 11/25</i>		
11/28	Psychological disorders	Presentations	Ch 14
			<i>Exam 3: Thursday 12/1</i>
12/5	Stress and Health	Presentation; CLA	Ch 16
			<i>Final Exam: 12/15 9am</i>

This syllabus is subject to change upon notification.