

Psychology 2301.2WB
Introduction to Psychology
Course Syllabus

Spring 2011 (2nd 8-weeks)

Class Begins: March 21, 2011

Class Ends: May 11, 2011

Instructor: Rodney Hernandez, M.Ed.

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Office Hours: via email: Monday - Thursday evenings, 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Course Number: 2301

Section: 2WB

Course Title: Introduction to Psychology

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisite: None

Course Textbook: The textbook that will be used this semester is ["Visualizing Psychology" Second Edition, by Carpenter/Huffman \(ISBN #: 978-0-470-41017-2\)](#). *To find out when textbooks are available for purchase, please contact the OC Bookstore at (432) 335-6655.*

About Your Instructor

The field of psychology is expansive and dynamic, filled with fascinating questions and interesting observations about human behavior and mental processes. When I first took this course as a college freshman in 1979, I knew right away that it was an area that I wanted to pursue and know more about. My major at the time was Business Management because I knew I enjoyed working with people, but I quickly realized the importance of understanding human behavior if I was to become successful in the business world. By the time I graduated with my BBA in 1983, I managed to complete enough hours in Psychology to apply for admissions into the graduate program for Counseling and Psychology. I received my Masters of Education Degree in Counseling and Psychology from Hardin-Simmons University in 1986, and was employed in various areas of counseling while living in Abilene before I accepted a position with Odessa College in 1988.

Prior to accepting a Counseling position at Odessa College, I worked at a Shelter for battered women and children. After about six months as an intake counselor, I accepted a supervisor/counseling position with the Taylor-Callahan-Coleman Counties Restitution Center in Abilene. Aside from supervising six residential supervisors of the center, I counseled felony offenders whose next step was prison if they failed to turn their lives around. Both these areas allowed me the opportunity to enhance my skills as a counselor, as well as put my managerial skills to practice as a supervisor of six other staff members. I later went on to accept a position with the Texas Employment Commission as an Employment Counselor where I did career advisement and job placement. I have always been a strong advocate of higher education and the many opportunities that an education provides. It did not take long for me to experience first hand just how impactful an education can be on the lives of those I encountered who were jobless and had no formal training or education. It quickly became apparent to me that I wanted to be in a career that would allow me to have a more positive influence on people who, like me, realize the importance of an education. It was through the opportunities I had with previous employers, and the personal experiences I gained, that eventually led me to accept a position as a Counselor at Odessa College.

I moved to Odessa in August 1988 to begin what I knew was going to be a long lasting career for me at Odessa College. During my first year at Odessa College, I was employed as an Enrollment Specialist whose primary responsibilities involved recruiting minority students to Odessa

College. After about a year, I was promoted to a full-time Counselor position, which I have been doing for the past 21 years. To this day I continue to enjoy what I do, which is helping students pursue and attain their educational goals.

In the fall of 1992, I was asked if I would be interested in teaching part-time as an adjunct instructor for the Psychology Department, which I gladly accepted. I alternated teaching two different courses every semester in the classroom, "Introduction to Psychology" in the fall and "Child Psychology" in the spring. After teaching for about 5 years in the classroom, I was approached by the Vice-President of Instruction about designing and creating an online web course for "Introduction to Psychology". At that time, Odessa College did not have any web courses and the college was very interested in expanding their distance education services. Since then, I have enjoyed the opportunity to teach an "Introduction to Psychology" web class on a regular basis every semester.

Course Overview

This course presents a basic understanding of psychological terms, theories, and methodologies in the scientific discipline that studies behavior and mental processes. Cognitive abilities such as problem solving, decision making, and communication, affective states like building self-esteem and sociability, and behavioral events, where one participates as a group member, are explored. Information acquisition, interpretation, and communication of a psychological nature are the basis on which this course is predicated. In this way, psychological principles are understandable in the context of biology, the brain, neurotransmitters and hormones, personality theory, learning principles, life-span development, relationships, abnormal psychology, and therapies. A wide application of a variety of topics is the focus of this introductory course.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to demonstrate competency in the following:

1. Comprehend the history behind the discipline of psychology, including how psychology evolved as a science.

2. Comprehend the various fields that comprise the discipline of psychology, and the different perspectives on explaining behavior that psychologists hold.
3. Identify and comprehend the basic biological functions that underlie behavioral processes, areas of development, consciousness, major theories of learning, memory, intelligence, personality theories, and major classifications of abnormal behavior and their corresponding treatments.
4. Identify rules essential to thinking critically and creatively about psychology through group interaction and class discussions, as well as focusing on the development of reading, writing, and oral communication skills.
5. Relate to a biological and biochemical understanding of behavior, feelings, and thought.
6. Identify and comprehend various personality theories and personality disorders, as well as possible antecedent causes.
7. Describe developmental psychology, and identify and comprehend theories and stages of development.
8. Utilize the World Wide Web for Psychological Research, and research in general, pertaining to personal and professional growth and interests.

Required Material

["Visualizing Psychology"](#) Second Edition, by Carpenter/Huffman

Computer Skills: Students enrolled in this course must be familiar with Blackboard and have adequate skills to navigate the internet, as well as create word processing documents, use email, and attach document files.

Course Schedule

Week 1-2

Topic/Overview: This week focuses on Chapters 1-3

Summary of Week 1 Assignments & Activities due Wednesday, March 30, 2011.

Item	Type	Description	Due
Read Chapters 1-3	Read	Chapters 1, 2, and 3	March 30, 2011
Complete online discussion for Chapters 1-2	Discussion	Chapters 1, 2, and 3	March 30, 2011
Complete Exam #1	Exam #1	Chapters 1, 2, and 3	March 30, 2011

Week 2-3

Topic/Overview: This week focuses on Chapters 4-6

Summary of Week 2 Assignments & Activities due Sunday, April 10, 2011.

Item	Type	Description	Due
Read Chapters 4-6	Read	Chapters 4, 5, and 6	April 10, 2011
Complete online discussion for Chapters 4-5	Discussion	Chapters 4, 5, and 6	April 10, 2011
Complete Exam #2	Exam #2	Chapters 4, 5, and 6	April 10, 2011

Week 4-5

Topic/Overview: This week focuses on Chapter 7-9

Summary of Week 3 Assignments & Activities due Wednesday, April 20, 2011.

Item	Type	Description	Due
Read Chapters 7-9	Read	Chapters 7, 8, and 9	April 20, 2011
Complete online discussion for Chapters 7-8	Discussion	Chapters 7, 8, and 9	April 20, 2011
Complete Exam #3	Exam #3	Chapters 7, 8, and 9	April 20, 2011

Week 5-6

Topic/Overview: This week focuses on Chapters 10-12

Summary of Week 4 Assignments & Activities due Sunday, May 1, 2011

Item	Type	Description	Due
Read Chapters 10-12	Read	Chapters 10, 11, and 12	May 1, 2011
Complete online discussion for Chapters 10-11	Discussion	Chapters 10, 11, and 12	May 1, 2011
Complete Exam #4	Exam #4	Chapters 10, 11, and 12	May 1, 2011

Week 7-8

Topic/Overview: This week focuses on Chapters 13-15

Summary of Week 5 Assignments & Activities due Wednesday, May 11, 2011

Item	Type	Chapters 10	Due
Read Chapters 13-15	Read	Chapters 13, 14, and 15	May 11, 2011
Complete online discussion for Chapters 13-14	Discussion	Chapters 13, 14, and 15	May 11, 2011
Complete Exam #5 (Final)	Exam #5 (Final)	Chapters 13, 14, and 15	May 11, 2011

Important Dates

Classes Begin: **Monday, March 21, 2011**

Late Registration & Schedule Changes: **March 21 - January 21**

Last day to Drop with a "W": **Thursday, April 14, 2011**

Last Class Day, Final Exams, End of Term: **Wednesday, May 11, 2011**

Grading Scale

Your final grade for this course will be determined as follows:

Online Discussion (Attendance/Class Participation) - 25%

Five Exams - (15% each) -75%

Attendance Policy

This particular course does have *suggested* deadline dates that are highly *recommended* in order to ensure the best grade possible, and also so that you do not make the mistake of falling too far behind. Most important, however, please do your best to follow the suggested schedule because it can often times work towards your advantage in obtaining the best grade possible for this class.

You will receive a grade for class attendance and class participation, which is the reason for the online discussion questions. This is a very important part of your final grade for this course as Odessa College Policy requires that students must attend class for at least two thirds of the semester. Failure to complete a minimum of 2/3 of class attendance will result in an automatic "F" regardless of passing work and exams that have been completed. In other words, you must be on schedule when it comes to completing the online discussion questions, so please be sure to complete the online discussion questions according to the due dates posted in the course schedule.

An Odessa College Web course such as this one is completed online with no classroom attendance required. **Every aspect of this course can be completed online without having to physically step foot on campus.** All assignments and all exams are completed online. A common misconception is that a web course is self-paced and follows no set plan or deadlines. Although this course does not have established meeting times in a structured classroom setting, there are exams and assignments that should be completed in a timely manner in order to ensure the best grade possible. Although you may not lose points for taking exams or doing assignments past the deadline dates, you could possibly be eligible for extra credit points by meeting the deadline dates posted in the course schedule, as well as keeping within the time limits posted for each exam. This is not always the case, however, which is why it is important to do your best to meet the deadline dates.

Prior to enrolling in a web course, it is very important to read over the course syllabus since each online course has different specific guidelines that must be followed. Please feel free to contact the instructor by email if you have any questions regarding this course. **It is also very important to check the Announcement Board on a daily basis to read any announcements that may have been posted. Again, before getting started, please read over the entire course syllabus and do not hesitate to email me if you have any questions.**

Incomplete Policy

A grade of "Incomplete" may be given only if (1) the student has passed all work completed, and (2) he/she has completed a minimum of 75% of the required coursework. A grade of "I" will only be assigned when the conditions for completions have been discussed and agreed upon by the instructor and the student.

Drop Policy

Another misconception is that a web course will require less effort than that of a traditional classroom type course. Each student is responsible for dropping this class if exams and assignments are not being completed. The instructor will **NOT** do this for you, and failure to drop this course prior to the deadline date to withdraw will result in grade earned being submitted to the Registrar's Office at the end of the semester.

The deadline date to drop this course with a “W” (withdraw) at Odessa College is Thursday, April 14, 2011.

Online Exams

There will be four exams and a final, but the final exam will **NOT** be comprehensive. Each exam, including the final, will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions and will have a 60-minute time limit. These exams are **NOT** take home exams nor are they open book exams, and each exam is available online and may be taken at any time during the day or evening. Failure to complete and submit your answers within the 60-minute time limit will result in points being deducted from your exam score (a 2-point deduction will be assessed for every 5 minutes over the time limit). Students who encounter a problem taking the exams online (such as being logged off line for whatever reason, or having a computer interruption due to an electrical storm) should contact the instructor about making special arrangements to take a makeup pencil/paper exam to avoid losing points by retaking the exam online. So make sure your computer does not make a habit of logging you off, and avoid taking exams online during an electrical storm to avoid being knocked off line. Resetting an exam online will result in an automatic loss of 10-points on the exam.

For those of you that encounter problems with your computers at home, there are computers available to students on the OC Campus, located at the Wi-Fi Cyber Café, and also on the 1st and 3rd floors of the Student Learning Center (Library). **Please be aware that any computer interruptions that may occur while taking an exam online may result in your answers being lost in cyberspace, and therefore no grade will be posted to the online grade book for that particular exam. In other words, avoid taking exams online when you suspect there might be computer interruptions, especially if your internet provider is one that allows interruptions from incoming telephone calls.**

When you are ready to take an exam online, be sure that all corresponding online assignments (online discussion questions) have been completed. Whenever you complete a set of online discussion questions for a particular exam, please take advantage of completing the study reviews that are provided on the Discussion Board for each exam. The study review does not have to be completed or turned in. It is simply a review so that you may be prepared for each exam. Along with the study reviews posted on the Discussion Board, you will also find the passwords required to access each exam. You will have the weekend (Friday thru Sunday) to complete each exam, so please try to complete your online discussion questions by the deadline dates so that you will have an opportunity to study the review and prepare for the exam. **Again, please do your best to follow the deadline dates that are outlined in the course schedule so that you do not fall behind in this class. If for some reason you need additional time to study and review for an exam and need to take an exam past the Sunday due date, please email me in advance so that I can give you approval to take an exam late.**

Please DO NOT access an exam online until you are ready to take the exam. You have only one attempt on each exam, so please be sure you have completed the Study Review in order to be prepared for each exam. Once you access an exam, the 60-minute time limit will automatically begin and you will need to complete the exam regardless of whether or not that was your intentions. If you access an exam and for some reason decide to exit, your exam will automatically be scored (even if you did not answer any of the questions) and a zero test score will automatically be posted to the online grade book. So again, **PLEASE do not access an exam unless you plan to complete the exam.** Absolutely no excuses (such as, “it was an accident”) will be accepted.

Online Discussion (Attendance/Class Participation)

Students will be required to access and answer online discussion questions for this course. The online discussion questions can be found on Blackboard by clicking on the icon that reads "*Discussion Board*". To post your answers online, simply click on "Add Thread" and type in your answers/responses, then click on the submit button to post your answer (please do not submit your answers as a word document or attachment). To reply to another student's answers/responses, simply click on a student's submission to bring up their posting and click on reply to type in your response to that particular student, then click on the submit button to post your response. Discussion questions will be posted online for each chapter and students will be required to complete these questions online prior to taking each exam. Completing the online discussion questions by the deadline dates will ensure the best grade possible for class participation/class attendance. Also, please be sure to read one another's comments that have been posted online and try to generate some class discussion on topics of interest. Use this as an opportunity to study in pairs if you like. The intent of the online discussion questions is that you spend time in each chapter to generate some class discussion in hopes of being better prepared for each exam. As a suggestion, you may want to consider pairing up with other students so that you can work together on completing the study reviews. Remember, the online discussion questions are a very important part of your final grade and is mandatory to fulfill the class attendance/participation that is required for this course.

As required, students must have the necessary skills and knowledge to access and browse the web. If you do not know how to use Blackboard or browse the web, then this class may not be for you. If you need assistance on how to use Blackboard, please contact the Student Success Center located on the 1st floor of the LRC (library). **Always be sure to check the Announcement Board each time you log on to Blackboard.**

Instructor Response Time

The instructor will respond to emails within 24 – 48 hours of receiving them. If I am going to be unavailable for any length of time for any reason, I will post a message on the Announcement Board. **I am usually not able to check my email over the weekends, so please submit your email requests during the week (according to my office hours posted above) instead of waiting until the weekend. If you email me during the weekend, I will probably not respond back to you until Monday morning.**

Statement of Academic Dishonesty

Ethics, Cheating and Plagiarism "Using someone else's ideas or phrasing and representing those ideas or phrasing as our own, either on purpose or through carelessness, is a serious offense known as plagiarism. "Ideas or phrasing" includes written or spoken material, of course, from whole papers and paragraphs to sentences, and, indeed, phrases, but it also includes statistics, lab results, art work, etc. "Someone else" can mean a professional source, such as a published writer or critic in a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or journal; an electronic resource such as material we discover on the World Wide Web; another student at our school or anywhere else; a paper-writing "service" (online or otherwise), which offers to sell written papers for a fee." (statement taken from <http://webster.commnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml>)

I do not tolerate cheating in any form. If you copy another student's discussion questions or cheat on an exam once, that assignment will receive a "0." If you copy another student's discussion questions or cheat on an exam a second time, then you will receive an "F" in the course.

See the section on "Scholastic Dishonesty" in the updated Odessa College *Student Handbook*.

See: http://www.riosalado.edu/distance_learning/tutorials/study/plagiarism.shtml

Statement of Special Accommodations

In accordance with federal and state laws and regulations, Odessa College does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and admission of students, the employment of faculty and staff, and the operation of any of its programs and activities. Students with a disability should contact *ADA Accommodation/Support personnel* Becky Rivera-Weiss @ 432-335-6861 or brivera@odessa.edu

Student Support Services

ADA Accommodation/Support

Becky Rivera-Weiss 432-335-6861 brivera@odessa.edu

Admissions & Registration & Transcripts

Becky Beard, Director 432-335-6443 bbeard@odessa.edu

Blackboard Assistance

Student Success Center 432-335-6538

Bookstore

Manager) 432-335-6654

Business Office

Debbie Polluck (Manager) 432-335-6600 dpollock@odessa.ed

Computer Services

David Carson (Director) 432-335-6649 dcarson@odessa.edu

Counseling

Rosie Aguilar, Lead Counselor 432-335-6741 raguilar@odessa.edu

Student Success Center

Susan Ferrini 432-335-6714 sferrini@odessa.edu

Financial Aid and Scholarship

Dee Nesmith (Director) 432-335-6429 dnesmith@odessa.edu

Library

Carolyn Peterson (Director) 432-335-6641 cpetersen@odessa.edu

Testing Center/Career Center

Terri Pease (Coordinator) 432-335-6816 thilliard@odessa.edu

Vice President of Instruction

Dr. Tungstall 432-335-6413 tungstall@odessa.edu

Vice President of Student Services

Dr. David Bauske 432-335-6683 dbauske@odessa.edu

Access to Odessa College Library Online Catalog

<http://www.odessa.edu/dept/library/>