

Psychology/Sociology Department
Arts and Science Division
Odessa College 2013

General Psychology

Course Number: PSYC 2301 (sections: 14, 39, 506, WB, WB9)
Course Title: General Psychology
Course Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Lab Hours: 0
Prerequisites: None
Method of Delivery: Classroom, Web Enhanced, Web.
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Text Book: Visualizing Psychology, Second Edition. Carpenter, Siri and Huffman, Karen. Wiley Publishing, 2010

Course Description:

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. (ICOs 1, 2, 4, 5). Prerequisite: None.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing the course, students should be able to demonstrate competencies in the following areas:

- 1) Demonstrate critical thinking and cognitive processing abilities by careful, thoughtful reading and clear written expression through written assignments and class interaction.
- 2) Identify factors in the historical development of the study of human behavior including current theoretical perspectives prominent in the field of psychology; explain the scientific method and techniques used in psychological research.
- 3) Identify the basic components and mechanisms of the major physiology systems often studied in psychology; explain the importance of sensation and perception as they relate to the field of psychology.

- 4) Understand and interpret the basic theories of memory, cognition, learning, motivation and emotion as they relate to psychology.
- 5) Describe developmental psychology and identify theories of development;
- 6) Identify psychopathology, nervous system disorders and therapeutic approaches;
- 7) Analyze the major theories in social psychology and their potential application to real-life situations.

(Some Student Learning Objectives may or may not be covered due to time constraints. Syllabus may be changed at any time if deemed necessary by instructor).

Course Competencies/Objectives

Chapter 1

- Define psychology and its four primary goals.
- Explain the origins of psychology and the seven major perspectives that have emerged from its study.
- Describe the scientific method and key ethical issues in psychological research.
- Describe the advantages and disadvantages of four research methods.

Chapter 2

- Describe and define neurons and how they communicate information.
- Describe the organization of the central and peripheral nervous system.
- Identify and explain the roles of the lower level brain structures.
- Describe the cerebral cortex, including its four cortical lobes and two hemispheres
- Discuss how behavioral genetics and evolutionary psychology explain behavior

Chapter 3

- Identify common sources of stress.
- Explain how the sympathetic nervous system and HPA Axis respond to stress.
- Describe how stress is related to illnesses such as cancer, coronary heart disease, PTSD, and ulcers.
- Define health psychology and its role in addressing issues such as smoking, drinking, and chronic pain.
- Identify resources for healthy living and stress management.

Chapter 4

- Define and differentiate sensation and perception.
- Understand the principles of sensation (i.e., processing, thresholds, adaptation
- Describe the mechanisms of vision and hearing, including physical structures and key terms
- Describe olfaction, gustation, and kinesthetic sense

- Explain perception through the principles of selection, organization, and interpretation

Chapter 5

- Define and describe consciousness
- Explain what happens to consciousness when we sleep
- Describe how psychoactive drugs affect consciousness
- Explain how altered states of consciousness such as hypnosis and meditation affect consciousness

Chapter 6

- Define classical conditioning and its relevance in everyday life.
- Explain how operant conditioning works and how it can be used to affect behavior.
- Describe how and when we learn, according to the cognitive-social theory.
- Identify the neurological changes that occur with learning.
- Explain how prejudice, marketing, medical treatments, and phobias are influenced by conditioning and learning.

Chapter 7

- Summarize the four major memory models
- Explain the biological aspects of memory, including how memories are formed and where they are stored
- Describe how quickly we forget and theories of why we forget
- Identify techniques for improving memory

Chapter 8

- Identify the major components of thinking.
- Explain the three steps involved in problem solving.
- Identify the building blocks of language and the major stages of language development.
- Compare and contrast the various theories of intelligence.
- Explain why standardization, reliability, and validity are necessary in creating tests.
- Define stereotype threat and its impact on IQ testing

Chapter 9

- Summarize the three most important debates in developmental psychology.
- Describe the physical changes that occur during prenatal, early childhood, and adolescent development.
- **Identify the major characteristics of Piaget's four stages of cognitive development**

Chapter 10

- Explain how attachment affects social development.
- Summarize **Kohlberg's theory of moral development and Erikson's eight stages** of psychosocial development.
- Describe how gender differences are related to cognitive, personality, and social development.
- Identify factors that influence realistic relationship expectations and life satisfaction.
- Explain the three basic concepts about death and dying.

Chapter 11

- Summarize three biologically based theories of motivation.
- Describe the internal and external factors that affect eating and sexual behavior.
- Explain the physiological, cognitive, and behavioral components of emotion.
- Compare the major theories of emotion and cultural influence on emotion

Chapter 12

- **Define the "big five" personality traits.**
- **Summarize the main contributions of Freud's psychoanalytic theory** and those of subsequent psychodynamic theorists.
- Describe the main premise of humanistic theory.
- **Identify Bandura and Rotter's contributions to social cognitive theories.**
- Explain how biological factors such as brain structure, neurochemistry, and genetics affect personality.
- Summarize the benefits and limitations of various personality assessment methods

Chapter 13

- Indicate four criteria for identifying abnormal behavior.
- Describe the structure of the DSM-IV-TR.
- Identify and describe four major anxiety disorders.
- Differentiate between major depressive disorder and bipolar disorder.
- Describe the common symptoms of schizophrenia as well as contributing biological and psychosocial factors.
- Identify major characteristics of substance abuse, dissociative, and personality disorders.
- Explain how gender and culture affect abnormal behavior

Chapter 14

- Summarize the similarities and differences among the various insight therapies.

- Explain how classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and modeling are used in behavior therapies.
- Identify the major types of biomedical therapies and the risks associated with them.
- Summarize the five most common goals of therapy

Chapter 15

- Explain how attributions and attitudes affect our thoughts about others.
- Differentiate prejudice from discrimination and explain four reasons why prejudice develops.
- Identify how groups affect conformity, obedience, aggression, and altruism.
- Describe how social problems such as prejudice can be reduced using social psychological principles

(Some course objectives may or may not be covered due to time constraints. Syllabus may be changed at any time if deemed necessary by instructor. Assignments are to be submitted using the Blackboard system unless other wise instructed. Tests will be given using the blackboard system unless other wise instructed).

Course Requirements:

- (1) Purchase required text from the OC Bookstore or other source.
- (2) Bring to class necessary equipment for note taking.
- (3) Read assigned chapters. Be prepared for class discussion about assigned chapters.
- (4) Take quizzes in class or online for web based students.
- (5) Complete all assigned work by given due dates.
- (6) Complete end of semester group project to enhance material covered during the semester.
- (7) Participate in class discussion/discussion board/blog for online students.
- (8) Have regular access to a computer (if you do not have regular access to a computer, see student expectations below)

Attendance Policy

Attendance is important. Especially in a behavioral science course like psychology, if you are absent your perception of the material is adversely affected. More than 6 absences in the long semesters of fall and spring and more than 3 in shorter format courses like Summer I & II or mid-winter, results in point deductions. Specific point deductions will be explained at the beginning of each semester.

Academic Ethics & “The Honor Code”

You are expected to take quizzes without the benefit of “cheat sheet”. Quizzes should reflect your own efforts; Assignments should reflect your own creativity. Plagiarism and or collusion will not be tolerated. If unethical behavior is detected, all parties involved will be denied points for that project or exam until the questioned material and a report of the ethics violation is submitted to the department chair for further action as deemed necessary by the chair. If a second offence occurs you will receive an “F” in the course.

No text messaging, photography, or recording (unless given permission by the instructor) is allowed. If you need to have your cell phone on because of a special situation, discuss it with the instructor prior to the beginning of class.

Student Assistance/ Office Hours

Phone and office conferences are available each semester. Please refer to your **instructor’s door** or syllabus for office hours. Best time to call will be discussed at the beginning of each semester.

SPECIAL NEEDS: Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have any special needs or issues pertaining to your access to and participation in this or any other class at Odessa College, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns. You may also call the Office of Disability Services at 335-6861 to request assistance and accommodations.

How to figure Your Grade/Course Calendar

Step by step procedures on how to figure your grade as well as test and assignment schedule contained in the course calendar will be provided to each student. It may vary from semester to semester.

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, and signed by the instructor and the student.

Note to students:

Keep track of all deadlines. The instructor will help you as much as possible to successfully complete this course, however, if you believe that you will not be able to stay in this course or if you fall too far behind in the course work, it is your responsibility to officially drop this course. If you do not, you will receive a F.

Expectations for Engagement – Online Learning

To help make the web-based learning experience fulfilling and rewarding, the following Expectations for Engagement provide the parameters for reasonable

engagement between students and instructors for the online learning environment. Students and instructors are welcome to exceed these requirements.

Reasonable Expectations of Engagement for Instructors

1. As an instructor, I understand the importance of clear, timely communication with my students. In order to maintain sufficient communication, I will
 - provided my contact information at the beginning of the syllabus;
 - respond to all messages within 24 hours if received Monday through Thursday and within 48 hours if received Friday through Sunday; and,
 - notify students of any extended times that I will be unavailable and provide them with alternative contact information (for me or for my **supervisor) in case of emergencies during the time I'm unavailable.**
2. As an instructor, I understand that my students will work to the best of their abilities to fulfill the course requirements. In order to help them in this area, I will
 - provide clear information about grading policies and assignment requirements in the course syllabus, and
 - Communicate any changes to assignments and/or to the course calendar to students as quickly as possible.
3. As an instructor, I understand that I need to provide regular, timely feedback to students about their performance in the course. To keep students informed about their progress, I will
 - Post grades for discussion postings within one week of the discussion thread/blog closing.
 - Provide grades for major assignments within 2 weeks of the due date or at least 3 days before the next major assignment is due, whichever comes first.

Reasonable Expectations of Engagement for Students

1. As a student, I understand that I am responsible for keeping up with the course. To help with this, I will
 - line up alternative computer and internet access in case my primary computer crashes or my internet services is unavailable;
 - recognize that the college provides free wi-fi and computer labs during regular campus hours to help me with accessing my course; and,
 - Understand that my instructor does not have to accept my technical issues as a legitimate reason for late or missing work if my equipment or service is unreliable.

2. As a student, I understand that it is my responsibility to communicate quickly with the instructor any issue or emergency that will impact my involvement with or performance in the class. This includes, but is not limited to
 - **getting “kicked off” of the system during tests or quizzes;**
 - having trouble submitting assignments; and
 - dealing with a traumatic personal event.
3. As a student, I understand that it is my responsibility to understand course material and requirements and to keep up with the course calendar. While my instructor is available for help and clarification, I will
 - seek out help from my instructor and/or from tutors;
 - **ask questions if I don’t understand; and,**
 - access my course several times during the week to keep up with assignments and announcements.

Expectations for Engagement – Face to Face Learning

To help make the learning experience fulfilling and rewarding, the following Expectations for Engagement provide the parameters for reasonable engagement between students and instructors for the learning environment. Students and instructors are welcome to exceed these requirements.

Reasonable Expectations of Engagement for Instructors

1. As an instructor, I understand the importance of clear, timely communication with my students. In order to maintain sufficient communication, I will
 - provided my contact information at the beginning of the syllabus;
 - respond to all messages in a timely manner through telephone, email, or next classroom contact; and,
 - notify students of any extended times that I will be unavailable and provide them with alternative contact information (for me or for my **supervisor) in case of emergencies during the time I’m unavailable.**
2. As an instructor, I understand that my students will work to the best of their abilities to fulfill the course requirements. In order to help them in this area, I will
 - provide clear information about grading policies and assignment requirements in the course syllabus, and
 - communicate any changes to assignments and/or to the course calendar to students as quickly as possible.

3. As an instructor, I understand that I need to provide regular, timely feedback to students about their performance in the course. To keep students informed about their progress, I will
 - return classroom activities and homework within one week of the due date and
 - provide grades for major assignments within 2 weeks of the due date or at least 3 days before the next major assignment is due, whichever comes first.

Reasonable Expectations of Engagement for Students

1. As a student, I understand that I am responsible for keeping up with the course. To help with this, I will
 - attend the course regularly and line up alternative transportation in case my primary means of transportation is unavailable;
 - recognize that the college provides free wi-fi, computer labs, and library resources during regular campus hours to help me with completing my assignments; and,
 - understand that my instructor does not have to accept my technical issues as a legitimate reason for late or missing work if my personal computer equipment or internet service is unreliable.
2. As a student, I understand that it is my responsibility to communicate quickly with the instructor any issue or emergency that will impact my involvement with or performance in the class. This includes, but is not limited to,
 - missing class when a major test is planned or a major assignment is due;
 - having trouble submitting assignments;
 - dealing with a traumatic personal event; and,
 - having my work or childcare schedule changed so that my classroom attendance is affected.
3. As a student, I understand that it is my responsibility to understand course material and requirements and to keep up with the course calendar. While my instructor is available for help and clarification, I will
 - seek out help from my instructor and/or from tutors;
 - **ask questions if I don't understand; and,**
 - attend class regularly to keep up with assignments and announcements.

Revised: 1/2013