

Professor Andrew Roberts, PhD

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Student Hours Monday/Wednesday: 1:00-2:00 PM

Thursday: 11:00 – 12:00 PM

By Appointment

Course Description:

A survey of general psychology: theories, methods, and basic principles and how these apply to human behavior. Topics include research, the brain, social psychology, learning, memory, and psychological disorders. The course emphasizes the understanding that psychological concepts are derived from the scientific method. Prerequisites: TSI Reading/Writing.

Required Course Materials:

- *Textbook:* OpenStax College, Psychology. Link to **FREE textbook:** <https://openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e>

Contact Guidelines:

I will strive to be available to aid your learning process by providing a number of ways to contact me:

- ***Email:*** Only use official university e-mail through Blackboard and include the course and section (e.g., PSYC 2301) and full name in subject line. Please do not use Blackboard messages. My university email is my primary and preferred point of contact outside of the classroom.

I check my email regularly on Monday – Friday from 8 to 5. Within that timeframe, I will generally respond back within 24 hours. If you do not hear back from me, email again in the event your message went to my Junk email box and/or follow up directly with me in class or during office hours (see above). On the weekends, I am generally not available by email, but will reply on the subsequent Monday. If you need to contact me, please plan ahead especially when it comes to clarifying assignment instructions and/or submission requirements.

In all communications, please be professional and be specific in your message (i.e., avoid informal correspondence styles like text messaging). Your correspondence MUST include the information specified above. If you send an email without sufficient information, I likely will not reply or may reply asking for clarification about your inquiry (this can result in an unnecessary delay). Please begin a new email thread in lieu of responding back to one of my emails if you are beginning a new conversation unrelated to the previous email (this helps minimize confusion caused by chain replies).

- ***Student Hours:*** I will be available in my office (Classroom Hall 220) to meet during student hours (see times listed above). Student hours are dedicated to interacting with and providing students assistance regarding course work. An appointment is not necessary to attend these hours, but interactions are limited to a first come, first serve basis. If there is a specific assignment/materials or topic you want to discuss, providing advance notice will allow me to have these resources ready. If students cannot meet during these times, an alternative time can be requested via email and I will do my best to try to accommodate students accordingly.

Assessment and Evaluation:

Exams – 100 points each

- There will be four 100-point exams given during the semester (see dates at end of syllabus).
- Each exam will cover three to four chapters of material and will be comprised a combination of multiple-choice true/false, matching, and/or short answers questions.
- Students will not be allowed to use their notes or the their textbook on their exam. Any content discussed during lecture, the textbook, and/or other upload documents is fair game for potential exam questions. This means students are responsible for studying this content including reading the assigned textbook chapters.
- All exams will be taken in the assigned classroom during the assigned lecture time. On exam days, students are expected to arrive on time and will be given the entire period to complete the exam. Failure to complete the exam during the designated testing period will result in a grade of 0.
- **Important:** No exam grade will be dropped or excluded from calculating final course grades. Therefore, students cannot afford to miss or skip any exams because a grade of 0 will appear in the gradebook for this miss work. Because each exam is worth 20% of your overall course grade, receiving a grade of 0 for failing to take an exam will substantially affect your course average and may result in you failing to pass this course.

Review Quizzes– Value TBD (Up to 50 points total)

- During the semester, students will be required to complete review quizzes based on lecture content. These quizzes could be given during class and/or administered through Blackboard. Students should review their notes and attend lecture regularly.

Research Experience Credits (SONA) – 5 point per 1 hour credit; 25 points total

- Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and behavior. Because Psychology is a science, students in several classes at A&M-SA have a Research Experience Component (REC), which allows students to gain first-hand knowledge of the scientific methods that psychologists employ. The REC is designed to help students gain a more complete understanding of the process and outcomes of psychological research. To be an effective researcher, you should have experience in research- including as a subject, if possible.

To complete the Research Experience Component (REC) requirement for this course, you will have to complete the assignment described below:

- **Requirements:**
 - The REC is worth **5% of your final grade** and each student must earn a minimal of 5 credits (1 credit = 1 hour of research participation).
 - All credits must be completed by the last day of classes on **December 6, 2024**.
 - **Students may earn credits by mixing and matching between several different options listed below (see next page for Options 1, 2, and 3):**

- **Option 1: Participating in Psychological Research (SONA).**
 - Studies are conducted by faculty in the Psychology Program and approved by Texas A&M University-San Antonio's Institution Review Board. You will complete consent procedures before every study, and you have the right to withdraw from any study, at any time, without penalty. **You must be 18 years old or older to participate in research studies.**
 - **FAQ about Option 1:**
 - a) *The number of credits for each study varies.* For example, some studies may be worth 5 credits, 1 credit, or 0.5 credits, etc.
 - b) Access to approved studies is provided at <https://tamusa.sona-systems.com>
 - c) Studies will be available to participate in after census day. It is your job to check SONA for studies, to complete the studies, and then to complete any additional assignments required to earn credit.
 - d) Studies may be in person or online. If a study is in person, SONA lists the time and place where the study will be conducted. If a study is online, SONA lists the DEADLINE by which you must complete your participation. Also, credit for online studies will be posted AFTER the deadline passes. The last day to participate in a study for credit is the last day of the term (prior to reading days and finals).
- **Option 2: Reading Published Psychological Research.**
 - *Each research article summary equals 1.00 credit.*
 - a) If you elect to use Option 2 to gain some/all of your REC credit, you will need to select an APA paper from your own research or ones suggested to you. You can email your instructor for guidance on what's appropriate. You will read the article on your own then afterwards, you will write a reflection paper. This paper summarizes your understanding of the article and your analysis of the paper.
 - b) Your paper should include all of the following:
 - i. A short summary of the paper.
 - ii. A deeper, more extensive outline of the main points of the paper, including for example assumptions made, arguments presented, data analyzed, and conclusions.
 - iii. Any limitations or extensions you see for the ideas in the paper.
 - iv. Your opinion of the paper; primarily, the quality of the ideas and its potential impact.
 - c) The paper should be two pages long—not shorter, not longer. Use APA format.
 - d) Please email your work directly to your instructor. The assignment should only be in Word or PDF format. This assignment is due on the last day of classes, before finals week begins.
- **Option 3: Attending Psychological Research Presentations.**
 - Students may attend an oral presentation over a psychological research topic. Students can seek out and attend presentations given through university-sponsored events, (e.g., Psychology Speaker Series, College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Speaker Series), and academic conferences (e.g., Southwestern Psychological Association, TAMUSA Sponsored Research Conference).
 - **FAQ about Option 3:**
 - a) To earn credit through this option, students can sign up for presentations that occur on campus via SONA Systems (same way they would for Option 1).
 - b) If you are attending a presentation/conference outside of TAMUSA, email your instructor for additional instructions.

General Class Participation & Attendance

- Very few students who miss class frequently perform well in that class. Given students are paying a lot of money per class period, it is to your advantage to attend and actively engage. Attendance and class participation are included in my grading system because class participation depends on attendance.
- Fair warning! I plan on calling on students by name during class, so you should be prepared and paying attention (i.e., not playing on your phone, gaming, shopping, texting, etc.). Be present in the moment!
- Students who attend every class and participate will receive full credit. Credit is subtracted after that based on participation level and number of absences (attendance will be recorded daily). If you only miss one or two days, the attendance half of the attendance/participation grade will still be good. If for some reason you must miss a lot of classes due to substantial extenuating circumstance, you might find it advantageous to drop the class and retake it. We can discuss what is best for you.
- If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to get the lecture notes from a classmate. I will not repeat a lecture for you because you decided to skip class and go to the coast. After you read and try to decipher your classmate's notes, please come to me if you would like some clarification about some specific questions. You need to take responsibility for your missed work FIRST, then come to me for help if you still need it. I will be VERY willing to help you when you show me that you have put some prior effort into the missed material. This is for your benefit!

Missed Exam/Quiz Policy:

- Unless you have experienced an emergency or illness, you will not be allowed to make up a missed exam or submit late assignments and will receive a grade of zero for missing work.

Excused absences include family emergency and death in the family. Work conflicts or difficulty with parking do not constitute legitimate reasons. If you know ahead of time that you will miss an exam or there may be a potential conflict, discuss these matters with your instructor well in advance of the exam date because it may be possible to schedule an alternate exam time or make-up.

Legitimate reasons with documentation include but are not limited to:

- Illness, injury, transportation failure athletic obligation, injury/illness/death of a friend or family member or other circumstances that requires your assistance (includes pets)

Non-legitimate reasons for missing exams or assignments but **NOT** qualifying for make-ups include:

- Vacation, lack of preparation, being busy, just not feeling like it, overslept, etc.

Grading:

Course Component	Value	Number	Total	% of Final Grade
Exams	10	4	400	80%
Review Quizzes	TBD	TBD	50	10%
Research Experience Credit (SONA)	5	5	25	5%
General Class Participation & Attendance			25	5%
TOTAL			500 possible points	100%

A: 450 and above B: 400-449.99 C: 350-399.99 D: 300-349.99 F: below 300

Policies and Procedures:

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disability. If you believe you have a disability that may require accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services for the coordination of services. DSS is located on the 1st floor of the Main Campus building (Room 127). The phone number for DSS is 210-784-1335.

Student Misconduct: Appropriate conduct is essential to the effective functioning of the University. University policy defines unacceptable conduct, both academic and non-academic misconduct, and penalties for such behavior.

Academic Dishonesty Policy: Students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty for which a student is subject to penalty includes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, multiple submissions, misrepresentation of academic records, facilitating academic dishonesty, unfair advantage, violating known safety requirements and ethical misconduct. This includes holding other students to the same standards and reporting any incidents of alleged violation of the honesty policy to the instructor involved or, if necessary, to the appropriate academic department head. All students are responsible for being familiar with the Academic Dishonesty Policy, which may be found in the Texas A&M University-San Antonio Student Handbook.

University policy prescribes serious consequences for acts of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, a grade of 'F' on the particular paper or assignment, a failing grade in the course, or possible expulsion from the University. Considering the potential consequences of academic misconduct, it is obviously in students' best interests to avoid even the appearance of such behavior. If you are ever unclear whether a specific act might constitute academic misconduct, please contact your instructor for an assessment of the situation.

All written assignments are subject to analysis by anti-plagiarism software.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free subject based tutoring to all currently enrolled Texas A&M University-San Antonio students. Tutors work with students to help develop skills necessary to succeed in a variety of courses offered by the University. Students are encouraged to make either individual or groups appointments by calling (210) 784-1332 or emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu. Walk-ins welcomed but priority is granted to those with an appointment.

Specific Learning Objectives (from APA Guidelines for Psychology Majors):

This course will assess your ability to:	Specific Outcomes
2.2 Demonstrate psychology information literacy	2.2a Read and summarize general ideas and conclusions from psychological sources accurately
	2.2b Describe what kinds of additional information beyond personal experience are acceptable in developing behavioral explanations (i.e., popular press reports vs. scientific findings)
	2.2c Identify and navigate psychology databases and other legitimate sources of psychology information
	2.2d Articulate criteria for identifying objective sources of psychology information
	2.2e Interpret simple graphs and statistical findings
2.4 Interpret, design, and conduct basic psychological research	2.4c Define and explain the purpose of key research concepts that characterize psychological research (e.g., hypothesis, operational definition)
	2.4e Explain why conclusions in psychological projects must be both reliable and valid
4.1 Demonstrate effective writing for different purposes	4.1a Express ideas in written formats that reflect basic psychological concepts and principles
	4.1b Recognize writing content and format differ based on purpose (e.g., blogs, memos, journal articles) and audience
	4.1c Use standard English, including generally accepted grammar
	4.1d Write using APA style
	4.1e Recognize and develop overall organization (e.g., beginning, development, ending) that fits the purpose
	4.1g Use expert feedback to revise writing of a single draft

Course Schedule:

Important Note about the Course Calendar: The following represents a tentative course schedule. As your instructor, I reserve the right to make adjustments to the course schedule as I deem fit. Should any changes in the schedule occur for any reason, they will be a) announced at the start of class, b) posted in Blackboard, and c) be reflected in an updated syllabus also posted in Blackboard.

Wk	Dates	Topic
1	Aug 26 Aug 28	Syllabus / Introductions Ch 1 – Introduction to Psychology (pg 7 – 34)
2	Sept 2 Sept 4	No Classes (Labor Day) Ch 2 – Psychological Research (pg 35 – 70)
3	Sept 9 Sept 11	Ch 2 – Psychological Research (pg 35 – 70) Ch 3 – Biopsychology (pg 71 – 106)
4	Sept 16 Sept 18	Ch 3 – Biopsychology (pg 71 – 106) Ch 4 – States of Consciousness (pg 109 – 143)
5	Sept 23 Sept 25	Ch 4 – States of Consciousness (pg 109 – 143) Exam 1 (Ch 1 – 4)
6	Sept 30 Oct 2	Ch 5 – Sensation and Perception (pg 145 - 179) Ch 5 – Sensation and Perception (pg 145 - 179)
7	Oct 7 Oct 9	Ch 6 – Learning (pg 181 – 211) Ch 6 – Learning (pg 181 – 211)
8	Oct 14 Oct 16	Ch 8 – Memory (pg 247 - 277) Ch 8 – Memory (pg 247 - 277)
9	Oct 21 Oct 23	Exam 2 (Ch 5, 6, & 8) Ch 9 – Lifespan Development (pg 279-320)
10	Oct 28 Oct 30	Ch 10 – Emotion and Motivation (pg 321-357) Ch 10 – Emotion and Motivation (pg 321-357)
11	Nov 4 Nov 6	Ch 14 – Stress, Lifestyle, & Health (pg 485-535) Ch 14 – Stress, Lifestyle, & Health (pg 485-535)
12	Nov 11 Nov 13	Exam 3 (Ch 9, 10, & 14) Ch 11 – Personality (pg 359 – 378)

13	Nov 18 Nov 20	Ch 11 – Personality (pg 359 – 378) Ch 15 – Psychological Disorders (pg 537-598)
14	Nov 25 Nov 27	Ch 15 – Psychological Disorders (pg 537-598) Study Day (No Classes Meet)
15	Dec 2 Dec 4 Dec 6	Ch 12 – Social Psychology (pg 399 – 444) Ch 12 – Social Psychology (pg 399 – 444) Study Day (No Classes Meet)
Final	TBD	Exam 4 (Ch 11, 12, & 15) <i>*Will occur during Final Exam period</i> (see academic calendar for date and time)