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Course Description

From the catalog: 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. TSI Restriction(s): Reading, Math, and Writing. Graduate level students may not enroll.

Required Course Materials

Textbook: Spielman, R.M., Jenkins, W.J., & Lovett, M.D. (2020). *Psychology* (2nd Edition). Houston, TX: OpenStax.
<https://openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e>

Contact Guidelines

I make every effort to be available to aid you in your learning process. There are a number of ways in which you can contact me.

- **Email: Only use your official university e-mail and include course and section (e.g., PSYC 4310) and full name in subject line. Failure to follow these steps will result in my not responding to your email.** This is my primary and preferred point of contact outside of the classroom. I check my messages regularly on Monday – Friday from 8 to 5. Within that timeframe, I will generally respond within 24 hours. If you don't hear back from me, email again in the event your message went to my Junk email box. On weekends, I am generally not available by email and will reply on the subsequent Monday. If you need to contact me, plan ahead. In all communications, be specific. Your correspondence MUST include information as specified above. If you send an email without sufficient information, I likely won't reply. Additionally, 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. Professional language and formatting is expected.
- **Office: Office hours held in my office or WebEx room during the office hours listed above**

Learning Objectives and Class Structure

How does the mind work? What influences human behaviors? How can behavior and mental processes be studied, predicted, and controlled? The purpose of this course is to provide a general understanding of the basic principles of psychology. We examine the broad spectrum of phenomena covered by psychological science, from the basic operations of neurons to conscious decision-making and social behaviors. We also overview psychological and personality development as well as clinical interventions when psychological processes operate abnormally.

To these ends, our class will interlace lectures, critical discussions of topics, and activities all designed to provide you with the important background and skills to introduce modern concepts in psychological science.



Assessment and Evaluation

Unless otherwise specified, assignments will be completed and turned in during class hours; however, electronic copies and late work may be turned in via Blackboard as designated by professor. All work is to be completed independently.

Exams

Examinations will consist of multiple-choice questions that typically focus on your ability to identify facts and apply concepts. All tests will be of a similar format and cover the most recent section of material from the text, lectures, and other sources from the course that we cover. The final will NOT be cumulative, but merely cover information from its preceding unit.

Chapter Quizzes

Brief quizzes accompany individual chapters or groups of chapters. They are to be taken out of class in your own space and completed independently. They are accessed and submitted through Blackboard and are due on the dates listed on the calendar. If you miss any, you are only permitted to make up one. The best way to avoid requesting your one permitted make-up quiz is to complete them on time.

Common Myth Paper

Psychology remains a widely misunderstood discipline, and many students come away from introductory courses surprised to learn what psychology really is – and isn't. These misconceptions may come from students' preexisting intuitions or from common myths and inaccurate representations of psychology in the broader culture. In this course, students are required to prepare a 2-page paper that addresses a misconception concerning human psychology they have encountered or even endorsed before. In this paper, you will present evidence from one or more empirical studies discussed in your text that refutes this misconception. Specifically, you should address the principles addressed in the relevant theories and hypotheses, the methods researchers have used to test these, and what their results say about the given phenomenon. In addition, you will determine the relevance of this knowledge to general society and/or how such knowledge might be used for bettering the human condition. This is NOT an intensive research paper, and therefore can take an informal tone, like if you were explaining it to a friend or relative.

Research Experience Component

A goal of this class is to help you familiarize yourself with the various methods used in psychological research. One manner to obtain this goal is to have you participate in research studies. Your participation also contributes to empirical research conducted by the students and faculty at A&M-SA, and human knowledge in general. All students in this class will be required to participate in the psychology department's participation pool *or* complete alternative assignments (see

the REC Information Sheet in Course Content for more information). **No Exceptions.** Failure to earn all 5 credits required for this class will result in a deduction of 1% of your grade for each half-credit not earned up to 10%.

Point Breakdown for the Semester

Course Component	Point Value	Number	Total Points
Chapter Quizzes	10	10	100
Examinations	100	4	400
Myth Paper	25	1	25
Research Experience Component			5% of final
Total			525



Bonus Situation

I don't really have a systematic mechanism for awarding bonus points in this class. Maybe there will be some, maybe there won't.

Other Important Information

In Blackboard's Course Content Folder, find a document with important information about dropping the course, academic integrity, emergency weather accommodations, and other important information.



Tentative Course Schedule

I will do my best to abide by this schedule. Any topic changes will be announced in lecture, e-mail and/or Blackboard. You are responsible to keep up with any changes. Calendar is at <https://www.tamusa.edu/provost/academic-calendar.html>

Week	Date	Topic	Notes, due dates
1	19-Jan	MLK DAY NO CLASS	No class held
	21-Jan	Introductions/Overview/Myths	
2	26-Jan	Chapter 1: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives	Quiz Chapters 1-2 due Feb 1
	28-Jan	Chapter 2: Research Methods in Psychology	
3	2-Feb	Chapter 3: Biopsychology pt. 1	Quiz Chapter 3 due Feb 8
	4-Feb	Chapter 3: Biopsychology pt. 2	
4	9-Feb	Chapter 4: States of consciousness	Quiz Chapter 4-5 due Feb 15
	11-Feb	Chapter 5: Sensation and Perception	
5	16-Feb	Exam 1	
	18-Feb	Chapter 6: Learning – Classical Conditioning	
6	23-Feb	Chapter 6: Learning – Operant Conditioning	Quiz Chapter 6 due Mar 1
	25-Feb	Chapter 7: Cognition, Language and problem-solving	
7	2-Mar	Chapter 7: Intelligence and testing	
	4-Mar	Chapter 8: Memory, pt. 1	
8	9-Mar	SPRING BREAK - APLS NO CLASS	Myth topic due Mar 15
	11-Mar	SPRING BREAK - APLS NO CLASS	
10	16-Mar	Chapter 8: Memory, pt. 2	Quiz Ch. 7-8 due Mar 17
	18-Mar	Exam 2	
11	23-Mar	Chapter 9: Theories of Lifespan Development	Quiz Chapter 9 due Mar 29
	25-Mar	Chapter 9: Stages of Life, Death and Dying	
12	30-Mar	Chapter 12: Social Psychology, pt. 1	Article due Apr 5
	1-Apr	Chapter 12: Social Psychology, pt. 2	
13	6-Apr	Chapter 13: Industrial/Organizational Psychology	Quiz Ch. 12-13 due Apr 7
	8-Apr	Exam 3	
14	13-Apr	Chapter 11: Personality Psychology Theories	Quiz Chapter 11 due Apr 19
	15-Apr	Chapter 11: Personality Psychology Approaches and Culture	
15	20-Apr	Chapter 14: Stress	Myth Paper due Apr 26
	22-Apr	Chapter 14: Managing Stress	
16	27-Apr	Chapter 15: Psychological disorders introduction	Quiz Ch. 14-15 due May 3
	29-Apr	Chapter 15: Psychological disorders pt. 2	
17	4-May	Chapter 16: Therapies and Treatments	Quiz Ch. 16 due May 4
	6-May	FINALS WEEK THRU May 12 (5/6@10AM)	