General Psychology

Psychology 2301.006

Spring 2016

Professor: Lauren Denver-Potter, MS          Email: lauren.denver-potter@tamucc.edu
Office: Bay Hall, 3rd Floor Cubicle          Class Location: MWF 12:00-12:50pm; BH207
Office Hours: 11:00am-12:00pm, Fridays, or by appointment

Description and Goals of the Course
This course will provide a broad and general introduction to the field of psychology—its basic subject matter; its approaches to gathering and evaluating evidence about the causes and correlates of behavior; and also the means by which psychological knowledge is or can be applied to improve the quality of individual and communal life. Topics covered include biological foundations, learning, thinking and intelligence, motivation and emotions, personality development, abnormal psychology, social psychology and therapy.

A combination of readings, lectures, class discussions, written work, and a group project will be used throughout the course. This course covers a large amount of material and it is imperative you read the material thoroughly, while utilizing your skills of critical thinking. This class will serve as an important foundation, should students decide to follow a career within the field of psychology, education, medicine, or other behavioral sciences.

Student Learning Objectives

1) Describe psychological theories, principles and concepts relevant to the following topics: history and methods, biological bases of behavior, cognition, social behavior, personality, and psychopathology.
2) Apply basic psychological principles to current events and daily human experience.
3) Understand the ways that psychological phenomena influence health.
4) Understand the scientific principles that underlie psychological research.

Course Requirements

Real World Psychology by Karen Huffman and Catherine Sanderson
ISBN: 9781119010098

Blackboard
We will use Blackboard for posting important class documents including information about tests, supplemental readings, specific instructions for the various writing assignments, announcements, etc. In addition, homework and project assignments will be posted on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to check Blackboard regularly to ensure completion of all required coursework. If you do not know your login information for Blackboard, please contact the IT Help Desk, (361) 825-2692. If there are issues within your Blackboard course, please contact me first, as typically the instructor is the only one who can make changes/fix issues within a course. If you are having technical difficulties, please contact the IT Help Desk or your ISP.

Course Evaluation
**Readings**

Assigned chapters from the textbook should be read *before* the class during which we will discuss them.

You may also be assigned additional readings throughout the semester. Instructions on accessing assigned readings will be posted on Blackboard. These supplemental readings are designed to broaden your understanding of the subject material.

**Exams (25% of your grade)**

Regular exams will be taken online and cover the textbook chapters and class discussions from the preceding section (see class schedule). Typically, tests will be available for at least 6 hours to allow for some flexibility. More information about accessing online tests will be provided in class.

There will be 4 online exams and one final examination which will count towards the final grade. Exams will be multiple choice and short answer. You are allowed to drop one exam, which will allow for unseen contingencies or a low test score. Each test is worth 100 points. There will be no make-up tests.

**Learning Team Project (25% of your grade)**

For this project, you will be assigned to teams during the first week of class. You will stay with your team for in-class discussions/assignments during class. The Learning Team assignment is your opportunity to explore one aspect of development more in-depth, collaborate effectively with peers, and present the information to your classmates. You will be responsible for choosing a topic of interest within general psychology as a team, submitting a topic proposal form, team member job duties, and presenting the information to class. You must utilize PowerPoint for this presentation. Further instructions will be provided. Due dates for the presentation will vary and will be assigned by the professor, based upon the Chapter most closely associated to the team’s chosen topic area.

**Essay (25% of your grade)**

You are required to write a 5-page (not including cover page or reference page), double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman-font, essay on a topic of your own personal interest within general psychology. This paper MUST utilize proper APA format, contain a cover-page, and a reference page. You must utilize at a minimum 3 references to base the information on within your paper. You may choose any topic that interests you within general psychology. You will turn this paper in within Blackboard. Due date is on the course schedule.

**In-Class Activities/Blackboard/Participation (25% of your grade)**

Note: All assignments must completed by the assigned due date. *Late assignments will not be accepted.*

Weekly Homework, in-class activities, and possible pop attendance quizzes will be assigned throughout the semester. Credit for in-class work will be graded on accuracy, completeness, and how well it was used to prepare for and contribute to class discussions. Incomplete work or missing part of the class may result in loss of credit for that assignment.
Situations which require you to miss a deadline must be discussed with me in advance. You are expected to attend class on time, as arriving late is disruptive and disrespectful. Please discuss any emergencies or other mitigating circumstances with me.

Your overall grade will be calculated based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Test 1</td>
<td>100 (drop lowest)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Test 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Test 3</td>
<td>Average of four tests to constitute 25% of your grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Test 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (Comprehensive)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>100 (total 25%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Team Project</td>
<td>100 (total 25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class work, attendance &amp; participation</td>
<td>100 (total 25%)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FINAL GRADE BASED ALL FOUR CATEGORIES ABOVE, EACH 25%</strong></td>
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90-100% = A  
indicates work of distinction, of consistent and exceptionally high quality

80-89% = B  
indicates good work, maybe not consistent or of distinction

70-79% = C  
indicates average work

60-69% = D  
indicates marginal work

Below 60% = F  
indicates unacceptable work

**VERY IMPORTANT – Late Work/Missed Exams**
No late assignments will be accepted. Emergency situations which require you to miss an exam/deadline must be discussed with me in advance or as soon as they arise.

**Classroom Expectations**

- Students are expected to arrive on time and attend and participate in all classes. If you miss a class, please arrange to get announcements, handouts, class notes, etc. from a fellow student. Also check Blackboard for new postings and/or assignments.

- In addition to being present, you are required to actively participate in all aspects of the class. This means that, not only are you expected to contribute to class discussions and group activities, but that your comments, questions, and contributions should indicate that you have read the assigned material and are prepared to contribute to class meetings.
We are all adults and it is expected that we will treat other students, teaching assistants/graders, and the instructor with respect. During discussions, feel free to express your disagreement with ideas but refrain from criticizing or belittling anyone (including researchers, authors, etc.) with whom you disagree.

Please respect your classmates’ desire to learn in an environment free from unnecessary distractions. Do not engage in any behavior which is disruptive to the class. This includes engaging in side conversations, talking on the phone, reading or writing that has nothing to do with class, surfing the web, sending or receiving text messages, etc. If I see this going on in class, I will assume that you are not participating and may ask you to leave.

Turn off all cell phones and electronic alarms before class begins. If you have a specific situation that you feel requires you to use an electronic device, please see me before class.

If there is a situation or issue that you know about ahead of time, please let me know. Please do not schedule other activities such as work or meetings during class time. You will not be excused from in-class work missed when you schedule other activities such as these during class meeting times.

If it is absolutely necessary for you to enter or leave the classroom once class is in session, do so in the quietest and least disruptive fashion possible.

Using Resources Outside of Class

There are a number of resources available to you outside of class and I strongly encourage you to contact me if you have any questions, difficulties, comments, or simply want feedback. I want you to succeed in this class.

I encourage you to set up study groups, or work with a partner whenever appropriate. Discussing the textbook material together and talking about what we are doing in class can be a great way to test your ability to express the ideas you are developing.

You are also strongly encouraged to make use of the Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA). CASA offers a variety of services including tutoring, writing assistance, and mentors. The personnel in the center are a great resource to help you with various aspects of academic and college life. You can access their website for additional information at http://casa.tamucc.edu/.

The Counseling Center can help you to better understand and address factors which may interfere with your academic success. Counseling can help to increase self-awareness, improve self-confidence, strengthen coping skills, and teach you more effective strategies for all aspects of your life. Counselors can also help you to improving study skills, reduce text anxiety, strengthen time management skills, and improve problem solving skills. They are located in the Driftwood Building and you can access their website at http://counseling.tamucc.edu/.

Correspondence

Email is the best way to get in touch with me. Be sure to include your course & section number in the email subject line. I generally respond to email within 24 hours, except on the weekends. I am always ready and willing to make myself available to help you succeed in this course. While most questions can probably be answered via email, you are also encouraged to drop by
my office or make an appointment so we can discuss more complicated concerns. I advise you to identify and remedy any concerns as early as you can during the semester. The more time we have to address concerns, the more likely it is that we will be able to resolve it in a way that allows you to be successful. If you wait until the end of the semester, there is little I can usually do to help at that point.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) Make sure you are familiar with all the information on TAMUCC’s Academic Honesty Policy at [http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=242#Academic_Honesty](http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=242#Academic_Honesty) and if you have any questions or are unclear about anything, by all means please talk with me or contact someone at the Center for Academic and Student Achievement (CASA) at [http://casa.tamucc.edu/](http://casa.tamucc.edu/) before engaging in any questionable behavior. In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero for the assignment or exam.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Friday, April 8th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Classroom/Professional Behavior**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.
Disability Services
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 disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Grade Appeals Process
Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.
Possible Topics for Research Paper

Emotional Intelligence
Schools of Thought and Theories Within Psychology
Play Therapy
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
Psychoanalysis
Mental Disorders/Abnormal Psychologies
   Examples: Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, Depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, Anxieties, etc
Overviews of Different Types of Psychology Professionals
Carl Jung
Alfred Adler
Sigmund Freud
Bowlby’s Theory of Attachment
Stress Reduction
Addictions
Stages of Lifespan Development
Stages of Personality Development
Historical Periods of Psychology
Research and Experimental Methods within Psychology
## COURSE SCHEDULE

*This is a tentative schedule, and is subject to change*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>CHAPTER READINGS</th>
<th>MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS &amp; EXAMS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 01/20-01/22</td>
<td>Welcome and Introduction to the course Research Methods</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2 01/25-01/29</td>
<td>Research Methods Neuroscience and Biological Foundations</td>
<td>Chapters 1&amp;2</td>
<td>Learning Team Topic Proposals- Due 01/29 Syllabus Quiz this week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 02/01-02/05</td>
<td>Stress and Health Psychology</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Learning Team Job Duties – Due 02/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 02/08-02/12</td>
<td>Sensation and Perception</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Exam 1 – Friday 02/12 (Chapters 1-4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5 02/15-02/19</td>
<td>States of Consciousness</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6 02/22-02/26</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7 02/29-03/04</td>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Exam 2 – Friday 03/04 (Chapters 5-7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8 03/07-03/11</td>
<td>Thinking, Language, and Intelligence</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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**SPRING BREAK March 14-18**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Life Span Development</th>
<th>Chapter 9</th>
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<tr>
<td>03/21-03/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Motivation and Emotion</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>03/28-04/01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/04-04/08</td>
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<td>Last Day to Drop Class (04/08)</td>
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<td>Exam 3 – Friday 04/08 (Chapters 8-11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Psychological Disorders</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
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<td>04/11-04/15</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Therapy</td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
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<td>04/18-04/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Social Psychology</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
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<td>04/25-04/29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Review</td>
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<td>05/02</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Review and Discussion for Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 05/11</td>
<td>Final Comprehensive Exam</td>
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<td>11am</td>
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