Spring 2008
PSYC 2301
Introduction to Psychology

13565 Lec 025   MW   9:10-10:25
13566 Lec 026   MW   10:35-11:50

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Instructional Materials:

Please note that the earlier editions of this textbook will not be adequate. There are significant differences between the 7th and 8th editions.

Purpose of the Course:
This course will introduce you to the topics that psychologists study, the methods they employ in studying them, and the major findings from their studies. We will also consider some of the ways in which psychologists apply the results of their research to the solution of personal and societal problems. You will have the opportunity to learn the basic terminology and principles that will enable you to take more advanced courses in psychology. My main goals for this course are to provide you with:
- a survey of the field of psychology and psychological principles;
- a solid foundation in theory and methodology; and
- opportunities for you to further develop your critical thinking and writing skills.

Methods of Instruction:
I will introduce each topic through a lecture. I expect you to listen intently, take notes, and check on your own comprehension while I lecture. I want you to feel free to ask questions or make comments at any time during these lectures. Your questions or comments will often move us into discussions related to the topic we are studying. I will also provide opportunities for us to have whole-class and small-group discussions. We will also watch a few video clips as time allows.

You will have occasional out-of-class assignments. Some of these assignments will require you to use a computer with an internet connection (computers are available at ACC for this purpose).
At the end of the semester, you will make presentations during which you will teach the class about a psychological concept.

**Course Requirements:**

- **Exams (300 points):**
  
  You will have three tests. The tests have a multiple-choice format, but there may be a few essay or short-answer questions included (you will know before each test whether any such items will be on your test). You need to bring your own machine-scoreable answer sheets (*the green scantrons*) and #2 pencils to each test.

  Test questions will come from assigned readings (regardless of whether they are covered in class), lectures, videos, and class discussions. Up to half of the test questions are likely to come from parts of your assigned readings that we haven’t specifically covered in class. I will lecture about the most important and/or difficult sections. You are expected to complete the readings at home, and use my office hours to ask for clarifications or further explanations when you need them. It is your responsibility to clarify your questions with me before the tests.

  Each of the three tests is worth 100 points. There are **no make-up tests**. Students who miss a test will be required to take a fourth test—a comprehensive final exam which will replace one missing test score. Students may also **choose** to take the comprehensive final to replace their lowest of the three test scores.

- **Class Attendance and Participation (100 points):**
  
  You will not benefit from the course if you are not here (physically or mentally). I check attendance every day. You are expected to attend every class and to be in class on time (two tardies will equal one absence), and you are expected to stay until class is dismissed (two early departures equal one absence).

  **You may have up to two absences considered excused without documentation. In order for me to excuse any absences after two, you must provide documentation of a valid reason for the absence (serious illness, for example).** If you accumulate two or more unexcused absences, I may ask you to withdraw from the course. Students who have perfect attendance (and no tardies) will get **10 extra-credit points** added to the total of their course points!

  A major part of your “attendance and participation” grade depends on the extent and quality of your participation in classroom discussions and activities. I would like you to be prepared for each class by having read the assigned materials and feeling ready to contribute to class discussions. If your behavior in class is disruptive or distracting to me or to other students, I will expect you to leave class upon my request.
Reflection Paper (100 points):
The purpose of a reflection paper is to help you organize your own thoughts (or reflections) about a topic we have covered in the course. By thinking about a psychological concept in a way that relates it to you (your opinions about it or how it applies in your life), you are more likely to understand and remember the concept (this is called the “self-referencing effect” in cognitive psychology).

A reflection paper is usually about two pages long. In a reflection paper you first briefly describe or explain a psychological theory in your own words, and then state your own opinion about it or give an example from your own experiences that demonstrates it.

The most important thing about these papers is that you must make a clear connection between the theories from class and your own experiences. Reflection papers that only summarize and rephrase the theories from the text, or that only state your own opinions and examples will not be sufficient. You have to make connections between the theories and your opinions or experiences.

You may choose any psychological concept to write about. A good topic for a reflection paper is one that you have a strong reaction to. For example, you may read about a psychological theory and think to yourself “Yes, I can see that! That’s just like when …” and remember an experience that is consistent with the theory. Or, on the contrary, you may think, “That’s just nonsense, because…..” and you think of several reasons you disagree with a theory. A third possibility is to think “I wonder how this theory or principal would relate to …….” or “I wonder what this theory or principal say about…….). When a psychological theory or principal makes you think about connections or makes you wonder about yourself or others, you know it’s a good topic for you to focus on for your reflection paper. You are likely to have a lot to say in these instances.

Your reflection paper is due the day of our 2\textsuperscript{nd} test.

Please see ***Important Requirements for All Written Work*** on page 6.
• **Paper and Presentation (100 points):**

You will form groups of 2 or 3 students to work together on this assignment. Your group chooses a topic related to psychological health from the list below (if you are interested in another topic not listed here, you may propose it for my approval). You then need to write a paper and make a presentation about your topic.

Your paper will have two sections, research and applied. You need to address the following in your paper:

- **Research Section:** Define the concept and the research about its relationship to psychological health (positive psychology). This part of your paper will look like a formal research paper that examines the research about this concept in depth.

  Your references must include a minimum of 4 academic sources. You may not use publications such as Readers Digest, Cosmopolitan, Psychology Today, etc. for your research. Your internet sources must also be proper academic sources.

- **Applied Section:** You have a choice about what you do in this section of your project.
  - you may try to implement ideas from research in this area of positive psychology in your own life and describe what happened (notice you must get a head start if this is your choice so you will have something to write about),
  - you can do an in-depth interview with someone who lives a “positive” life, or
  - you may create your own project. You must have your project approved before you begin.

Whichever is your choice for the applied section, you must relate what you did to the “research” section of the paper—how does your project fit in with what research says about this concept?

You must also keep detailed notes about your work as part of this project. You will use these notes to write the applied section of your paper and you will need to turn in your notes.
List of Topics for the Psychological Health Project:

1. Happiness
2. Self-esteem
3. Empathy
4. Friendship
5. Love
6. Achievement
7. Creativity
8. Music
9. Spirituality
10. Humor
11. Strengths
12. Flow and well-being
13. Hope, luck and optimism
14. Emotional intelligence
15. Creativity and creative thinking
16. Wisdom and decision-making
17. Meaning and purpose
18. Sleep
19. Yoga
20. Meditation
21. Exercise/Sports

Please see ***Important Requirements for All Written Work*** on page 6.
***Important Requirements for All Written Work***

The quality of your writing will certainly affect your grades on all written assignments. Please take advantage of the help available in ACC’s learning labs to polish your papers.

You must use the American Psychological Association’s (APA) format for your written work and documentation (refer to the “APA Documentation” page on the ACC library’s web site at http://library.austincc.edu/help/APA/

So that I can read your work and keep track of it, you must:

- type your papers using a 12 point Times New Roman font,
- double-space,
- leave 1.5 inch side-margins,
- have a cover page, on which you state:
  - your full name
  - Your class day and time (for example: M, W 9:10)
  - the submission date,
  - the label for the assignment (for example, reflection paper)
- If your document is more than one page long, you must staple all the pages together (I will not accept any multi-page document that is not stapled).
- If you use the Learning Lab at ACC (http://www.austincc.edu/tutor/), please have your tutor fill out a form for you. Then staple the form to the last page of your paper.

**Course Grade:**
Letter grades in the course (A - F) will be based on the total number of all the points you have earned on the required elements plus any points you may have received on the optional extra-credit assignments. Your grades in this course are not “curved”. It is possible for each of you to get an “A” in this course! Grade assignments will be based on the following point system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>540 &amp; higher</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>480 to 539</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>420 to 479</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360 to 419</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>359 or lower</td>
<td>F</td>
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**Academic Freedom**
You have the right to believe whatever you happen to believe (of course) and, within the appropriate constraints that follow from the organization of a course and its class discussions, to express those beliefs. In order to foster inquiry and the free exchange of ideas, we will all respect the views of others when expressed during such forums.
Your grades will never be based on your beliefs, but only on the quality of the psychological work you have performed and the clarity and coherence of your arguments and writing.

**“Incomplete” Grades:**

On very rare occasions, I may assign a temporary grade of “Incomplete” at the end of the semester. It is to your benefit to complete the course during the semester in which you are registered. Many students who are granted an “Incomplete” grade never complete the course and end up with an “F” in the subsequent semester. The following is from ACC Student Handbook:

“The grade of “I” (for incomplete) may be given by an instructor for a course in which a student was unable to complete all of the objectives for the passing grade. A grade of “I” cannot be carried beyond the established date in the following semester or session. Grades of “I” that are not resolved by the deadline will automatically be converted to a grade of “F.””

In order to receive a grade of “Incomplete” you must meet all of the following conditions:

- There is a valid reason for needing the delay (I will ask you to provide documentation supporting your reason).
- You request the incomplete grade *in writing* and complete the necessary forms at least 10 days before the last day of the semester.
- You have completed at least 2 of the exams with at least a "C" average.
- You have a grade of at least a “C” on your reflection paper.
- You have attended at least 60% of the class meetings.

**Withdrawals:**

If you decide not to attend class any more, you are responsible for withdrawing yourself. Failure to do this will result in an F on your academic record.

*New this academic year at all Texas state colleges and universities (for all courses):* A new law puts a brake on dropping classes at Texas state colleges and universities.

Starting this fall, students attending Texas public colleges can withdraw from no more than six courses during their undergraduate career. The withdrawal limit applies to first-time college students and follows them until they graduate. Current and returning students are not affected.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) at any ACC campus as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For further information regarding the OSD services visit them online at http://www.austincc.edu/support/osd/
**Scholastic Honesty:**
All work submitted in this course should be your own; any violations of ACC’s Student Code of Conduct regarding plagiarism or collusion will cause you to receive a **failing grade in this course** and to be referred to the Dean of Student Services. A record of this disciplinary action will remain a permanent part of your academic file.

**Plagiarism** is the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work or ideas and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one’s own work. **Collusion** is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course work.

For information regarding proper documentation refer to the “Documentation and Plagiarism” page on the ACC Library’s web site at

http://library.austincc.edu/help/documen/

**Questions, Comments:**
If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to talk to me. If there’s a problem, don’t let it bother you all semester; let’s work it out together.

**Tentative Course Schedule:**
Your interests will partly guide how much time we spend on a given topic. If you miss any classes, it is your responsibility to check with me or your classmates to be advised of any possible changes (including exam dates and chapter assignments) in our schedule.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction To Class</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to Psychology</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Research</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Test 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neuroscience Behavior</td>
<td>Chapter 3 (skip module 8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensation &amp; Perception</td>
<td>Chapter 4 (skip module 11 &amp; pages 113-118)</td>
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<tr>
<td>States of Consciousness</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Psychology</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Test 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Paper Is Due Today</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognition and Language</td>
<td>Chapter 8 (skip module 23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
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<td>Social Psychology</td>
<td>Chapter 17 (skip module 57)</td>
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<td>Psychological Disorders</td>
<td>Chapter 15 (skip module 48)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Chapter 13 (skip module 44)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Test 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<td>(papers &amp; presentations are due during the last two weeks of the semester.)</td>
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**Information for you to keep (update this as you get your test and paper grades back):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Your Points</th>
<th>Total course points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test 3</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Reflection paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc. extra-credit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Health Paper</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Health</td>
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<td>presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (without extra-credit)</td>
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