

Psychology 100-001: Basic Concepts in Psychology

Fall 2019

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Office Hours: Monday 12:00-1:00pm or by appointment.

Office Location: 2062 David King Hall

COURSE OVERVIEW: This is a survey course on the field of Psychological Science and is organized around five “big questions.” We will explore facts and concepts in the areas of human development, neuroscience, memory and learning, emotion, intelligence, personality and social psychology, clinical psychology, and stress and health. The emphasis will be on practical applications of these facts and concepts and becoming a critical consumer of psychology related information.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

E-Readings: [Noba Customized Textbook](#) (linked here and available free on the class Blackboard site). You may order a print copy at a low cost - info available on Blackboard.

The readings come from an open access educational resource, coordinated through the Noba Collection. This is the result of an effort to collect textbook material written by experts in various fields, and make that content freely available online. A collection of chapters has been customized for this course and is available to you through the course site on Blackboard. This is a digital book with links to websites and videos embedded into it. You can read it on any device, and can download a pdf. You can also order a paper copy if you prefer screen-less reading. If you do this, please be sure to visit the book site frequently to see the supplementary links.

Required Websites, Podcasts, and YouTube Videos: These are linked within the Discussion assignments when assigned.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify basic concepts and research findings and give examples of psychology’s integrative themes.
2. Apply psychological principles to everyday life
3. Draw appropriate, logical, and objective conclusions about behavior and mental processes from empirical evidence.
4. Evaluate misconceptions or erroneous behavioral claims based on evidence from psychological science.
5. Evaluate basic psychological research using knowledge of how research is designed and conducted.
6. Describe ethical principles that guide psychologists in research and therapy.

You will demonstrate your progress on these objectives through:

1. Participation in smaller group discussions on Blackboard where you will grapple with real-world questions through the application of psychological principles, produce a project on identity, and conduct a short behavior change project.
2. Performance on five exams throughout the semester.
3. Research Participation (SONA).

COURSE STRUCTURE/GRADING:

Discussion Board Assignments (40%): There will be one online assignment per unit (5 total). You will be placed in a group of approximately 20 students for online discussion assignments. The graduate student TA and I will participate in the discussions and you will be graded on your participation. They will require outside readings and/or small projects, and will require active thinking and application of the concepts we are learning in class. I will drop the lowest grade, so only four will count toward your final grade.

Exams (40%): There will be five exams, one per unit. The lowest exam grade will be dropped. If you must miss an exam, this is your dropped grade - so please save this for emergencies!

Exams will be in multiple-choice format and will cover material from the text and lectures. All exams in this course will be taken in the classroom using Blackboard and the Respondus Lockdown Browser, which must be downloaded from the Mason website. ***You must bring a device to class so that you can access and take the exam.*** Laptops are available for loan from the library - ***please plan ahead!*** If you come to the exam without a device, you will not be able to take it and you will earn a grade of zero.

Exit tickets (3%): For 3% of the grade, you must turn in at least three "exit tickets" through [this google form](#) (also linked in Blackboard). You may also earn *up to* 3 percentage points extra credit on your final grade when you turn in more than three (.5% per extra ticket). There will also be an opportunity to earn extra credit points by visiting a museum. More on this in the first few weeks.

Research Participation (7%): The psychology department believes that participation in psychological research can enhance your learning about the field. Therefore, for 7% of the grade, all students are required to serve for seven hours as participants in psychological research. For students who are not eligible or choose not to participate in research, attendance at alternative lectures also meets this requirement. Be sure to assign your research hours to the correct course and section (Psyc100-001) in order to receive credit. Unassigned or incorrectly assigned hours will not be credited toward your final grade. Available research studies can be found at <http://gmu.sona-systems.com>. *You can earn up to 12 SONA credits for 5 extra percentage points on your overall grade.*

Final Grade The final grade will be calculated using the percentages above, with 100% as the highest possible total grade. Letter grades will be assigned based on the standard format (scores of .5 and above are rounded up, anything below .5 is rounded down):

A+ 97%-100%
A 93%-96%
A- 90%-92%
B+ 87%-89%
B 83%-86%
B- 80%-82%

C+ 77%-79%
C 73%-76%
C- 70%-72%
D 60%-69%
F < 60%

TECHNOLOGY

Communication: All primary contact in the course will be via email and Blackboard; thus, you are required to check your Mason email account regularly and to keep your mailbox maintained so that messages will not be rejected for being over quota. You may forward GMU emails to other accounts, but emails to the instructor should come from your GMU account, to allow verification of your identity. For this course, *discussion assignments must be completed online* within Blackboard (see below). This is also where you will find the textbook and other information. In addition, you must sign up for required experiments/alternatives through the [Sona Systems website](#) or complete online alternatives via Blackboard (see Research Requirement Handout).

Blackboard: All of the materials for this course, including grades and the link to the textbook and the discussion board assignments can be found in Blackboard.. *It is extremely important to access Blackboard through the MyMason Portal ASAP – please follow these instructions:*

1. Go to <http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/>
2. Login using your Mason ID and password (the same one you use for your GMU email account)
3. Click on the 'Courses' tab (toward the top right of the screen)
4. Go to the list of courses entitled "Course List" (in the middle of the screen)
5. Click on the link for Psyc 100-001 (Summer 2019)
6. It is important to login and begin to explore the various components in the first days of the semester.

Exams: As stated above, all exams will be taken in the classroom using Blackboard and the Respondus Lockdown Browser. Laptops are available for loan from the library - ***please plan ahead!*** If you come to the exam without a device, you will not be able to take it and you will earn a grade of zero.

Technology in the Classroom: I will use slides, videos, etc. and will sometimes ask you to pull out a smartphone or other device for a class activity or to look something up. Students who prefer to use a device for note-taking are requested to sit in an area of the classroom designated for them - so that they do not distract other students with their screens.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance and Decorum: Class attendance is not recorded, but it is important for students who want to do well in PSYC100 to be in class and attentive. In addition to other important information, any extra credit opportunities will be announced in class.

In order to be attentive, please do not engage in any multi-tasking activities during class – that means no texting, e-mailing, web surfing, doing homework for other classes, etc. Engaging in such activities is distracting for those around you, and for the instructor. If you engage in these activities, and the instructor or other students find it distracting, you will be asked to leave the room.

Cellphones: ALL SOUNDS/VIBRATIONS OFF!!

If you must arrive late or leave early, please do so as quietly as possible and be considerate of your classmates by sitting near an exit.

Preparation: Class time will be more interesting and more meaningful for students who have done the reading in advance. I will *not* review all textbook content, but you are responsible for all of it for the exams. In class, I

will support your textbook learning with deeper explanations, examples, and activities to aid your understanding.

Class cancellation policy: In case class needs to be cancelled due to an unexpected event, students will be informed via email as soon as possible. If the class cancelled was a lecture class, an alternative (video, podcast, reading) will be posted to Blackboard as soon as possible. If an exam is cancelled, the exam will take place the following class and one lecture from the next chapter will be placed online. Currently, there is no exam scheduled during our final exam period. If more than one class is canceled, the entire schedule may shift so that we do have our last exam during the final period.

Late Work Policy: Late work will not be accepted. Documented extenuating circumstances will be considered – but if you plan your time wisely this will not be an issue. I DO NOT give extra credit under any circumstances, other than those extra credit points built in to the course. This policy is in place to protect you and not provide any classmate with an advantage you do not have.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in THE Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474”

HONOR CODE

I have a zero tolerance policy when it comes to plagiarism. If you are uncertain about if something needs to be cited, how to cite or if you have given adequate credit, ask me. If you want a general refresher, the Mason library has [a short video here](#).

HINT: If you google the discussion questions and use words or phrases from outside sources without giving credit, I WILL figure this out and you WILL fail the assignment or the entire course.

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. It is every student’s responsibility to familiarize himself or herself with the Honor Code. [The Honor Code is available HERE](#). It states, among other sanctions, that in the event that a student cheats by plagiarizing the work of someone else, the instructor may assign an F grade for that assignment, and/or fail the student for the course.

(course schedule on next page)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class.

Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes

- **9/3 last day to add classes**
- **9/9 last day to drop classes with no tuition penalty**
- **9/17 last day to drop with tuition penalty**

After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

[Full Course Schedule is at this link](#). I will notify you of changes but you are responsible for looking at the schedule on a regular basis. Exam schedule here:

Unit and Big Question	Exam	Date
1: How Do I Succeed in this Course?	Exam 1	9/18
2: What Makes Us, US?	Exam 2	10/9
3: Why is it so hard to change behavior?	Exam 3	10/28
4: What is the big deal about climate change (and why are we talking about it in Psychology?)	Exam 4	11/13
5: Why are there so many social injustices?	Exam 5	12/4

*I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule.