

Basic Concepts in Psychology

FALL 2020 | PSYC 100 | SECTION DL1

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a survey course on the field of Psychological Science. 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 course is entirely online with no required class meetings. This course meets the Mason Core requirement in the Social and Behavioral Sciences category.

Professor: *Dr. Alison Melley*



Drop in Student Hours: Tuesday 1-3 pm Thursday 10-12am. Link in Blackboard.



amelley@gmu.edu

Make an Appointment: <https://calendly.com/amelley/15min>

Ask Anything Zoom: Every Other **Wednesday 1:00 pm**

MASON CORE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors;
2. Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs;
3. Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and

COURSE-LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

OVERVIEW

These are the major components of this course:

1. Class Participation
2. Readings/Videos
3. Group Work Discussions
4. Pre-tests and Practice Quizzes
5. Exams
6. Research
7. "Ask me anything" on Zoom

REQUIRED READINGS

The major readings come from two open access educational resources, which are 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 in Blackboard.

Supplementary readings, videos, and podcasts are posted on the course site.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The following are the course activities and assignments



Introductions/Class Participation (8%)

The first few days of the course is dedicated to, becoming familiar with the online learning environment, getting to know each other, and setting you up for success. This part of the course is so important that you will earn 5% of your grade just in these beginning activities! As a class, you will earn 3% of your grade as you continue to engage and participate in the course throughout the semester.



Readings/Videos

Each week you will read the textbook chapter(s) assigned in Blackboard.

These readings are carefully selected to be accessible for an introductory psychology student. Lecture videos and other content will supplement these readings to enhance your understanding.



Exams (30%)

There is one timed online exam for each module, 5 total, and an optional cumulative Final Exam that can replace your lowest exam grade or an exam that you missed.



Pre-tests/Retrieval Practice (25%)

At the beginning of each sub-unit in Blackboard, there will be a pre-test that is identical to the quiz at the end of the section (5%). These are scored for completion rather than accuracy. Retrieval Practice Quizzes (20%) are untimed and taken at the end of each sub-unit and will be scored immediately. If you are not happy with your score, you make retake it and an average of the two quizzes will be your final score.



Group Work Discussions (30%)

In every module there are group work assignments that are intended to help you learn the material. Your engagement and effort are what is graded rather than the specific outcome. These are done in an app called Perusall, and you will be assigned to work with a different group of students for each one. The goal of these assignments is to help you work through the material to learn it well.



Research Participation (7%)

Psychological science depends on research to advance the field, and the department believes that participation can enhance your learning about the field. Therefore, all students are required to serve for seven hours as participants in psychological research (there are online studies available). For students who choose not to participate in research, there is an alternative reading assignment with either a quiz or a written review. More information can be found in Blackboard and at <http://gmu.sona-systems.com> where you must create a new account each semester.



Ask Me Anything Zoom Meetings

Every other week (more if needed) I will hold a Zoom meeting with all three of my PSYC 100 sections together.

These will be held “webinar” style – I will take questions before the meeting and during the meeting via chat. We can talk about anything you want related to course structure, course content, global issues, being a psychology major, how you can use psychology in *your* major, whatever you want! Engagement in these meetings and sending questions will be a part of your class “community building” grade.



Learning in a time of Global Crisis

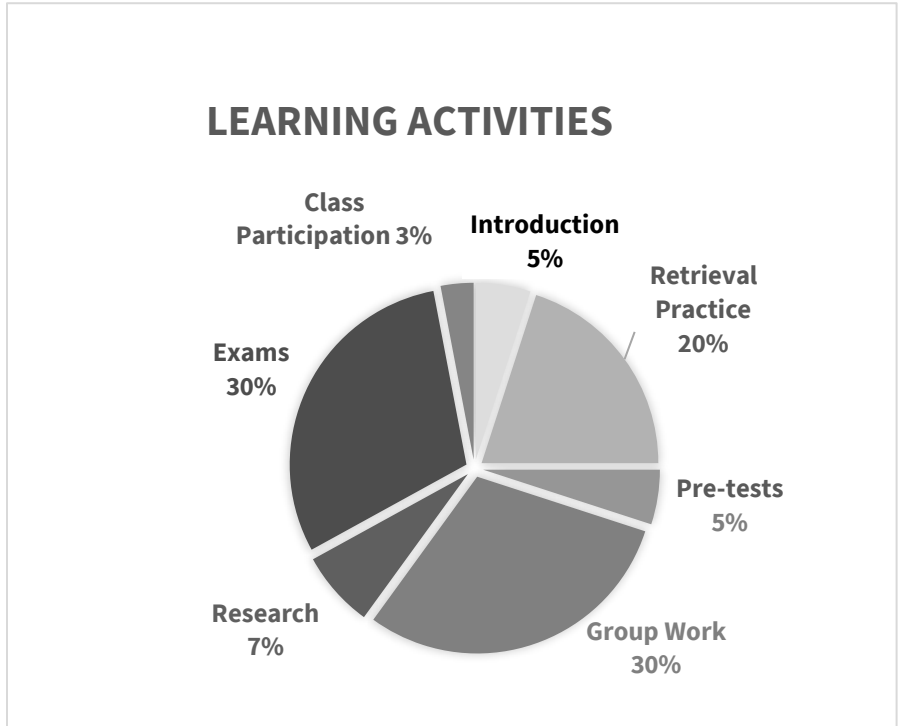
Below are listed my usual course policies. However, this is not a “usual” time. I fully understand that more of us than ever will face new obstacles, or old obstacles in novel ways, during this time. Please communicate with me if such things are getting in your way in this class. My goal is to facilitate your growth and success in this strange and uncertain time; I can only do that if you tell me what is happening.

GRADING POLICIES

The grading scale and points allocated per assignment are shown below.

Grading Scale

| Final Grade | % |
|-------------|-----------|
| A+ | 97 - 100% |
| A | 94 - 96% |
| A- | 90 - 93% |
| B+ | 87 - 89% |
| B | 84 - 86% |
| B- | 80 - 83% |
| C+ | 77 - 79% |
| C | 74 - 76% |
| C- | 70 - 73% |
| D | 60 - 69% |
| F | <60% |



Extra Credit/Dropping Lowest Grades/Final Exam

There are a few built-in opportunities for extra credit. This will include a midterm survey, a Top Ten list at the end of the semester, and a few other activities offered to the entire class. Do not ask me for other opportunities for extra credit.

Also, your lowest Group work grade, lowest Retrieval Practice grade, and one Pre-test grade will be dropped. This occurs at the very beginning of the course so that your final grade for these items *always* has the lowest one dropped. That one will be added back in if you score lower or miss one of these activities. Finally, you are able to replace *one* module exam with the final exam.

Late Work

Pre-tests cannot be accessed after the due date. Quizzes and Exams are due by end of day (11:59pm) on the due date. If you miss this deadline, 5 points are deducted for each half day that they are late. For example, if it is submitted at 12:05 am (just after midnight), 5 points are deducted. If it is done after 12pm (noon) but before midnight on the day after it is due, 10 points (the equivalent of one letter grade) are deducted. Do not ask for extensions. I understand that students are juggling many things in their lives which is why I build in the dropped grades and late deductions. I have over 450 PSYC100 students and creating exceptions for each is not possible so I build the flexibility into the course policies. I will provide plenty of reminders so you can stay on track.



POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

The following describe various policies that will be in place this semester.

Technology

This course is conducted via Blackboard. Assignments and quizzes must be completed online. If your wifi connection is weak or if you will be away from the internet for a length of time, it is your responsibility to plan ahead and complete work before you leave.

Withdrawal and Refund Dates

It is the student's responsibility to drop a course. Non-participation or failure to pay does not constitute official withdrawal. To view specific deadlines, log into your MyMason account: 1) Click on "My Class Schedule" under Student Quick Links 2) Select the current term 3) Click on "View Drop Deadline Dates" at the bottom of the page. You can find the academic calendar with these dates here: https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall_2020/

Student Privacy Statement

At times, students may disclose personal information in class discussions. It is expected that the class will respect the privacy of classmates just as you would if we were in a face to face classroom. The personal information disclosed in this class should not be repeated outside of the course.

Accommodations

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in The Student Union Building I (SUB I). Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474.

Academic Misconduct

George Mason's honor code, requires all community members to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are prohibited. It is every student's responsibility to familiarize himself or herself with the honor code. [The honor code is available HERE](#). In the event that a student cheats by plagiarizing, the instructor may assign an F grade for the assignment, and/or for the course.

Civility (Non-Academic Misconduct)

Please remember that we are members of a larger learning community where excellence is achieved through civility. Our actions affect everyone in our community. Please be respectful of others regardless of gender, age, race, culture, religion, or sexual orientation. It is expected that all students will follow general "netiquette" in online work. For example:

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Individuals who engage in disruptive online behaviors such as posting disrespectful or hostile comments, posting inappropriate comments, or shouting (using all capitals) may have their online access privileges revoked and/or may receive an F for the class.

Title IX: George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support.

[University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct](#) details Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students. Any faculty or staff member is required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator, but please know that this will result only in someone reaching out to you directly to let you know about available services and to determine if you wish to take any action. You can also contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380) to speak to someone confidentially, as those offices are not required to report disclosures. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; titleix@gmu.edu).

Holidays/College Closures

In general, online classes continue in the event of weather-related or other closures. Please check the calendar for any holidays that may affect your work:

<https://ulife.gmu.edu/religious-holiday-calendar/>.

You are expected to submit before a due date that falls on a holiday that you observe.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

You can expect to earn an A in this class. Do the following and you will succeed!

Readings/Videos/Links

Do the readings, watch the videos, and take notes as you go. After you read or watch, try to summarize (out loud or writing). This helps you remember what you just learned.

Pre-tests and Retrieval Practice

Research on learning tells us that previewing and frequent retrieval practice helps you learn the concepts better. Knowing the concepts well helps you with understanding and applying at a higher level. This can make classes more enjoyable too!

Managing your Time

You are expected to spend 10-15 hours per week on this course. PRINT the schedule and mark off each item as you complete it. If you begin to fall behind talk to me about how best to get back on track. *If a crisis emerges, contact me *immediately** - I cannot accommodate your emergency if you wait until afterwards to talk to me.

Research

Try to complete some of your hours in the beginning of the semester. Most students find this interesting! You are responsible for keeping track of the appointment time, location, and experimenter information. As soon as you are finished, submit your summary in Blackboard.

Grades

Grades are kept on Blackboard. Group Work grades are transferred after each unit deadline. If you have a question or concern, please contact me immediately, not at the end of the course.

Collegiate Compassion

I believe we learn best when we can show up as whole and healthy people. To learn effectively we need to have basic security: a roof over our head, a safe place to sleep, a stable place to live, and enough food to eat. If you are struggling to meet any of these basic needs please talk to me, visit our campus food pantry:

<https://ssac.gmu.edu/patriot-pantry/> or other Mason resources <https://learningservices.gmu.edu/campus-resources/>. Asking for assistance and advocating for yourself is an important part of your collegiate experience. You are not alone!

Email/Announcements

Emails will be sent to your GMU email. Course announcements are emailed and posted in the Announcements on Blackboard. Check email regularly. I recommend having your school email linked to your cell phone and turn on notifications. I will make every effort to respond to emails within 48 hours. I expect you will extend the same courtesy.

Come “see” me!

Send questions (link in Blackboard) and attend “Ask Anything.” Stop by office hours or make an appointment for 1:1 conversation.

Wellness

If you are experiencing feelings of anxiety, panic, depression, sadness during the semester, Student Health Services (703-993-2831) and Counseling and Psychological Services Offices (703-993-2380) provides a range of resources to assist and support you. Students can call or walk-in during open hours. If you or someone you know experiences a mental health crisis or emergency, seek help immediately. Call 911 for local emergency services, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255), or text the Crisis Text Line (741-741) anytime. I am also available to speak with you about stresses related to your work in my course.



Personal Success!!!

Please utilize me as a resource to help you succeed, both in class and outside class. I want you to earn the grade that you want and enjoy this class, do well in college, and still have a life with your friends, family, job, and hobbies. If one or more of those things are not happening, please talk to me so we can work together to figure out a plan to improve your situation.

PSYC 100 Fall 2020 Course Schedule

| Module | | Topic | To Read/Do | Graded Assignments | Due Date |
|--|---|--|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH METHODS | A | Introduction, Overview, Subfields of Psychology | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> History of Psychology Overview Careers, Subfields Submit questions and join Ask Anything Wednesday at 1pm | *Pre-test 1a Syllabus Q&A Honor Code Intro Video Study Skills Video | Fri 8/28 |
| | | | | Group Work: Introductions Quiz 1a | Tue 9/1 |
| | B | Empiricism & Research <i>Labor Day 9/7</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Why Science? Thinking Like a Scientist Research Designs Videos | *Pre-test 1b Group Work 1.1 Quiz 1b | Fri 9/4 Tue 9/8 |
| | C | Empiricism & Research <i>Final Drop Deadline 9/15</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Internal/External Validity Video Exam Prep Video Submit questions and join Ask Anything Wednesday at 1pm | Group Work 1.2 Module 1 Exam (untimed) | Tue 9/15 |
| 2 BIOLOGICAL BASES OF BEHAVIOR | A | Biopsychology | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Brain & Nervous System Peripheral Nervous System Videos | *Pre-test 2a Group Work 2.1 Quiz 2a | Fri 9/18 Tue 9/22 |
| | B | Sensation & Perception <i>Final Withdrawal Deadline 9/28</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sensation & Perception Inattentional Blindness Videos Submit questions and join Ask Anything Wednesday at 1pm | *Pre-test 2b Group Work 2.1 Quiz 2b | Fri 9/25 Tue 9/29 |
| | C | Consciousness | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> States of Consciousness Submit questions and join Ask Anything Wednesday at 1pm | *Pre-test 2c Quiz 2c Module 2 Exam | *Fri 10/2 Tue 10/6 |
| 3 COGNITIVE & AFFECTIVE BASES OF BEHAVIOR | A | Memory <i>Fall Break 10/12</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Memory Forgetting & Amnesia Eyewitness Testimony Brain Exercises Video | *Pre-test 3a Group Work 3.1 Quiz 3a | Fri 10/9 Tue 10/13 |
| | B | Cognition | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking Language Intelligence Brain Games Video Submit questions and join Ask Anything Wednesday at 1pm | *Pre-test 3b Group Work 3.2 Quiz 3b | Fri 10/16 Tue 10/20 |
| | C | Motivation & Emotion | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Motivation Emotion | *Pre-test 3c Quiz 3c Module 3 Exam | Fri 10/23 Tue 10/27 |

| Module | | Topic | To Read/Do | Graded Assignments | Due Date |
|--|---|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 4 INTERNAL & EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON BEHAVIOR | A | Development | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cognitive Development Social/Emotional Development Videos | *Pre-test 4a Group Work 4.1 Quiz 4a | Fri 10/30 Tue 11/3 |
| | B | Personality | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Personality Traits The Psychodynamic Perspective Personality Assessment Submit questions and join Ask Anything Wednesday at 1pm | *Pre-test 4b Group Work 4.2 Quiz 4b | Fri 11/6 Tue 11/10 |
| | C | Learning | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Video | *Pre-test 4c Quiz 4c Module 4 Exam | Fri 11/13 Tue 11/17 |
| 5 NORMAL AND ABNORMAL FUNCTIONING | A | Social Psychology | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Social Psychology Bias Prejudice, Discrimination, Stereotyping Conformity and Obedience Persuasion Submit questions and join Ask Anything Wednesday at 1pm | *Pre-test 5a Quiz 5a | Fri 11/20 Tue 11/24 |
| | B | Psychological Disorders <i>Thanksgiving Break 11/26-27</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Psychopathology Overview Mood Disorders Anxiety and Related Disorders Schizophrenia & Spectrum Disorders Personality Disorders Videos | *Pre-test 5b !Thanksgiving! Quiz 5b | Fri 11/27 Tue 12/1 |
| | C | Psychological Theories | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Therapeutic Orientations Psychopharmacology Psychopharmacology Examples Videos Submit questions and join Ask Anything Wednesday at 1pm | *Pre-test 5c Quiz 5c | Fri 12/4 Tue 12/8 |
| FINAL EXAM (optional) | | | DUE Friday 12/11 11:59PM | | |

Schedule is subject to change – I will provide plenty of notice.