**Biopsychology Lab**

**PSYC 373-203 (Spring 2021)**

**Instructor:** Aaron Booth

**E-mail:** [Abooth5@gmu.edu](mailto:Abooth5@gmu.edu)

**Office Hours**: Friday 1:00 – 2:00 PM or by appointment

**Goals of Lab:** The primary goal of this lab is for students to become familiar with brain structure and function through lectures and dissection videos/activities. The course will begin with a broad survey of cellular neuroscience, behavioral neuroscience, and histology. The course will then focus on the specific structures found in sheep brain/eye dissections, including location and function.

**Optional Text:**

Cooley, R.K., & Vanderwolf, C.H. (2001). The Sheep Brain: A Basic Guide. A.J. Kirby Co.: London. **(not required)**

**Attendance/Lecture Videos:** Instead of strict times for meeting online, multiple lecture/lab videos will be posted for each week. The material covered in the videos will be the basis of quizzes, exams, and lab reports. As such it is extremely important that everyone watches all the lecture/lab videos throughout the course. Videos will be posted at the start of each week. To make sure that everyone is watching the videos, I will include a passphrase at a random point in each lecture video (9 times total). An assignment labeled “Attendance” will be posted on Blackboard. To receive credit for that class you will need to type in the passphrase by 11:59 PM Friday. Attendance will be worth 10% of your total grade.

**Quizzes:** The quizzes will be based on lecture material covered in class. This will cover the information not directly tied to the dissection itself. As such, these quizzes will not require identification of brain structures as observed through dissection unless specifically stated. Quizzes will be open notebook, with no strict time limit, however, they should be worked on individually, without the help of others. There will be 2 quizzes total, with each individual quiz being worth 5% of your total grade.

**Lab Reports:** Students will be asked to complete eight lab reports throughout the course. These lab reports will be a mix of short answer questions and brain structure identification. Each individual report is worth 5% of your total grade (40% total).

**Lab Practical Exams:** These exams consist of identification and/or questions regarding brain structures. A PowerPoint with images of pinned brain structure will be provided. Students will have at least 24 hours to complete the exam. Exams will be open notebook, with no strict time limit, however, they should be worked on individually, without the help of others. There will be 2 practical exams total, Practical 1 will cover Brain Tours I & II and is worth 15% of your total grade. Practical II is a cumulative final, and will cover Brain Tours I, II, III, IV, as well as the eye dissection, and is worth 25% of your total grade. Mock Practicals will be assigned the week before the Practical. These Mock Practicals will not be worth points, and will instead be practice tests to prepare for the actual Practical.

**Policy Regarding Late Assignments:** Permission to postpone a quiz/exam or to turn in an assignment late will only be given for very important reasons. **All quizzes/practical exams that are missed without prior approval (e.g. ODS, family emergency, etc.) will receive an automatic 0. Lab reports turned in late will immediately receive 10% off the maximum possible score, with a further 10% taken off for every 24 hours it is late. Attendance/Lecture video passphrases turned in late will receive a 50%.**

**The GMU honor code will be strictly enforced.** Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor System and Code (<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>). Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the University Honor Board and/or penalized. **All assignments should be completed individually, without the help of classmates or other peers. This includes, quizzes, lab reports, and lab practical exams.** I reserve the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

**Class Cancellation Policy:** Due to unforeseen circumstances classes may be cancelled. An email will be sent prior to class to notify any class cancellations. In order to account for cancelled classes, the course schedule is subject to change.

**Official Communications via GMU E-Mail:** Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

**Technology Statement:** Required knowledge of technology for this course includes ability to retrieve documents, watch videos, and turn in assignments sent either through GMU email or posted on Blackboard (mymasonportal.gmu.edu).

**Students with Disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474.  All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**All Assignments are due by 11:59 PM of the scheduled due date unless otherwise stated over email**

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| **Date** | **Tentative Course Schedule:** | **Assignments** **Due:** |
| 1/25 | Syllabus Overview  Lecture 1: Introduction to Biopsychology | 1/29: Lecture 1 Attendance |
| 2/1 | Lecture 2: Action Potentials  Lab Report 1 Guide: MetaNeuron | 2/5: Lecture 2 Attendance  2/7: Lab Report 1  2/7: Quiz 1 |
| 2/8 | Lecture 3: Histology | 2/12: Lecture 3 Attendance  2/14: Lab Report 2 |
| 2/15 | Lecture 4: Behavioral Neuroscience | 9/19: Lecture 4 Attendance  2/21: Lab Report 3 |
| 2/22 | Lecture 5: Brain Tour I (Surface Structures) | 2/26: Lecture 5 Attendance  2/28: Lab Report 4 |
| 3/1 | Lecture 6: Brain Tour II (Cranial Nerves) | 3/5: Lecture 6 Attendance  3/7: Lab Report 5 |
| 3/8 | Mock Practical 1 | 3/12: Mock Practical 1 (Optional) |
| 3/15 | Practical 1 | 3/19: Practical 1 |
| 3/22 | Lecture 7: Visual System (Eye Dissection) | 3/26: Lecture 7 Attendance  3/28: Lab Report 6  3/28: Quiz 2 |
| 3/29 | Lecture 8: Brain Tour III (Midsagittal Cut) | 4/2: Lecture 8 Attendance  4/4: Lab Report 7 |
| 4/5 | Lecture 9: Brain Tour Part IV (Coronal Cut) | 4/9: Lecture 9 Attendance  4/11: Lab Report 8 |
| 4/12 | Mock Practical 2 | 4/16: Mock Practical 2 (Optional) |
| 4/19 | Practical 2 Available | 4/23: Practical 2 |

**Important dates:**

Last day to add a class: Feb 1

Last day to drop a class with 100% refund: Feb 12

Selective withdrawal period: Mar 2 – Apr 1

**Grading Scale**

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| --- | --- |
| **97% - 100%** | **A+** |
| **93% - 96%** | **A** |
| **90% - 92%** | **A-** |
| **87% - 89%** | **B+** |
| **83% - 86%** | **B** |
| **80% - 82%** | **B-** |
| **77% - 79%** | **C+** |
| **73% - 76%** | **C** |
| **70% - 72%** | **C-** |
| **60%-69%** | **D** |
| **59%-Lower** | **F** |

**Grades will be rounded up from .5%. For example, an 89.50% would become an A-, however, an 89.49 would become a B+**

**Grading:**

Attendance/9 Lecture Video Response: 10% (1% each + 1 free point)

2 Quizzes: 10% (5% each)

8 Lab Reports: 40% (5% each)

Lab Practical 1: 15%

Lab Practical 2 (cumulative): 25%