



Department of Psychology  
PSY 115 – Introductory Psychology – Instructor: Jake Kurczek – Fall 2013

## Psychology: 115

# Introductory Psychology

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Stuart 103  
Coe College  
**Department of Psychology**

T/Th 8:00 – 9:20; 9:30 – 10:50

Fall 2013

**Instructor:** Jake Kurczek  
**Office:** Stuart 110  
**Phone:** 319-399-8059  
**E-mail:** [jkurczek@coe.edu](mailto:jkurczek@coe.edu)  
**Office Hours:** T/Th 7:00 – 8:00 AM, 10:50 – 12:00 PM  
and by appointment

**Textbook:** Ciccarelli, S. & White, J. (2010). *Psychology: An exploration* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed), Boston, MA: Pearson.

**Class Website:** You will be able to find PDFs of the lectures and discussions posted on Moodle.

## Course Goals and Overview

*From the Course Catalogue:*

Basic concepts, theories, and methods in the study of behavior and mental processes. Provides a basic understanding of psychology for interested students, who may take this as their only course in psychology, as well as for future majors.

*Additional Notes:*

While the study of the brain and mind has occurred for thousands of years, only with the advent of various techniques in the past few hundred years has our ability to understand human cognition from a biological perspective matched our ability to question the human brain and mind. Psychology as a discipline was only coined just 300 years, while experimental psychology began just over 100 years ago. The goals of the course are:

- To provide basic background on the study of psychology.
- To pique the interest of students who are planning to major in the psychology or are undecided



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- To provide an understanding of the methods and principles of the scientific process for those not continuing with this subject.
- To provide a strong preparation for the upper level courses in psychology. Most of you are probably aware that this course is required for taking any upper level course in psychology.

### Course Requirements and Policies

1. **Course web page.** Lecture slides, assignments and readings are available on the course web page - moodle.
2. **Lecture Attendance.** Students are required –and expected - to attend all of the classes for this course. While I will not enforce a daily attendance policy, a failure to attend will reflect poorly in your participation/question portion of your final grade.
3. **Absences and Make-ups.** It is expected that you will take each examination at the scheduled time. A make-up exam can be taken only for excused absences. Unless highly unusual circumstances prevail, approval for excused absences must be obtained prior to the scheduled exam. If you fail to take an examination (an unexcused absence), you will receive a score of zero for that exam.
4. **Posting of Lectures:** PDF’s of the lectures will be posted on the Moodle page for your reference. I will do my best to post lectures within 24 hours after the lecture.
5. **Grading.** Grades will be based on the total points shown above. It is likely that the final grades for the course will be curved at the end of the semester. The implication of this is that grade values will not be assigned for each exam/assignment. I will do my part to try to provide guidance for how the grading scale will approximate. In the event that overall grade averages are high, the scale will be no more strict than as follows:

<b>A</b>	<b>93% and above</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>80-82%</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>67-69%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>90-92</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>77-79%</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>63-66%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>87-89%</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>73-76%</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>60-62%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>83-86%</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>70-72%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>59% and below</b>

6. **Late Work:** Late assignments will be docked 10% for everyday after the assigned due date.



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7. **Examinations.** There will be four exams. The exam questions may include the following question formats: multiple-choice; fill-in-the-blank; matching; true/false; and short-answer sections.

Exam 1	= 50 pts	8.3%
Exam 2	= 100 pts	16.7%
Exam 3	= 100 pts	16.7%
Exam 4	= 100 pts	16.7%
Questions/Participation	= 60 pts	10.0%
Critical Thinking Journal	= 40 pts	6.7%
Presentations	= 40 pts	6.7%
Wiki	= 160 pts	26.7%
Reflection	= 50 pts	8.3%
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	= 600 pts	100%

Everything that is presented in lecture and in the chapter readings will be fair game for the exams. Note also, that some of the lecture material will be non-overlapping with the textbook, as lectures are designed to augment, or expand upon, the chapter readings.

8. **Assignments.** As a class, we will create a web-based resource for students and adults to learn about the college experience. My thinking is that this resource will help others adapt to coming to college. Others who are eager to learn about psychology and college should have access to this material for teaching and learning alike.

- **Wiki.** A wiki of the psychology topic of your choice should be designed for a general audience.
  - This wiki should include the following aspects
    - An introduction to the topic
    - How it relates to psychology
    - Why is it important
    - Activities that can teach you more about the topic (e.g. games, demonstrations, other resources)
- **Reflection Paper.** Students are asked to write a 3 page, double-spaced reflection paper reacting to the experience of researching a topic and what the process was like. Also, discuss why the topic is significant to people in general.
- **News Updates.** Students will be asked to give 2 presentations of 3-5 minute each on topics of their choice across the semester. These presentations will



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give students an opportunity to summarize either a current event or research finding and discuss how it relates to psychology.

- **Questions.** Students should post any questions from the assigned reading before class in the moodle discussion forum. *These are due by 11:59PM the night before lecture.* This could also take the form of post about an article or study that you find interesting and related to psychology. I will do my best to look for themes and answer them in the lecture. Additionally, students should be aware that I will post questions to moodle. Each question will be open for one week and students are expected to answer 5 across the semester.
- **Critical Thinking Journal.** Over the course of the semester I will ask students to respond to questions in-class. You must be present in order to receive credit. If you will be absent any given day, make sure to send me an e-mail *before* class.

**Extra Credit.** Students can earn extra credit towards their final grade through two ways: Students who participate in research are eligible for extra credit. Students not interested in participating in research may find an article related to psychology and write a 2 page, double spaced paper on the study with an overview of the study, how it relates to biopsychology and your critique of the study. Please also include an APA citation of the study. Additionally, other opportunities may arise.

9. **Cell phones, etc.** Please turn off or silence all electronic devices during class. I will remember to do the same.
10. **Students with disabilities.** If you need any special accommodations due to a disability, please see me after class and/or contact the **Academic Achievement Program (Phone: x8547)**. Reasonable and appropriate accommodations will be arranged.
11. **Getting Help.** If you find that you are having difficulties with the any of the material please contact me as soon as possible! Do not wait until late in the course. It is difficult to significantly improve your grade if there is only a few weeks left in the course. I am happy to help you. If you are not able to see me during office hours we can make other arrangements. Tutoring is available through the [Academic Achievement Program](#) (Phone: x8547).
12. **Academic Integrity.** At Coe College, we expect academic integrity of all members of our community. Academic integrity assumes honesty about the nature of one's work



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in all situations. Such honesty is at the heart of the educational enterprise and is a pre-condition for intellectual growth. Academic dishonesty interferes with the mission of the College and will be treated with the utmost seriousness as a violation of community standards.

Cheating, plagiarism, deliberately impeding other students' work and misuse of common academic property, in the libraries, labs, and elsewhere are all forms of academic dishonesty and will be subject to one or more of the following sanctions:

- 1) failure of the assignment, i.e. exam, paper, lab report, etc.
- 2) failure of the class
- 3) suspension or expulsion

**Important Dates**

First Day of Classes	August 26th
Labor Day	September 2nd
Topic Due	September 3rd
Exam 1	September 10th
Fall Break	October 7 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Exam 2	October 10th
Daylight Savings	November 3rd
Exam 3	November 12th
Thanksgiving Break	November 26 <sup>th</sup> – December 2nd
Wiki Due	December 3rd
Reflection Paper Due	December 6th
Last Day of classes	December 9 <sup>th</sup>
Reading Day	December 10 <sup>th</sup>
Exam 4	8:00AM - December 11 <sup>th</sup> , 8:00 AM 9:30AM - December 14 <sup>th</sup> , 8:00 AM

**Schedule of Lecture Topics and Assigned Readings\***

Unit	Date	Topic	Assignment
Unit 1 – CH 1	8-27	Science of Psychology/Intro	Chapter 1
	8-29	How to Research	
	9-2	NO CLASS	<i>LABOR DAY</i>
CH 2	9-3	The Biological Perspective	<b>Topic/Proposal Due</b>
	9-5	The Biological Perspective	
	9-10		<b>EXAM 1</b>
Unit 2 CH 3	9-12	Sensation and Perception	<b>Start Presentations</b>
	9-17	Sensation and Perception	



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CH 4	9-19	Learning	
	9-24	Learning	
CH 5	9-26	Memory	
	10-1	Memory	
	10-3	Memory	
	10-8	NO CLASS	<i>FALL BREAK</i>
	10-10		<b>EXAM 2</b>
Unit 3 CH 6	10-15	Consciousness and Cognition	
	10-17	Consciousness and Cognition	
CH 7	10-22	Development	<b>Send Wiki to Partner</b>
CH 8	10-24	Motivation and Emotion	
	10-29	Motivation and Emotion	<b>Send Feedback</b>
CH 9	10-31	Stress and Health	
	11-5	Stress and Health	
CH 10	11-7	Social Psychology	
	11-12		<b>EXAM 3</b>
Unit 4	11-14	Social Psychology	
CH 11	11-19	Personality and Intelligence	
	11-21	Personality and Intelligence	
CH 12	11-26	Psychological Disorders	
	11-28	NO CLASS	<i>THANKSGIVING</i>
	12-3	Psychological Disorders	<b>Wiki Due</b>
	12-5	Evaluation/Review	
	12-6		<b>Reflection Due</b>
	12/11	8:00 T/Th – 8:00 AM	<b>EXAM 4</b>
	12/14	9:30 T/Th – 8:00 AM	

\*Tentative schedule subject to change without notice as instructor deems necessary



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### Wiki Project

You will be asked to create a wiki. Wiki topic choice and proposal will be due by September 3rd. The wiki will be due on December 3rd, 2013.

Through your wiki, you will have the opportunity to explore a topic of your interest in psychology in greater depth. I want you to be able to explore an area that *you* are interested in, so I am giving you some freedom in selecting your topics. You may decide to expand topic discussed in class or in the book, create a variation of a topic from one of these sources, or choose a completely different topic.

Things to include in your wiki:

- 1) Background information
- 2) The formal question or purpose for your wiki. This should relate to why your topic is important for college students.
- 3) Your own response/motivation for choosing the topic. Why is this topic important to you as a college student.
- 4) An organized and informed response to the question using a *minimum of 8* psychology journal articles (6 must be empirical – meaning they include actual research studies with a methods section) to support your conclusions. Avoid simply stating what each article contributes individually, rather discuss how the article helps answer your question, how the articles agree or disagree with one another, and how they agree or disagree with your own initial response.
- 5) A minimum of 4 multimedia resources. These could include pictures, graphs/tables or videos.
- 6) An activity (e.g. games, demonstrations, other resources, etc.) that helps people learn about your topic.
- 7) What conclusion would you draw after considering all of the sources thoughtfully and in an integrated way? What should be done or addressed in the future? Why is the topic significant?

\* On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, please post to the forum a paragraph with your topic choice and the reason you chose it and how it relates to both psychology and is important for college students

\*You are also asked to send your wiki to a classmate on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, they will provide feedback on your wiki by October 29<sup>th</sup>.



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Potential Project Topics

***College***

Stress

Depression

Decision Making

Self-reliance

Love/Relationships

Social Media/Communication

Ethical/Moral Judgment

Values/Beliefs

Diversity (Cultural/Ethnic etc)

LGBTQ

Independence

Time-management

Self-identity

Financial challenges

Social/peer pressure

Expectations

Homesickness

Sleep

Exercise

Diet

Anxiety

Learning Disabilities

Learning/Memorization

Trauma

Concussions (as they relate to performance in the classroom)

Schizophrenia (particularly its emergence during college age and its effect on classroom/relationship performance)

Creativity

Leadership





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### **Presentations**

Students will be asked to give 2 presentations that are each 3-5 minutes on topics of their choice. The goal of this presentation is to get students comfortable with speaking to an audience of peers and preparing PowerPoint slides. Students will be asked to submit 3-5 slides to me via e-mail by 9:00PM the night before the presentation. Presentations should include a brief summary outlining the topic. You could also discuss anything that surprised you, the significance of the topic, or anything else that seems interesting in the *way the topic connects to psychology*.



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### **Reflection Paper**

Experiential-learning must involve reflection in order to be an effective teaching technique. Students will engage in critical reflection about the connections between their experiences and the academic content. To be successful, students will apply concepts from the classroom to their experience/topic. The questions listed below are not meant to be covered comprehensively in your reflection, but rather to help you think about your experiences.

#### Reflection Questions

1. What have I learned about this issue or about life?
2. What have I learned about myself? What did the experience mean to me?
3. Did you make a difference? Why or why not?
4. How is this experience related to my studies?
5. What should society do about this issue?
6. What am I going to do about this issue?
7. How will this issue change the next week, month, or year of my life?
8. How has this experience affected my life goals?
9. What more needs to be done?
10. What is the identified problem or need?
11. What do you hope to gain from this experience?
12. What have you learned about yourself?
13. What values, opinions, beliefs of yours have changed?
14. What was the most important lesson learned?
15. How have you been challenged?
16. What should others do about this issue?