



# Psychology 101: Introductory Psychology

---

Location: Science Hall 109  
Loras College: MWF 10:00-10:50

**Psychology Program** Spring 2018

**Instructor:** Jake Kurczek, PhD  
Assistant Professor of Neuroscience and Psychology  
**Office:** Henn 193  
**Phone:** 588-7045  
**E-mail:** [jake.kurczek@loras.edu](mailto:jake.kurczek@loras.edu)  
**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Peer Assistant (PA):** Dayton Olson ([dayton.olson@loras.edu](mailto:dayton.olson@loras.edu))

**Textbook:** R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds), *Noba Textbook Series: Psychology*.  
Champaign, IL: DEF Publishers. DOI: [nobaproject.com](http://nobaproject.com)  
You may purchase a [print copy here](#)  
Additional journal articles and materials will be assigned as needed and posted to the course website

**Class Website:** You will be able to find PDFs of the lectures and discussions posted to the course website

## Course Goals and Overview

This course is an introduction to the science and practice of psychology as a discipline within liberal arts. All sections will include an overview of the science of psychology, basic research methods and statistics, and physiological psychology. Other topics may include: learning and/or cognition, perception, intelligence, personality psychology, and social psychology. Students should begin to appreciate the expansiveness of psychology. Unfortunately, time restrictions will prevent exploring all avenues that psychology has to offer and only allows us to discuss some concepts superficially. Thus, this course will attempt to lay the building blocks of your psychological knowledge.

### Course Goals:

- To teach students the importance, applications, and implications of psychology.
- To make students educated consumers of psychology.
- To advance the critical thinking skills, not just in psychology, but for everyday situations. Thinking critically incorporates the ability to begin to think like a “scientist”.

Psychology  
Introductory Psychology – Instructor: Jake Kurczek, Fall 2017

In other words, thinking critically is learning to evaluate and analyze the material and to integrate concepts.

- To teach students how psychology is a science.
- To provide students with a solid understanding of psychology, thus preparing them to take it with them to future (more advanced) psychology courses.
- To make the concepts of psychology fun.

### Overall Course Objectives:

Students will meet the following learning objectives in this course:

- Gain an elementary understanding of the research process including: basic statistics, research design, and ethics of research.
- Explore the physiological origins of psychology on the neural, cortical, and subcortical levels.
- Gain a basic understanding of classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and social learning paradigms of learning.
- Study how individual behavior is affected by groups, including obedience, beliefs, conformity, and prejudice.
- Gain knowledge of various theories of personality and learn how personality is assessed.

### Learning Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Understand the key psychological theories and practices.
- Know how psychological research is conducted.
- Recognize when key psychological concepts are present in the real world.
- Apply learned theories to real situations.
- Interpret psychological findings based on science and skepticism.

## Course Requirements, Policies and Assignments

Course information and assignment details are found in the Syllabi Appendices on the Course Onboarding document called Course Information and Assignment Details (with Assignment Rubrics).

Digital Storytelling	21
Presentation	2
News Update	2
Engagement	15
Checks	5
Exam 1	10
Exam 2	15
Exam 3	15
Exam 4	15

---

Psychology  
Introductory Psychology – Instructor: Jake Kurczek, Fall 2017

**Total**

**100**

**Digital Storytelling.** As a class, we will create a web-based resource for students and adults to learn about how psychology interfaces with life. My thinking is that this resource will help others understand the applications and misapplications of psychology research to our lives. Others who are eager to learn about psychology and science should have access to this material for teaching and learning alike. A digital storybook of the psychology topic of your choice (see sign-up) should be designed for a general audience.

This digital storybook should include the following aspects:

An introduction to the topic

Interesting/Analytic Components

- 1) Background information – how is your topic generally presented to the public
- 2) The complication – how is your topic generally viewed in the community of science
- 3) Examples or discussion of where the misunderstanding has occurred (this could include figures/pictures)
- 4) Suggestions for how the public should approach the issue/topic as they are faced with scientific information or discoveries in the future

Interactive components that can teach you more about the topic (e.g. data visualization, games, demonstrations, other resources)

Your wiki should include a minimum of 8 empirical research articles (that are not just summarized individually, but discusses your topic in context and how the articles interact with each other), 6 multimedia resources and be the equivalent of an about 2000 word essay (excluding References)..

**Digital Storytelling Conversation/Presentation.** Psychology conferences typically host symposium sessions, in which researchers construct talks to present their research findings from a recent study or studies. The last few days of class will consist of an academic symposium. During the session, each student will present their digital story that they have developed over the course of the semester. This also includes a five minute presentation overview completed in powerpoint/google slides.

**News Updates.** Students will be asked to give a news update.

**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.

### Engagement

**Research Participation.** You are required to complete 6 research credits for our Introduction to Psychology course. Research credit can be obtained by: (1) participating in a research study, (2) writing a 2-page response paper about a

Psychology  
Introductory Psychology – Instructor: Jake Kurczek, Fall 2017

research study, or (3) attending a scholarly talk in psychology (must be approved by me).

*In-Class Participation/Activities/Discussion/Critical Thinking Journal.*

*Contributions to the Loras Intellectual Community (Out of class engagement)*

**Comprehension Checks.** On a class-to-class or weekly basis may include the following question formats: multiple-choice; fill-in-the-blank; matching; true/false; and short-answer sections.

## Schedule\*

### Important Dates

1/29 – First day of classes

2/16 - Last day to drop classes without “W”

10/27 - Last day to drop without receiving an “F”

3/26-4/2 – Spring Break

5/11 – Last Day of Class

5/14-5/17 – Final Exams

View the checklist at this link and track your semester.

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