Psychology 101: Introductory Psychology

Location
Loras College
Hennessy Hall 280
MWF 9:00 - 9:50

Psychology Program
Spring 2019
Instructor: Jake Kurczek, PhD
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Office Hours: By appointment

Textbook:
R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds), Noba Textbook Series: Psychology.
Champaign, IL: DEF Publishers. DOI: 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”. 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**

**SEE ASSIGNMENT DETAILS and COURSE INFORMATION for documentation**

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).

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<td>Symposium</td>
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<tr>
<td>News Update</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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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
- 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). Your digital story should be created on medium.com (a blog/story-telling website).

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 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)
Homework. Homework is due by 9:00PM the Saturday the week they are assigned. However, there may be some assignments that will be due the day before they are indicated on the checklist (e.g., if due on the Thursday class, the assignment is due by 9:00PM Wednesday). Upload these files to the Engagement dropbox. There are 13 homework assignments.

Comprehension Checks. There will be a number of comprehension checks throughout the semester. These will include questions in the following formats: multiple-choice; fill-in-the-blank; matching; true/false; and short-answer sections. Checks are due by Saturday at 9:00PM the week they are assigned and graded on participation, not correctness.

Schedule*

Important Dates
1/28 – First day of classes
2/1 - Last day to add
3/8 - Registration for Summer Term
3/10 - Daylight Savings Starts
3/29 - Last day to drop with a semester course with W
4/8 - 4/12 - Registration for Fall Term
4/15 - 4/22 - Spring Break
5/10 – Last Day of Class
5/13 -5/16 – Final Exams

View the checklist at this link and track your semester.
*Tentative schedule subject to change without notice as instructor deems necessary

Some Potential Digital Storytelling topics

Stereotype Threat
Narcissism Epidemic
Spanking effects
Media Violence
Multiple Intelligences
Evolution and Mating Choices
Antidepressant Effectiveness
10% Brain Myth
Mozart Effect
Brainwashing
Bystander Apathy
Chemical Imbalance
God Spot
Hypnotic Trance

Psychology of Aging
Positive psychology
Measuring critical thinking
Fear of Happiness
Dark Triad
Affect Heuristic
Mind-wandering
Facial Feedback
Personality Type
Grit
Truth Serum
Love molecules
Lie Detector Test
**Propose your own**