

Introduction to Psychology

Psy 101 (Summer Second Session, 2005) Albany campus of The Sage Colleges

Dr. Susan Cloninger

Class Meetings: Mondays and Wednesdays, 6 to 9 PM; Froman Hall, room 301

Office Hours: by appointment or after class

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Psychology 101 introduces the field of psychology by surveying topics studied by psychologists. As a science, psychology is committed to the scientific method to test our ideas about psychological phenomena. In addition, many psychologists and professionals in other fields apply psychological concepts in a variety of ways. In this introductory survey, students will learn major concepts and perspectives of psychology ranging from "micro" (biological) through "macro" (social) phenomena, will understand the scientific method as it applies to psychology, and will learn some of the practical applications of psychological knowledge.

TEXT:

Myers, D. G. (2005). *Exploring psychology* (6th ed.). New York: Worth. (A study guide is available. No assignments will be made from it *per se*, but many students find that using it improves their grades by making their study focused and efficient.)

There are also several study aids available on the publisher's website, for free, which I highly recommend. Go to: <http://bcs.worthpublishers.com/exploring6e/> and follow the links for the chapter you are studying. Use the menu on the left of the page to select particular content (e.g., Chapter Review). ***For purposes of improving your readiness for course exams, I particularly recommend, for each chapter:***

Chapter review

Flashcards (for glossary terms)

Additional resources are also available, which sometimes (e.g., anatomical art) vary from chapter to chapter, and which in some cases (e.g., quizzes) require that students register (free). You may also find some of the web links interesting to explore.

COURSE NOTES:

Course notes that correspond to the text portion of the instructor's PowerPoint lecture displays are available on the web. Follow the links to the Psy101 course from my home page at <http://www.suecloninger.com/> -- but realize that these notes do not substitute for reading the text! Many students print out these web note before the class lecture on that topic, to simplify taking lecture notes. (Because much of the lecture material is already printed, they can write down additional explanations or questions in the margin.) For your convenience, you may link to the publisher's resources by following the link toward the bottom of each page of chapter notes.

REQUIREMENTS:

Students are required to attend class regularly and to participate actively, and to demonstrate their knowledge on exams and papers. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with reading assignments throughout the course, so that the almost inevitable "unexpected demands" that often occur just before exams can be taken in stride.

EXAMS:

Three exams will be given, consisting of multiple choice and essay questions. It is the student's responsibility to take the exam on the scheduled date. Although the instructor will give a make-up exam for a genuine and *documented* excuse, such as a major illness, there is no automatic entitlement to a make-up. Don't count on a makeup exam for reasons of work overload, minor illness, lack of preparation time, and so on. In case of extraordinary circumstances, please talk to me (in person or by phone) in advance. In the unlikely event that class is cancelled for a weather-related emergency or other circumstance, the scheduled exam would be given at the next scheduled class. Exams will count as 70% of the course grade. Although all of the text is required, exams will focus most heavily on material that is covered in lecture, and on the "terms and concepts to remember" that are listed in the text at the end of each chapter (e.g., on page 30 for Chapter 1).

PAPERS OR ONLINE ACTIVITIES:

For this portion of your grade (which counts as 24% of the course grade), students may choose between papers and/or on-line activities. If you select on-line activities, you must be sure to "submit" them from the publisher's website. In addition, you should turn in a brief (one page) paper for each, describing what you have learned from this simulation, (To guide this paper, look at the printed activity sheet that accompanies each activity. Summarize your answers to those questions in no more than one page.) You may "mix and match" these activities; that is, you may do one or two papers and do on-line activities instead of the other paper; or you may do 3 papers and no on-line activities; or you may do no papers and all on-line activities.

1. ASSIGNMENT DUE 7/18

Write the paper (described below) on "Research in Psychology"

or do 3 on-line simulations, which may be *any* 3 of these:

- a. Descriptive Statistics
- b. Hemispheric Specialization
- c. Mind-Reading Monkeys
- d. Visual Illusions

2. ASSIGNMENT DUE 8/1

Write the paper (described below) on "Applications of Learning Principles"

or do these 3 on-line simulations:

- a. Operant Conditioning
- b. Helplessly Hoping
- c. Get Smart

3. ASSIGNMENT DUE 8/10

Write the paper (described below) on “Observing Emotional Behavior”
or do 3 on-line simulations, which may be *any* 3 of these:

- a. All Stressed Out
- b. Expressing Emotion
- c. Computer Therapist
- d. Hunger and the Fat Rat

ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION:

It is my experience that students who attend class regularly and who actively participate by commenting and asking questions, generally get higher grades. To encourage regular attendance and participation, these, including participation in class exercises from time to time, will be counted as 6% of the course grade. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes and explanations of assignments that may have been given. If you miss class because of illness or another understandable reason, please notify the instructor *in writing or by e-mail* so that this reason may be considered when participation points are given.

GRADING:

Because exams and papers (or other assignments) are assigned throughout the term, most students should have a reasonable accurate awareness of their course grade as the term progresses. Talk with me individually if you have questions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

1. Recognize areas of psychological investigation that have implications for everyday life and society.
2. Understand the scientific method as it applies to psychology.
3. Recognize that psychological phenomena are investigated from many levels of investigation, ranging from biological through social ("micro" through "macro") levels.
4. Identify some of the biological mechanisms that influence human psychological processes.
5. Be able to discuss psychological development throughout life, from before birth through old age.
6. Recognize the impact of experience on psychological phenomena, based on learning principles.
7. Recognize the role of cognition and memory in human functioning.
8. Recognize some of the important individual differences that influence human functioning.
9. Discuss psychological health and psychological problems, based on scientific evidence.
10. Recognize ways that society influences human functioning.

NOTES:

Students are encouraged to discuss any difficulties with the instructor. College policies and deadlines regarding academic honesty, registration, drop-add, disability accommodations, and so on are contained in college publications. Students who require accommodations because of disabilities must bring this to the attention of the instructor at the beginning of the course. Please ask if you have questions.

CLASS SCHEDULE

(Subject to revision as needed; topics will sometimes continue to the following classes.)

Date	Reading & Lecture	Exams & Written Assignments
Wed 7/6	Introduction to the class Chapter 1: Introduction: Thinking Critically with Psychology	
Mon 7/11	Chapter 2: Neuroscience and Behavior	<i>tip: This is a great time to start the first paper or on-line simulations!</i>
Wed 7/13	Chapter 3: The Nature and Nurture of Behavior Chapter 4: The Developing Person	Optional quiz: Chapters 1-2. (If you do well, this grade will replace the portion of Exam 1 over these chapters. No make-ups will be given for this quiz, for any reason.)
Mon 7/18	Chapter 5: Sensation and Perception	Paper 1 due: Research in Psychology (or On-Line Simulations)
Wed 7/20	Chapter 6: States of Consciousness	Exam 1 (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
Mon 7/25	Chapter 7: Learning Chapter 8: Memory	<i>tip: This is a great time to start the second paper or on-line simulations!</i>
Wed 7/27	Chapter 9: Thinking, Language, and Intelligence Chapter 10: Motivation	<i>tip: Be sure to schedule your time carefully. This is the busiest part of the term, and next class has an exam as well as an assignment. Don't wait until the last minute.</i>
Mon 8/1	Chapter 11: Emotions, Stress, and Health	Exam 2 (Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) Paper 2 due: Applications of Learning Principles (or On-Line Simulations) (Grace period for this assignment: work received by class on 8/3 will not be considered late.)
Wed 8/3	Chapter 12: Personality	<i>tip: This is a great time to start the third paper or on-line simulations!</i>
Mon 8/8	Chapter 13: Psychological Disorders Chapter 14: Therapy	
Wed 8/10	Chapter 15: Social Psychology	Paper 3 due: Observing Emotional Behavior (or On-Line Simulations)
Mon 8/15		Exam 3 (Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)

First Paper: Research in Psychology

1. Select a specific research question that would be suitable for psychology to investigate. Describe the area(s) of specialty within psychology that would be most closely concerned with this question. (*Hints*: Consider which chapter is most relevant; use the index of the text.)
2. Decide whether this behavior is best investigated using an experimental method or a nonexperimental (correlational) method. (Descriptive studies are probably not relevant, in most cases.) Explain your choice. (*Hint*: Does your research question deal with cause-effect relationships? or with description?)
3. Describe the research method in greater detail. For example, how would you operationally define the variables you are studying? If you have selected an experimental method, how would you divide subjects into groups, and what precautions would you take to avoid experimenter bias? If you have selected a correlational method, are you taking precautions to control nuisance variables (if possible)? What hypothesis (or hypotheses) would you test?
4. What results might occur? How would these results help answer the research question?

Suggested length: 2-4 pages (double spaced, typed or word-processed).

- Be sure to proofread your paper.
- Be sure to answer the questions listed above.
- Think of an interesting and descriptive title for your paper. ("First Paper" is not a great title. "Research in Psychology" is only a little better, because it does nothing to distinguish your paper from those of other students in the class.)
- Put your name, the course (Psy101), the section (the time the class meets), and the date on the first page, *in the upper left corner*. Be sure the pages are securely stapled together.
- Turn in your paper in class on the due date. Keep an extra copy for yourself.
- Be sure to use material from the class (lectures and text, as appropriate) in your paper. Course-appropriate content is essential to this assignment. Paper mechanics are also important. Literary style is of minimal importance for your grade; emphasize content and clarity instead of creativity, for papers in this course. It is not expected that you will do any library or web research for this paper. The purpose is to demonstrate that you understand principles of research methods.

Second Paper: Applications of Learning Principles

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate that you understand how learning principles can be applied to improve conditions in everyday life.

Select a specific behavior that you wish to change; describe it. The behavior may be your own behavior, or that of someone else. Explain what the behavior is now (before intervention) and what you hope it will be after intervention.

1. Decide whether this behavior is best changed using operant conditioning principles (reinforcements or extinction) or using classical conditioning (stimulus substitution). Explain your choice.
2. Describe a specific strategy for changing the behavior. That is, how will you modify the behavior using reinforcements/extinction, or using stimulus pairing. Give a step by step description of the intervention.
3. What specific outcomes do you expect? (This may repeat what you said in #1 above, but should be more precise.) How would you know whether the intervention has succeeded or failed? If it fails, what are some reasons that might have caused the failure.

Suggested length: 2-4 pages (double spaced, typed or word-processed).

- Be sure to proofread your paper.
- Be sure to answer the questions listed above.
- Think of an interesting and descriptive title for your paper. ("Second Paper" is not a great title; "Learning" is only slightly better.)
- Put your name, the course (Psy101), the section (the time the class meets), and the date on the first page, *in the upper left corner*. Be sure the pages are securely stapled together.
- Turn in your paper in class on the due date. Keep an extra copy for yourself.
- Be sure to use material from the class (lectures and text, as appropriate) in your paper. Course-appropriate content is essential to this assignment. Paper mechanics are also important. Literary style is of minimal importance for your grade; emphasize content and clarity instead of creativity, for papers in this course. It is not expected that you will do any library or web research for this paper. The purpose is to demonstrate that you understand principles of learning.

Third Paper: Observing Emotional Behavior

The purpose of this assignment is to give you practice becoming aware of your emotions and of how you deal with them. Increasingly, psychologists find that emotions are involved in physical as well as mental well-being, and that people can learn to improve well-being by dealing more effectively with their emotions.

1. Select a situation or issue that occurs at the present time in your life, to be the focus of your attention for this paper. It should be a situation or issue that arouses some emotion in you, or that other people might expect would have emotional implications. (It isn't necessary for you to completely understand the emotion at the beginning of this project.)
2. Think about the situation. Identify the emotions that you remember experiencing in the situation. Also identify the emotions that you experience now, while you are thinking about the situation. (Perhaps they are the same emotions; perhaps not.)
3. Describe your behavior in that situation. Did your emotions cause you to behave differently than if you had not experienced those emotions? (For example, did you avoid the situation or some aspect of it; did you continue to stay in a situation that you found enjoyable.) Many ways of coping with stress, described in the text (Chapter 10) and in class, are ways of responding to emotional experiences; did you use any of those ways of coping?
4. How should you behave in the future? Do you think (now, from your current perspective) that you should behave in that way in a similar situation in the future, or should you behave differently? (What is in your own personal long-term best interest?)
5. What can you do to make it more likely that you will respond in an adaptive way (as you described in the item above) in the future? (For example, will you think differently about the situation? change your environment? seek support or information from other people?)

Suggested length: 2 to 4 pages (double spaced, typed or word-processed).

- Be sure to proofread your paper.
- Be sure to answer the questions listed above.
- Think of an interesting and descriptive title for your paper. ("Third Paper" is not a great title.)
- Put your name, the course (Psy101), the section (the time the class meets), and the date on the first page, *in the upper left corner*. Be sure the pages are securely stapled together.
- Turn in your paper in class on the due date. Keep an extra copy for yourself.
- Be sure to use material from the class (lectures and text, as appropriate) in your paper. Course-appropriate content is essential to this assignment. Paper mechanics are also important. Literary style is of minimal importance for your grade; emphasize content and clarity instead of creativity, for papers in this course.

College Policies on Various Academic Matters

THE SPIRIT OF LEARNING

All members of The Sage Colleges community are expected to conduct themselves in a way which respects the learning environment. Thus, Sage has the right to remove any student from the classroom, other academic area, or program at any time if the student's behavior is contrary to the spirit of learning or hinders the operation of the program in any way. Violent, disruptive, harassing, or intimidating behavior is not tolerated in the classroom or any other place on campus. Any student whose conduct disrupts a class or other learning environment may be required to leave the premises immediately and subjected to disciplinary or legal actions.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Sage Colleges is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student seeking academic adjustment under the Americans with Disabilities Act must make a request in writing to The Sage Colleges Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities, Sage Albany Campus, 140 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, NY 12208: telephone 518-292-1764. Any student in need of classroom assistance or modification under the Americans with Disabilities Act must inform the instructor of the needed adjustment no later than the first week of class, and provide documentation from the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic dishonesty in any of its forms, including cheating, plagiarism, misuse of SageNet, and failure to comply with guidelines for the conduct of human research, will not be tolerated at The Sage Colleges. A full statement of the policy on plagiarism, cheating and academic dishonesty is available in any of the academic division offices, in the Russell Sage College Dean and Graduate Dean offices (Troy) and Center for Extended Learning and Sage College of Albany Dean office (Albany).

For guidance in proper referencing of sources, as well as how to avoid plagiarism, consult the most recent editions of the following works, which are available in the reference sections of the libraries on the Troy and Albany campus:

- Joseph Gibaldi & Walter S. Achtert *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. New York: Modern Language Association.
- Kate L. Turabian *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Thesis, and Dissertations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- American Psychological Association *Publication Manual*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

(Check college publications for any additional or revised policies.)