

## Psychology 120

# Introduction to Psychology

Spring 2014

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Class meets on W and F (8:55am - 10:05am) in HILL 410 **Section 120B**  
Class meets on W and F (10:20am - 11:30am) in HILL 410 **Section 120C**

Office hours:

Wednesday/Friday 8:30-8:50; 10:05-10:20am; 11:30-noon (in HILL 120)

Other hours available by appointment

## Course Description

Overview of research drawn from biological, perceptual, cognitive, developmental, clinical, social, and personality traditions in the discipline.

## Required Book:

Weiten, W. (2014). *Psychology: Themes & Variations* (Briefer version; 9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning. ISBN: 978-1-285-06298-3

## Learning Goals and Outcomes for this Course

- ❖ To become familiar with the research methodology commonly used by psychologists and to become familiar with the scientific method.
- ❖ To develop an appreciation of the important contributions that Psychology can make in understanding one's own and other's thoughts and behavior.
- ❖ Learn how to apply psychology concepts and principles to real-life situations.
- ❖ To apply critical thinking skills within (and outside of) the field of Psychology.
- ❖ Learn how psychology can explain and influence people's behavior.
- ❖ To become knowledgeable of the major theories and concepts in the field of Psychology.

## Course Requirements

### *Attendance and Participation*

I expect attendance at all regularly scheduled class meetings. Missed classes will lower your grade because lectures will cover material that is not covered in the assigned readings, and you will be held responsible for this material. The lectures are intended to supplement the readings. As such, the lectures will typically not duplicate the reading materials but will emphasize the most central aspects of the chapter and/or discuss particularly difficult concepts. The lectures will presuppose familiarity with the reading assignment for that lecture. You can earn up to 5 bonus points on your class total (*not* average) for good attendance.

Because of the classroom's location, I understand that promptness could be problematic. Please make *every* effort to be on time and not to leave early. I will do my best to start and end class promptly. Please do not disrupt the class when you enter or exit.

I strongly encourage you to ask questions at any time during the class to help clarify points. Discussion of any portion of the class materials is encouraged and welcomed.

AVOID cell phones in class!! Research shows that using your cell phone lowers your attention and learning material in class. Perhaps even worse, it is just as distracting and damaging to your classmates.

### *Examinations*

There are four exams, each covering 3-4 chapters. The exams are non-cumulative and will be comprised of multiple-choice, definitional, short answer, and essay questions.

I *dislike* giving makeups. Thus, I expect your attendance on exam days. If unavoidable circumstances (valid reasons only) force you to miss an exam, please contact me as soon as possible **before the next class meeting**. My goal is to give exams back at the next class period, so makeups should occur quickly.

- ▶ Late makeups will be all essay exams and will occur at the end of the semester. ◀
- ▶ Late homework assignments will not be accepted. ◀

### *Student Presentations*

Each student will have an opportunity to make an oral presentation to the class on a preselected topic (topics are listed on the syllabus below). The presentations should be no longer than 8-10 minutes in length. Weiten's unifying themes are key to understanding the study of human behavior (see pp. 19-22). For this assignment you are to synthesize and integrate **at least** one of these perspectives into your understanding of your topic. (See end of p. 4 for possible topics.)

Your presentation will be graded on the following dimensions: clarity, organization, educational value, presentation skills, and your ability to connect your topic to the key themes within psychology. In addition to your presentation, you must submit a 2-3 page paper on your research topic. **Be sure to research your topic beyond the textbook—including at least one empirical reference.** You must also hand in a hard copy of your Powerpoint presentation on the day you present.

***Homework Assignments***

You will be responsible for showing the application of a concept from the previous section's chapters (those covered on the exam) to your life—it could be a personal experience, a TV show, a movie, a cartoon, etc. (See the page 7 at end of syllabus for more details.)

Additional outside reading may be necessary (or desirable) to complete the homework assignments. The assignments are due at the class period immediately following each exam.

*You can drop your lowest homework grade (missing one means it is dropped).*

► *Late homework assignments will not be accepted.* ◀

***Plagiarism and Cheating***

The Moravian College faculty has become increasingly concerned by the problem of plagiarism on campus. The Psychology Department's policy on this subject is important for students to understand. Simply put, plagiarism is the intentional misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own. This includes such diverse situations as quoting directly from a published work without giving the author credit, having your roommate write the paper, “borrowing” from fraternity or sorority files, buying a paper from a professional service, and so on. The policy of the department is that the student must keep all note cards and rough drafts on a paper until the grade is assigned. The instructor may request these materials, along with the source materials, at any time. Evidence of plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the College policy on academic honesty, copies of, which are available at the departmental secretary's desk.

Please visit: <http://www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic/academic2.html> to view the policy.

***Disability Issues***

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic Support Services for Academic and Disability Support at the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling 610-861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

***Required Research Participation***

See Departmental Policy (p. 6 of the syllabus).

**Grading.** Final grades will be weighted as follows:

Exams (15% each)	60%
Presentation & Paper (10% each)	20%
Homework assignments (5% each)	15%
Class participation	5%

I will use the following grading scale for course work:

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Grade Range</i>
A	100	95-100
A-	92	90-94
B+	88	87-89
B	85	83-86
B-	81	80-82
C+	78	77-79
C	75	73-76
C-	71	70-72
D+	68	67-69
D	65	63-66
D-	61	60-62
F	0	0-59

### ***Possible Presentation Topics***

Achievement Motivation	Moral Development
Aggression	Need to Belong
Altruism	Nonverbal Communication
Alzheimer's	Obedience
Attachment (caregiver/child)	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
Attraction (interpersonal)	Optimism and Health
Autism	Phobias
Bipolar Disorder	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
Dissociative Identity Disorder	Prejudice
Eating Disorders (select one)	Puberty
Group Influence	Schizophrenia
Happiness/Subjective Well-Being	Social Support and Stress
Lie Detection	Taste Preferences
Life Expectancy	Teen Pregnancy
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	<i>See me if you wish to propose a topic not listed</i>

## Introduction to Psychology Schedule for Spring 2014

We will cover the text in classroom lectures/discussion/demonstrations according to the schedule below. You are responsible for all material presented in class (we will cover non-text material on many days) and in the text (regardless of whether we cover it in class). In this course, we will focus on psychology research—the scientific study of human behavior—and how that research applies to the real world. Readings should be completed before class on the dates noted herein. I reserve the right to alter the syllabus should the need arise.

Aug 27: Class introduction, Chapter 1  
29: Chapter 1

►► **SEPTEMBER 2: Last day for course changes** ◀◀

Sept 3, 5: Chapter 2  
10, 12: Chapter 3

**Sept 17: Exam 1**

Sept 19: Meet in Reeves Library for research training session (When entering library, go to the right to the computer alcove just past reference desk)

24: Chapter 4 (*1<sup>st</sup> homework due*)

26/Oct 1: Chapter 6

►► **OCTOBER 3: Mid-Term** ◀◀

3, 8: Chapter 7

10: No class; prepare for Exam2; work on second critical thinking/writing assignment

**Oct 15: Exam 2 (bonus: Chapter 5)**

Oct 17: Chapter 8 (*2<sup>nd</sup> homework due*)

22, 24: Chapter 9

24, 29: Chapter 10

31: Chapter 11

►► **OCTOBER 31: Last day for withdrawal with W** ◀◀

**Nov 5: Exam 3**

Nov 7, 12: Chapter 12 (*NOV 7: 3<sup>rd</sup> homework due*)

14, 19: Chapter 13

21: Chapter 14

**26-28: Happy Turkey Day**

Dec 3: Chapter 14

5: Chapter 15

**Dec 8: Exam 4 (8:30-11:00) (last homework due) SECTION C (8:55)**

**Dec 9: Exam 4 (8:30-11:00) (last homework due) SECTION B (10:20)**

### **Required Research Participation: For Students Enrolled in PS120**

You will be required to participate in 1 hour of research being conducted by students in PS212, Experimental Methods and Data Analysis II (or by honors or independent study students, or occasionally by faculty). This experience allows you to view the research process first hand and to support other students who will in turn support you when you are ready to conduct your own PSYC 212 experiment.

If you have objections to participating in research, you may arrange to complete an alternative, written assignment, which will involve reading a psychological article. In order to do the alternative assignment, you must meet with Dr. Zaremba to arrange it **by the third week of the semester**. After that point, you may still have the opportunity to complete the research requirement by participating in experiment sessions, but you will not be able to do a written assignment. Please be aware that experiments will not be offered at the end of the semester, so please be sure to sign up early!

More information about research participation (e.g., how to sign up) will be provided later in the semester, when experiment opportunities start to become available.

When you sign up for a research experiment, please be sure to record the time and location of the session. As many experiments require that students begin a task at the same time, please plan to show up on-time for your sessions. Showing up late may result in your not being able to participate in the experiment!

Failure to complete the required participation (or the alternative assignment) will result in a **reduction of your class grade by 1/3<sup>rd</sup> letter grade** (e.g., from a B to a B-). The entire required hour needs to be completed to avoid this deduction (i.e., completing ½ hour only will still result in the full deduction).

If you fail to attend an experiment session for which you signed up, the required hours of research participation will increase to 2 hours. If you then fail to show up a second time for a scheduled experiment session, then you will forfeit all extra credit opportunities (including extra research hours you already completed for extra credit in the course) and will face a **reduction of your class grade by 1/3<sup>rd</sup> letter grade** (e.g., from a B to a B-).

Thanks very much for helping the research process! Both students and faculty appreciate your participation!

## Guidelines for Introduction to Psychology Homework Assignments

Dr. Randolph Smith

The Introduction to Psychology homework assignments are somewhat similar to a course-related scrapbook entry that you will write for each unit (Chapters 1-3, 4-7, 8-11, 12-15). It is important to your grade that the entries you write for your homework assignments *are* indeed relevant to the course.

Homework assignments may consist of any of the following:

- *Personal experiences that relate in some way to the material we have studied.*
- *Newsworthy items you read about in newspapers, news magazines, etc.*
- *Information you study in other courses that is related to the material we have studied.*
- *Miscellaneous items—for example, you might choose to use a magazine advertisement, TV show, or movie to illustrate a psychological principle (this category is intentionally broad and vague in order to allow you to be creative).*

For each of your assignments, you should describe in detail the facts or observations surrounding the situation/event and relate how psychological research or theory gives you particular insight into that situation—its causes, its correlates, its relation with other events, and/or other pertinent topics. You must include a copy of the original information (e.g., newsworthy items, information from other courses, cartoon) *whenever possible* with your assignment. When you use a personal experience or some other event that you cannot copy as your stimulus, you must describe it in enough detail that I can understand the stimulus that made you think of its relation to psychology.

After you write about the stimulus, you should **clearly** connect it to psychological concepts or knowledge as noted in your textbook. I should not have to guess what psychological concept you think your stimulus relates to in the textbook—you must draw the link for me. You should explain the concept (in writing) to me as you would to a friend or relative. Putting things in your own words is the most desirable approach.

In addition, be certain that your assignment contains a **critical thinking element**. For example, contrast the “common sense” interpretation (what the general public might think) with the scientific explanation of the phenomenon. You could identify a possible bias or assumption about your entry, or you can share a possible alternative perspective on your item.

All homework assignments are confidential and will be seen only by your instructor, so you are free to write about any topic.

Your homework assignments will be **graded** on several dimensions/questions:

- ☞ How relevant is each item to the course material?
- ☞ Is the commentary on each entry accurate?
- ☞ Have you demonstrated creativity in your identification of “real world” relationships to psychology?
- ☞ Did you include a critical thinking element?
- ☞ Do you communicate your ideas well? (I will look at grammar, spelling, writing, etc.)
- ☞ Do you make appropriate citations of others’ works? (If you get information from any source, *including your textbook*, you should reference the book and cite the information.)