

General Psychology

PSY110

Winter Session 2014/2015

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Required Text:

**** SINCE THIS IS AN EXTREMELY SHORT WINTER SESSION, PLEASE PURCHASE THE BOOK BELOW BEFORE 12/22 (THE FIRST DAY OF THE WINTER SESSION). UNFORTUNATELY, IN ORDER TO SQUEEZE A FULL SEMESTER INTO 2 WEEKS, YOU WILL NEED TO BE PREPARED TO TAKE THE EXAM FOR CHAPTER 1 ON 12/22.***

Kowalski, R. & Westen, D. (2011). *Psychology (6th Edition)*. NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

There are a number of different ways you can get the textbook that is required for this course:

- You can get it instantly on-line as a subscription E-book at www.coursesmart.com for \$83.50. The ISBN# for the E-book is 9780470919880.
- You can also get it instantly on-line as a downloadable E-book that you can own forever for \$100.50 at www.store.vitalsource.com. The ISBN# for the downloadable E-book is 9780470913604.
- I have asked the bookstore to order a printed copy of the book that is binder-ready (since that version is cheaper than the bound textbook...and it has 3 holes, so it is ready to slip into a binder). It costs \$109.95. The ISBN# for that book is 9780470917664.
- The ISBN# for the regular textbook is 9780470646441. So if you can purchase it some other way that is more convenient or better priced, please feel free to do so.

You will need a fast internet connection (not a dial-up connection) to take the exams. If you do not have a fast internet connection at home, please take the tests for this course on campus or at your local town library. Once you time out of an exam, your grade will be recorded and you will not be able to take the exam again.

Contacting Me:

Please contact me by E-mail with any questions and issues you may have about this course. I check my E-mail regularly Monday through Friday. However, I check E-mail infrequently on over the week-end, so it is unlikely that you will hear from me then.

Important: Think carefully about your choice to complete an on-line class in this short semester. Many students believe that an on-line course is less demanding than a face-to-face course. This is definitely not the case! Students are often surprised by the effort it takes to do well in this class. On-line classes require intrinsic motivation, self-discipline and dedication. You must do a lot of reading on your own and keep up with the assignments since no one will be reviewing the material with you in person. On-line classes also require active participation, unlike some face-to-face classes where you can sit in the back row and get by without getting involved.

Think through your decision to take this on-line course carefully. It is demanding. I anticipate, however, that if you put in the time and effort you will find it a rewarding experience.

Course Objectives:

The primary objective of this course is to provide an overview of the field of psychology. With this goal in mind, a range of disciplines and perspectives within the field of psychology will be explored. The course content will include information about:

- The methodological approaches psychologists use to understand human emotions and behavior.
- Ways in which to interpret and evaluate learning from the field of psychology, with the aim of applying this knowledge to real-life situations.
- Current controversies and differing perspectives within the field of psychology.
- The history of psychological science, the current state of psychology, and psychological issues that currently remain unexplored or unanswered.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After taking this course, I hope that students will be able to:

- Effectively communicate information relating to the field of psychology in both written and oral form.
- Assemble information about specific psychological issues and critically evaluate the implications of these findings.
- Integrate knowledge and ideas from different psychological perspectives and appreciate the contribution of a variety of approaches to psychological learning.

Course Expectations:

This is a *very intense reading* course. And because of the short length of the Winter session, you are expected to read as many as 5 full chapters each week. You are expected to post to the discussion board before every chapter test is due to be completed. You are expected to ask questions. Test dates are given in the course outline. There are no make-up tests given. You must take the test on or before the date specified. There are no exceptions.

OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

Class Discussions

During the first couple of days of this Winter session, I would like you to take a few minutes to tell me about your goals for this class. Aside from doing well in the course ☺, what would you like to gain from this course? Are there any particular interests you have in mind? Is there anything that you hope to gain from this course that may be useful to you in your life outside of this classroom, in the future? Please go to the Discussion Board in Blackboard and write a few sentences about your goals for this class. Your thoughts will be public and other students will be able to read them. So please be sure to share things with that in mind.

For each chapter, I am going to ask you to post your thoughts on the Discussion Board on Blackboard. As you finish reading each chapter, please be sure to check the Discussion Board for the corresponding discussion topic or exercise. I will expect everyone to post their response sometime before the test deadline for that chapter. Twenty percent of your grade will be determined by your participation on the Discussion Board. For each chapter you will be expected to do **one** the following:

1) Answer the question(s) on the Discussion Board. Your postings should be well thought out and you should always provide a complete argument / support for your position.

or

2) Comment on someone else's posting or write about something you found interesting in this chapter. Again, the quality of your post is important. Saying you agree or disagree with person X is insufficient -- you need to specify your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing. You can also extend another's posting by providing additional information.

Late postings to the Discussion Board will not be graded...no exceptions.

While I will read your postings on a regular basis, I will not respond to every single comment. Students have a lot to offer and teach each other and I'm looking to see that you can have discussions without me guiding your every step. Be assured that I will read everything that is posted.

Textbook Course Content and Exams

In addition to the Blackboard discussions, you will need to keep up to date with the textbook materials. As soon as you get your textbook, please get started with Chapter 1 - Psychology: The Study of Mental Processes and Behavior. In order to complete the full course during the short Winter session, you will need to be prepared to take the first exam on 12/22, the first day of the Winter session.

In addition to reading Chapter 1, you may want to take a look at the PowerPoint slides and lecture notes that are posted for each chapter on Blackboard. They will help you to reinforce the material you have read in each chapter and highlight the most important points.

As we move through the semester, you will be required to read chapters in your textbook and take the corresponding exams according to the schedule below. Please note that I have listed the test deadlines for each of the chapters. You will have until 11:55PM on the date listed to complete the exam and post your thoughts about the chapter on the WPU Blackboard Discussion Board. However, the test will be available for two days before the test deadline (except for the Chapter 1 exam, which will only be available on 12/22), so you will be able to complete the exam on any day and at any time, according to your schedule before the date listed. Please remember that there will be no make-up tests given. You must complete the exam by the date specified. There are no exceptions. Your exams will be automatically graded as soon as you complete them. All together, your exams will account for 80% of your final grade.

Chapter Exam Deadlines

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|------------------------|---|
| Monday, December 22 | Chapter 1: Psychology: Yesterday and Today |
| Wednesday, December 24 | Chapter 2: Research Methods in Psychology |
| Saturday, December 27 | Chapter 3: Biological Bases of Mental Life and Behavior |
| Monday, December 29 | Chapter 4: Sensation and Perception |
| Wednesday, December 31 | Chapter 5: Learning |
| Friday, January 2 | Chapter 6: Memory |
| Sunday, January 4 | Chapter 12: Personality |
| Tuesday, January 6 | Chapter 13: Life-Span Development |
| Thursday, January 8 | Chapter 14: Psychological Disorders |
| Sunday, January 11 | Chapter 16: Social Cognition |

Teaching Methods:

This course is purely an on-line course. In order to do well in this course you will need to be very responsible and self-motivated. If you do not keep up with the readings, discussions, and exams you will quickly fall far behind. On-line classes require you to be more self-disciplined than traditional lecture classes.

The course syllabus, Discussion Board, lecture notes, PowerPoint slides, and exams can be found on the WPU Blackboard: HYPERLINK "<http://bb.wpunj.edu/>"
<http://bb.wpunj.edu/>.

If this is your first time using Blackboard and you feel in need of a crash-course, please see the Information Technology people in the Atrium.

Class Policies:

Respect: Even in an on-line environment, mutual respect is necessary for productive learning. This involves making the environment as user-friendly as possible. Examples include: completing assignments on time in order to be prepared to discuss the chapter topics, being an involved participant, and respecting another person's opinion even if it differs from your own is also essential for a constructive dialogue. Please do not post disparaging or panicked messages in the discussion board as this takes away from our collective learning experience.

Personal responsibility

You are expected to take personal responsibility for your learning in this class. This is done by: reading all required material, being prepared for discussions, completing assignments, and being a team player. If you do not understand something, you need to take the initiative to contact me. I am always happy to talk to students via E-mail or by phone and I am often able suggest additional resources to support your learning efforts if needed. You do not need to have a major problem or question to contact me.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to abide by the University's policy on Academic Honesty which is outlined on the WPUNJ website:
http://ww2.wpunj.edu/catalog/undergrad_2001_03/CatalogFront/AcademicRegulations.pdf.

Cheating, plagiarism, collusion and lying are serious violations and students should understand fully what constitutes each. Students' work is routinely checked to ensure that this policy is enforced. If you are unsure about any definitions or have questions, please ask before you take a chance!

Grading:

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

80% of your grade will be based on the chapter exams. Exams will consist of 25 multiple choice questions and you will have 25 minutes to complete the exam once it has begun. Once you start the exam, you will not be able to log out and then log back in, so please be sure you have set aside enough time so that your exam will not be interrupted. Questions will be given one at a time and you will not be able to go back to review earlier questions, so please be sure to select your answer to each question on the exam carefully. The exam will be available the entire week before the exam deadline and up until 11:55PM on the date listed as the exam deadline on the syllabus. Please be sure to plan accordingly. There will be no make-up exams or exceptions.

20% of your grade will be based on your participation in the Discussion Board topics. Grades will be given based on the quality of your postings.

Support Services:

Academic support services (such as tutoring and writing skills training) are available to all WPU students. If you think these services might help to improve your learning and performance in this class, I encourage you to make use of them. Although I will not be in my office during the Winter session, please feel free to contact me by E-mail to discuss these options and any other issues of concern to you.