

Welcome to General Psychology, PSY 110-82

My name is Thereza Hernandez, and I will be your instructor for this course. If this is your first online class you may find that it is more work than you expected. Don't worry - I'm here to help. I'll guide you with a detailed syllabus and make certain that all of your questions and concerns are addressed through the *Questions and Answers* discussion thread. However, you will need a large dose of self-discipline to stay on track with the assignments because the temptation to procrastinate will be great. To get off to the right start, follow these five steps before the beginning of the semester:

Step 1: Buy your textbook

You will need to purchase *Exploring Psychology, 8th edition* (2008) by David Myers, ISBN 978-1-4292-3826-7. It is published by Worth Publishers. Yes, you really do need the text, but you should be able to find a copy at a discounted rate on the internet.

Step 2: Take Blackboard on a test run

A great deal of your coursework requires the Blackboard system. Unfortunately, this system can be problematic because it is not compatible with MACs, AOL, and some security settings. To prevent last-minute complications and to make sure that your computer is compatible with Blackboard before the add/drop period closes, get online and test the system. You can log directly onto the site by typing bb.wpunj.edu into the address line of your browser (this site will work even if the university system crashes). On the face page of this site you can find all the information you need to use Blackboard successfully. You do not need to log in to access technical support and get help.

Step 3: Access the companion website

Every week you will use the textbook's companion website to submit a quiz. Test the link entitled "Quizzes" in the left margin of this class' Blackboard page to ensure that you can access the website and to create a student account for quiz submissions. You will need to enter my e-mail address, hernandezt@wpunj.edu, to have your quiz scores sent to my account.

Step 4: Get into the habit of checking your university e-mail

I will communicate important information to you via your e-mail address. Make sure that you can access it and remember to check it regularly.

Step 5: Review the syllabus

The syllabus outlines all the requirements for this course - review it early so you will not be surprised by its content or deadlines. *I will be very strict about your adherence to deadlines.* A 10-point extra credit quiz regarding the details of the syllabus can be accessed through Blackboard. This syllabus is also posted on the Blackboard system.

Course description

This course provides an overview of the field of psychology by reviewing different perspectives, research methods, and major theories regarding personality, development, and mental processes. Emphasis will be placed on the application of course material to students' everyday lives and interactions with others. Progression through the semester is largely self-directed, with regular quizzes to aid students in keeping with the reading schedule.

Course objectives and learning outcomes

Students will gain an understanding of human behavior and the mental processes that drive it. They will apply their newly acquired knowledge to their own lives, thereby raising self-awareness. By the end of the semester, they will be able to describe the various psychological perspectives, the

connection between mind and body, and the subfields included under the broad term “psychology.”

Grading

Your grade for this course will be determined by the number of points you accrue throughout the semester. A maximum of 521 points can be earned: 100 for exams (50 points each), 195 for quizzes, 60 for term paper, 156 for Blackboard discussion board entries, and 10 for the extra credit quiz. Your lowest quiz score and lowest Blackboard discussion score will be dropped and will not be computed as part of your final grade; your grade will be computed on only 484 points.

Examinations. The midterm and final exams will be posted on Blackboard and must be completed by 11:59 pm on the day noted on the syllabus. These exams are time-limited, so you will not have enough time to look-up answers as you complete these exams; you must study and prepare as you would for a traditional college course. Please note that you will need a fast internet connection, not a modem-based connection, to write tests. If your home connection is slow, you may need to use a computer on campus or at your local library.

Quizzes. You will be quizzed regularly to keep you on track with the course readings. They will be taken online on the companion website for your textbook. The web address for this site is http://bcs.worthpublishers.com/exploring8e/default.asp#577581__593085__. When you log onto this site, choose Quiz 1 for the chapter that is assigned for that week. You will need to register as a student by using the link on the top right side of the website. When prompted to give your instructor’s e-mail address, type hernandezt@wpunj.edu. All quizzes must be completed prior to 11:59 pm on Friday of the weeks that they are assigned. This deadline is non-negotiable, so please plan ahead and submit your quizzes as early in the week as possible to avoid last-minute complications. The lowest quiz score will be dropped. If you encounter a complication that prevents you from submitting a quiz by the due date, you will earn a zero for that quiz. Don’t panic – this score will be count as your lowest score and will not be computed into your final grade.

Term paper. A short paper, 1 - 2 pages in length, typed and double-spaced will be due. Research is not required for this paper; instead, this assignment is designed to increase self-awareness by prompting you to identify the perspective you normally take when interpreting life events. Proper use of the English language is important, so be sure to follow all rules for spelling, grammar, and punctuation. You can earn a maximum of 60 points: 10 for proper use of grammar and correct spelling of words; 10 for cohesiveness and organization; 10 for references to the ideas noted in your textbook; 10 for including a paragraph about the perspective that you normally take in your personal life and giving an example, 10 for exceptional, thought-provoking work that shows you put a lot of effort into your paper, and 10 for simply turning the paper in on time. You’ll notice that with this grading paradigm, only exceptional papers that meet the deadline will earn all 60 points; I expect college-level writing and will be strict in my grading. The term paper is due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, March 20. Please send your paper to my e-mail address by this deadline. If you miss the deadline, you will forfeit 10 points.

Blackboard. In lieu of participating in a classroom discussion, you will share your opinions and insight through the Blackboard discussion board. Unlike the traditional classroom setting, you cannot hide in the back row and go unnoticed for an entire semester - I will know if you do not participate! I will post thought-provoking questions, web links, or supplemental readings, and you will be required to respond directly to my post and to at least one of your classmates’ responses. Please don’t feel compelled to limit your responses to nods of agreement; the discussion will be livelier and you will learn more if you share dissenting opinions. Just remember that typed responses have a tendency to be perceived more harshly than the spoken word, so be sensitive to how your posts will be received.

A maximum of 12 points can be earned each week for discussion board posts, 5 points for the first post and 7 points for the second. If you encounter a complication that prevents you from submitting a post by the due date, you will earn a zero for it. Don't panic – this score will be count as your lowest score and will not be computed into your final grade. To maximize the points earned for your posts, I recommend that you first write your posts on a Word or Mac document, reread them, use spell-check to catch errors, and make all necessary alterations before cutting and pasting your post to Blackboard. Each discussion thread will close by 11:59 pm on Sunday of the week it was assigned. Roughly, I will be grading discussion board posts in the following manner:

Post #1

1 point **Proper use of grammar and correct spelling of words.** Up to two grammatical and spelling errors will be forgiven for each post. More than two errors will result in the loss of this point. Remember, no text-speak!

1 point **Writing is cohesive and well-organized.** This point will be lost if information is presented in a jumbled, unorganized way, if proper paragraphs are not formed, or if sentence structure is very awkward.

1 point **References to academic material.** Reference either material from your textbook or from academic websites (not Wikipedia or personal blogs). If you choose to reference the text you must name researchers, studies, or phenomena and note the page numbers where the information can be found. If you choose to reference an academic website, include the web address so your classmates can access the material and respond to it intelligently. An improper citation will result in the loss of this point.

1 point **Personal perspective is clearly stated and supported.** Resist the urge to write a post as if it were a book report! Instead of summarizing information, think critically about the ideas and concepts that are presented and share newly acquired perspectives that have resulted from your studies. Or, formulate and share an opinion that is based on academic material, life experiences, and your own deep thought. Remember, if you state an opinion without supporting it with examples, you will earn only half of this point.

1 point **Exceptional work that is thought-provoking, well written, and stands out from the rest.** This final point is reserved for exceptional work and is issued sparingly. If you earned all 5 of these points for an entry, you clearly put a lot of thought, time, and effort into your response. Very well done!

Post #2

The second post can earn a maximum of 7 points, following all of the above guidelines and adding another 2 points for responding to one of your classmates. When responding to someone else's work, address that person by name so she knows that you are conversing with her. If you do not respond directly to another writer's entry, then you forfeit two points.

Technical information about Blackboard

The best way to access Blackboard is at bb.wpunj.edu because this web address is not affected when the university system is down. Please note that Blackboard has some limitations that could prove to be problematic for you. For example, you must turn off your pop-up blockers before starting an exam, and your computer is not compatible with Blackboard if you use Safari or AOL. Any questions or problems should be directed to Blackboard technical support, which can be reached on the BB website (bb.wpunj.edu).

Communication

If you have a personal matter that you do not want broadcasted on Blackboard, you can reach me by sending a note to my e-mail address, but always include PSY 110-82 in the subject line to flag your

message as high priority. I will also start a discussion thread on Blackboard for clarification of the course material that will allow your classmates to respond to your inquiry or concern. Of course, I will monitor these responses and correct any misinformation. If I need to share important information with you I will send a message to your university e-mail address, so be sure to check it regularly.

Schedule of assignments

Week of	Topic	Readings and assignments
January 18	Introduction	Extra credit quiz about details of syllabus is found on Blackboard and due by 1/21
January 24	Overview of psychology	Chapter 1 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
January 31	Neuropsychology	Chapter 2 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
February 7	Consciousness	Chapter 3 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
February 14	Nature vs. nurture	Chapter 4 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
February 21	Development	Chapter 5 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
February 28	Sensation and perception	Chapter 6 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
March 7	Learning	Chapter 7 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday

March 14	Spring Break	Get some much needed rest and we'll reconnect next week . . .
March 21	Term paper due Midterm exam due	1. Term paper must be submitted to my e-mail address by 11:59 pm on Monday, 3/21. 2. Midterm exam will be posted on Monday, 3/21, and must be submitted by 11:59 pm on Friday, 3/25.
March 28	Memory	Chapter 8 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
April 4	Thinking and language	Chapter 9 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
April 11	Motivation	Chapter 10 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
April 18	Emotions	Chapter 11 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
April 25	Personality	Chapter 12 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
May 2	Social Psychology	Chapter 15 Quiz 1 on companion website due by 11:59 pm on Friday Post on Blackboard discussion board by 11:59 pm on Sunday
May 9	Final Exam	Final exam will be posted on Monday, 5/09, and must be submitted by 11:59 pm on Friday, 5/13.

You've completed General Psychology. Congratulate yourself on a job well done and have a great summer!