

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY (PSY 102)

Instructor: Michael Wiederman, Ph.D.
Telephone: 786-3630 (*office*), 446-6367 (*cell*)

E-Mail: mwiederman@columbiasc.edu
Office: 117 Wil Lou Gray Building

Office Hours: I am in class from 9-10:50 am and 12:00-12:50 pm on M-W-F, and 9:30-10:45 am on T-Th. So, typically I will be in my office 11:00 am--11:45 am and 1:00-3:00 pm on M-W-F and 11:00 am--3:00 pm on T-Th. Also, feel free to set a specific time to meet.

Text: *Forty Studies that Changed Psychology* (6th Ed.). Roger R. Hock. Prentice Hall, 2009.
Plus readings online – links found at: www.SmellsLikeCollege.com

Course Objectives

The primary objective in this course is to gain a greater understanding of the study human experience from the scientific perspective of psychology. In addition to certain facts and concepts, the focus of the course is learning how psychologists analyze and study psychological topics from their scientific approach. The goal is development of critical thinking skills and learning how to evaluate claims people make about what we know regarding human behavior and experience or the results of some particular research. Finally, a goal of the course is application of numerous psychological principles to your own life.

To accomplish the course objectives, I have chosen a non-traditional textbook. Instead of one of the many massive introductory psychology texts available, we will be reading a smaller book and material from various sites on the internet. The book is focused on classic research studies in psychology, including the background for the research, the methodology and findings of the particular study, and the subsequent implications and lines of research that followed. This book will serve as a good training tool for learning to think like a scientific psychologist. Because we are not using a traditional textbook for introductory psychology, there is some important material that will be covered through online readings and presentations in class.

General Education Objectives

Several general educational objectives will be met through this course. Coverage of the course content should lead to a greater appreciation for social science as an aspect of the liberal arts curriculum as well as appreciation of human commonality and diversity. The *Studies* text, and the homework questions, foster improved higher order thinking and the ability to critically evaluate information. Also, the small group interaction throughout the semester should result in improved communication skills, as well as a better understanding of the commonality and diversity of human experience.

Course Format

As an incentive to perform the readings assigned for each class meeting, we will not be reviewing the material from the readings. Still, if you have questions or comments regarding the readings, please raise them in class. Otherwise, instructor presentations will consist of important information that is not covered in the readings. A primary pillar of the course is student participation in small groups. You will be given a set of homework and discussion questions corresponding to each reading assignment. You are to write out (or type) your answers to each question and bring those answers to class. Then some class time will be spent

discussing and comparing answers within small groups. Within those groups you will get the opportunity to sometimes be a “student” in that other group members will help you to better understand the material. At other times you will probably end up playing the role of “teacher” as you help other group members. **If the instructor happens to be absent for some reason, still perform your group work for that day. We will maintain the schedule regardless of instructor absence.**

Effective use of the group discussion method requires both verbal participation and an appropriate atmosphere in which group members feel comfortable expressing their ideas. The success of group discussion requires tolerance of differing viewpoints. That does not mean you need to agree with everyone in your group, or that you will always be emotionally comfortable in your group. Many times other people express ideas or opinions with which we disagree, and that may upset us. Fortunately, no one said education was going to be emotionally comfortable. It is what we do in response to that upset that is important. If we withdraw or ignore the issue, everyone misses the opportunity to grow through considering multiple viewpoints. If we express our upset through being emotionally argumentative no one will be able to rationally consider the issues being discussed (and the hurt feelings may interfere with future interaction within the group). Ideally, when someone expresses an idea or opinion that is an emotional trigger for us, we can focus on remaining cognitive—that is, focused on our thoughts rather than our feelings. This allows us to try to intellectually understand why the other person said what she did, and why we believe as we do. The ability to step outside our own beliefs to try to understand someone else’s is a hallmark of an educated person.

Expectations / Grading

Participation (40 possible points--20 possible pts. at midterm & 20 possible pts. at the end): Because of the format of this course, class participation is vital. I do not take attendance, but attendance is a prerequisite for participation. Your level of attendance and participation will be evaluated at midterm and at the end of the course, and 20% of your course grade will be based on those assessments of your preparedness and participation. Participation consists of completing assigned work prior to class, bringing the completed assignment with you to class, and sharing meaningfully in small group discussion.

I recognize that the assessment of participation can be rather subjective, and that my judgment regarding your level of preparedness and participation may be far less than perfectly valid and reliable. So, you will have two opportunities to assess your own level of preparedness and participation and provide a brief summary as input into your grade. A reporting form will be provided, but feel free to simply write or type your comments. After collecting your evaluations, I will report to each student the general impressions conveyed by the other group members (without attributing such comments to any particular student). In terms of a grade, I will factor in the self-assessments and group-member assessments when arriving at an overall score. The membership of the discussion groups will change at midterm, immediately after the first assessment, so that you have all new group members for the second half of the course.

In Case of an Emergency School Closing

If we have an unexpected evacuation or closing of the college, continue to follow the assigned reading schedule. If an exam falls on a cancelled day, the exam will be held the next time the class meets (so be prepared to take the exam). If the college closes for a substantial length of time, monitor Koala Connection and your college e-mail account for information and directions.

Exams: There will be four exams (*50 possible points each*) consisting of short-answer items covering the material since the previous exam. We only have 50 minutes for each exam, so the questions will represent only a sampling of the material we have covered. Because of the limited time, be sure to arrive early on exam days and only write what you need to answer the questions. Answers will be graded on content, not writing style, spelling, or how well they are written. So, dive into answer the question and do not worry about writing in complete sentences or restating the question. If you can answer the question adequately with a list, do so. Also, many of the exam questions will be the same as, or very similar to, the homework questions. So, study your answers to the homework questions, as well as any notes from class.

Scores on 3 exams will be counted toward your course grade. If you miss an exam **for any reason**, that exam will be dropped from calculation of your course grade. If you know well in advance of an exam that you will not be able to take it during class time, see me to set up an alternative time. I try to return graded exams during the class meeting following the exam, so there is only a limited window for making up an exam. Once graded exams have been returned, there is no opportunity for making up that exam. If you miss more than one exam, the first missed exam will be dropped and an alternative version will be used for each of the subsequently missed exams. If you take all 4 exams, the lowest exam grade will be dropped.

To encourage cooperative learning within each group, there is an incentive to help one another do well on the exam (make sure your fellow group members understand the material each day). For exams I, II, and III, if each member of a group takes a particular exam *and* every group member scores at least 39 (78% or C+), then each group member will have 2 points (4%) added to her score (to a maximum of 50 points).

Mini "Quizzes" (*1 possible point each – 10 possible points total*): To promote attendance and being in class on time, there will be a series of 1-point mini "quizzes" on randomly chosen days. The quizzes are not meant to test you, or to be difficult, and may simply involve reinforcing the primary points covered that day, or requesting feedback from you. The slip of paper for each mini quiz will be handed out at the start of class, and anyone arriving after the door has been shut will not receive one. Your completed "quiz" will be handed in at the end of class, as you leave. Because there are legitimate reasons for being absent or late, we will have a total of 12 mini quizzes, counting your best 10 toward your total for the course. That way, even if you are late or miss a couple of times, you still have the opportunity for a perfect quiz grade overall.

Final Grade: The total number of possible points in the course equals 200, and your course grade is based on a straight scale: 179-200 (90-100%) = **A**, 175-178 (88-89%) = **B+**, 159-174 (80-87%) = **B**, 155-158 (78-79%) = **C+**, 139-154 (70-77%) = **C**, 119-138 (60-69%) = **D**, less than 119 (less than 60%) = **F**. **Sorry – there will not be opportunities for extra credit.**

Special Individual Arrangements

If you need accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in the event the building must be evacuated, please see me as soon as possible.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READING(S) to complete before class:</u>
<i>Research Methods, Evolutionary Psychology, and Genetics</i>		
Jan. 20	Making the Most of the Group Experience	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
Jan. 23	Research Methods in Psychology	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
Jan. 25	Critical Thinking about Psychology	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
Jan. 27	Evolutionary Psychology and Human Nature	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
Jan. 30	Genetic Influences on Who We Are	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 19-27
<i>The Brain, States of Consciousness, and Perception</i>		
Feb. 1	The Brain: <i>Structures and Functions</i>	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
Feb. 3	The Brain: <i>The Hemispheres</i>	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 1-11
Feb. 6	Body Rhythms, Sleep, and Dreaming	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 42-56
Feb. 8	Hypnosis: What is it Really?	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 56-64
Feb. 10	Perception (is everything)	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 27-34, 36-42
Feb. 13	<i>Exam I</i> (covering material from Jan. 23-Feb. 10)	
<i>Cognition, Memory, Intelligence, & Learning</i>		
Feb. 15	Cognition, Judgment, and Decision Making	<i>Worksheet from Feb. 13</i>
Feb. 17	Interpersonal Communication and Language	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 168-175, www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
Feb. 20	Memory: <i>Models and Functioning</i>	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
Feb, 22	Memory: <i>A Reconstructive Process</i>	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 117-125
Feb. 24	Intelligence (IQ) and Testing	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: 100-109
Feb. 27	Classical Conditioning	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 65-78
Feb. 29	Operant Conditioning (Rewards/Punishments)	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 77-84
<i>First Evaluation of Participation Due</i>		
March 2	<i>Exam II</i> (covering material from Feb. 15-29)	

Social Psychology

March 12	Social Learning (<i>New Groups Formed!</i>)	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 85-92
March 14	Person Perception and Expectancy	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 93-100
March 16	Cognitive Dissonance Reduction	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 183-190
March 19	Prejudice and Stereotypes	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
March 21	Persuasion and Conformity	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 295-300
March 23	Power of the Setting and Social Roles	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 287-294
March 26	Obedience to Authority	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 308-317
March 28	Helping and Altruism	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 300-308
March 30	The Psychology of Happiness	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
April 2	<i>Exam III</i> (covering material from March 12-30)	

Personality, Stress, Coping, and Clinical Psychology

April 4	Individual Personality: "The Big 5" Clusters	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
April 9	The "Personality" of Cultures	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 217-226
April 11	Control and Learned Helplessness	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 192-199, 242-249
April 13	Stress, Coping, and Health	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 175-182, 210-17
April 16	Psychoanalysis and Defenses	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 235-242, 271-276
April 18	Anxiety Disorders & Behavioral Treatment	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 264-271
April 20	Depression and Cognitive Treatment	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
April 23	Body Image and Disordered Eating	www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
April 25	Psychoticism and Chronic Mental Illness	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 227-235 www.SmellsLikeCollege.com/PSY102
April 27	Counseling and Psychotherapy <i>Second Evaluation of Participation Due</i>	<i>Forty Studies</i> book: pp. 258-263
April 30	<i>Exam IV – Monday (11:00 am)</i>	