



PSY 2301-04E, Introduction to Psychology
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2023
Monday-Wednesday-Friday 1pm-1:50pm, BA 221

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Will Whitham, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology

Office Hours: TBA

Office: TBA

University Email Address: will.whitham@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: email

Communication Response Time: 24-48 hours Monday-Friday, weekends and holidays may take longer than 48 hours.

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required

Sanderson, C. A., & Huffman, K. R. (2019). *Real world psychology (3rd ed)*. John Wiley & Sons.

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the field of psychology and to give a general understanding of the basic principles of psychology. It provides an overview of the field necessary for later courses.

This course will highlight some of the most interesting experiments within the field of psychology, discussing the implications of those studies for our understanding of the human mind and human behavior. We will explore the brain and some of the cognitive abilities it supports like learning, memory, perception, language, and consciousness. We will examine human development --- both in terms of growing up and growing older. We will discuss the manner in which the behaviors of others

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affect our own thoughts and behavior. Finally, we will discuss some of the mental disorders and the treatments.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- 1) Develop an overview of the field of psychology by studying and reflecting on the topics.
 - 2) Appreciate how psychologists take a scientific approach to understanding human behavior and thought.
 - 3) Practice the convention of scientific discourse appropriate to the audience, purpose and message.
 - 4) Explain the real world phenomena by applying the concepts, theories, and methods learned in our course. Learning how to learn is a good start.
 - 5) Nurture scientific thinking. This is an approach to information that combines a high degree of *skepticism* (questioning what “everybody knows”), followed by *objectivity* (using empirical data to separate fantasy from reality) and *rationalism* (practicing logical reasoning).
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

You need to be able to use the following.

- Microsoft Office or equivalent
- Socrative app
- D2L
- PDF

In addition, refer to the following:

<https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources/essential-technological-skills/>

Instructional Methods

This course is a face-to-face class. During our lecture, we will focus on deepening your understanding of the important concepts and theories through lectures, demonstrations, and class discussions. Prior to each week’s lecture, you will be expected to complete the reading materials before the class.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Your attendance is a significant factor in student course grades. Start with attending our class and do the following basics.

- 1) Check and read class emails promptly for announcements, updates, clarifications, etc.

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- 2) Take notes as you listen to lectures, read the assigned parts of the textbook to check if your listening comprehension matches with the textbook descriptions, and fill in the missing pieces.
 - 3) Quiz yourself often. Can you define a concept in your own words? Can you answer 3 or 4 questions of the textbook practice questions correctly?
 - 4) Review the materials on a regular basis. Consider the *Pomodoro technique*. Set aside 15-20 minutes each day and study. Do at least 3 Pomodoro sessions each week. Depending on your needs, you may need to do more. For more details, refer to “*Secrets of Student Success*” in our textbook Ch1.
 - 5) Complete assigned coursework on time.
 - 6) Complete the hands-on activity during the announced times.
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GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

- A = 90%-100%
- B = 80%-89%
- C = 70%-79%
- D = 60%-69%
- F = 59% or Below

Makeup exams and assignments

If you become sick, you must schedule to retake the assignments within two weeks of the due date and must provide documentation of your illness.

If you are traveling and representing the university (e.g., band members, athletes, etc.) you need to request accommodations BEFORE the exam or assignment is due, not after.

If you encounter any technical problems when you take any timed tests or assignments online, take screenshots and email me immediately for potential makeup.

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Assessments

Learning engagement: 5%

Engagement is the heart of this course, as it is how we learn the most from each other; therefore, it is imperative that all students attend class and actively contribute ideas and reflections. Class session attendance is required and will be a part of your course grade as outlined on the syllabus. For each class session, please observe the following.

While anyone can be late on rare occasions, habitual lateness is unacceptable. Also once in class, be prepared to stay for the entire class period.

If you must miss a class, you are responsible for what transpires during class sessions whether you are there or not.

Be respectful toward all members of the class and their views.

Socratic time: This class will employ active learning strategies via the use of in-class socratic questions. Please download Socratic at your mobile phone or laptop. These socratic questions will help you to assess your understanding of material presented on that day of class or your memory for information presented in previous classes. **If you forget to bring the app device or if your batteries are dead, you cannot obtain credit for that day of class. We will not have Socratic make-up. However, we will drop the 4 lowest Socratic scores.**

Learning engagement will be assessed via your performance on the Socratic questions, your participation in discussions, and my assessment of your class participation.

Disruptive behavior or disrespect toward other students or the instructor will not be tolerated. At the very least, it will cost a letter grade, and is subject to further penalty.

Critical thinking essays: 10%

Critical thinking refers to the process of objectively evaluating, comparing, analyzing, and synthesizing information. Students will answer two essay-style questions via the assignment folder in D2L. Essays should include insightful ideas and comments that are complete and well explained as well as defended by specific evidence. You are not allowed to use direct quotation from sources. Please use your own words and ideas.

An essay should be at least 1 paragraph but no more than 3 paragraphs in length. The essay will be graded as pass/fail. Essays that demonstrate the student has reviewed, understood, and contemplated the material will earn a passing grade.

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Essays that are weak, trivial, unclear, ungrammatical, or not defended by evidence will earn a failing grade.

There are 5 critical thinking essay questions. You must choose at least **TWO** of these questions to answer during the semester. Answers are due at the end of the week for the corresponding chapter. **If you complete more than 2 essays, only the 2 essays with the highest grade will be used in calculating your final grade.** These are graded pass/fail. Thus, once you pass two of the essays, you do not have to do anymore for the semester.

Exams: 75%

There are five exams in the course. Questions will be designed to reflect each of the student learning outcomes with emphasis on SLO 2, 3, and 4.

The weighting of the five exams is as follow:

- Exam 1 (10%)
- Exam 2 (15%)
- Exam 3 (15%)
- Exam 4 (15%)
- Exam 5: Cumulative with emphasis on Ch 12-13 and Ch 14 (20%)

Research Engagement via Sona: 5%

A goal of this class is to help you familiarize yourself with research methods. One way to obtain this goal is to have you participate in research studies. Participating in research studies contributes to students and faculty at A&M - Commerce, your understanding of how research is conducted, and human knowledge in general. All students in this class will be required to participate in the psychology department's participant pool or complete alternative assignments.

Students must complete a total of 6 sona credits. However, if you do not have any unexcused no-shows (i.e., you do not show up for a study or show up too late), you will be required to complete only 4 sona credits. You are **only allowed to complete 50% of your sona credits via online studies**, the remaining credits need to be completed via lab studies. Each week there are lab study schedules posted. Sign up in advance and show up on time.

When you first sign into the experiment management system (EMS), you will be asked to take a prescreen. The prescreen takes about 20 minutes to complete. If you complete the prescreen in the first two weeks of the semester, you will receive 0.5 free experiment credit. This can be combined with later experiments that are worth 0.5 credit.

The alternative to Sona research participation will be to complete original 2-page article summary for each credit hour. The instructions and assigned articles can be

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found on D2L. If you choose to do the research alternative instead of the research studies, the article summaries will be due **Dec 3, 2023**.

Hands-on Activities: 5%

Instructors will announce these hands-on activities in advance. To receive credits, students are required to follow the procedure announced promptly and successfully complete the activities. **You must bring your laptop and mobile device with you.** Please remember to fully charge your device in advance. There is no makeup for the required hands-on activities, so please attend to the class announcement in advance. If you absolutely must miss one, you will be given alternative assignment.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

| Week | Chapter | Topic |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| 1 | 1 | Introduction and Research Methods |
| 2 | 7 | Memory |
| 3 | | Exam 1 Review, Exam 1 9.15 |
| 4 | 2 | Neuroscience and Biological Foundations |
| 5 | 4 | Sensation and Perception |
| 6 | | Exam 2 Review, Exam 2 10.6 |
| 7 | 5 | Consciousness |
| 8 | 7 | Learning |
| 9 | 9 | Development |
| 10 | | Exam 3 Review, Exam 3 11.3 |
| 11 | 12 & 13 | Psychological Disorders |
| 12 | 11 | Personality |
| FALL BREAK | | |

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|----|----|---|
| 13 | | Exam 4 Review, Exam 4 12.1 |
| 14 | 14 | Social psychology, Careers in Psychology, Final Exam Review |
| | | Cumulative Final Exam (Exam week) |

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

myLeo Online Learning Management System

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: *Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner.* Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

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COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Typically, I will respond to your emails within 24 hours from Mon to Fri. It will take longer during the holidays and weekends. I can also meet with you via Zoom. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Generative Text Policy

Unless authorized by me, you are expected to complete all course assignments without assistance from any source, including artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT.

Course Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Academic Honesty

You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you are not allowed to submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesprocedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age,

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genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel