

## **PSY 111: Basic Principles of Psychology (Fall, 2009)**

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Class Times: MWRF; 10-10:50

### **Text**

Tavris, C. & Wade, C. (2001). Psychology in perspective (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

### **Course Description and Goals**

The primary goal of this course will be to introduce students to the basic conceptual approaches used in modern academic psychology. This introduction will come through a combination of lectures, class discussions, class demonstrations, readings and writing assignments. Psychology is an extremely diverse discipline and a wide range of topics will be discussed—e.g., the neuroanatomy of the brain, the training of animal behavior, the workings of memory, the behavior of people in crowds, and the interpretation of dreams. These topics will be drawn together by looking at psychological phenomenon through the lens of five different perspectives--biological, behavioral (learning), cognitive, sociocultural and psychodynamic. When taken together, these five psychological perspectives will help to illuminate the ways that people think and act in the world.

### **Exams**

There will be 3 regular in-class exams (worth 100 point each) and one final exam (worth 150 points). The final exam will be partially cumulative. The questions will be of a variety of types including multiple choice, definition, long answer and short essay. Many of the broad, big-picture questions from which test items will be drawn will be given in lecture from class to class. Some questions will be drawn exclusively from reading material not directly covered in class. A study guide articulating broad topic areas will be provided to students prior to each exam.

### **Written Work & Homework Assignments**

Throughout the semester, there will be five homework assignments worth 5 points each. Most of these will involve a small amount of writing. These assignments are intended to enhance learning by encouraging students to think critically and by preparing students for particular classroom activities. These assignments may be announced the day before they are due. Homework turned in late will not be accepted unless arrangements are made.

A final project worth 75 points will be due the last week of class. This project can be on any topic related to psychology. The main goal of the final project will be to demonstrate that students have assimilated the five perspectives. Students will use specific insights/study results/speculations/theories/observations, etc. to make connections to each of the five perspectives. The paper will have a library research component to it. The assignment will be

explained in more detail as the course progresses, and there will be several check-in dates for different phases of the project. Grades on late projects will be reduced by 10% for each weekday they are late.

### **Attendance, Preparation & Participation**

Class attendance is expected and will be taken for each class. Students are allowed one unexcused absence throughout the term without penalty. Unexcused absences after the first will result in a deduction of 5 points per class from the student's overall grade.

Also, regular, informed participation is expected. This means that not only should students ask questions and engage in discussions, they should be prepared for class. Participation will be worth 50 points and will be factored in based on the following scale:

Outstanding	50 points
Very Good	45 points
Good	40 points
Average	35 points
Below Average	30 points

### **Extra Credit**

There will be extra credit opportunities for participation in psychological research being conducted by faculty and other students. Students will receive 3 points for every ½ hour of participation time, up to a maximum of 18 extra credit points. After that, it's for fun. [Note: There will be alternative activities available for each research opportunity so students should not feel coerced into participating in research.]

### **Grading**

(Total of 600 points)	
540-600	A
480-539	B
420-479	C
360-419	D
359 & Below	F

Assignment of +'s & -'s will be made based the overall distribution of scores and special considerations such as degree of improvement.

**If there is anything preventing you from doing your best in this class (medical issues, learning disabilities, personal issues, etc.), please contact me as soon as possible, and I will do what I can to help you maximize your learning in this course.**

### **Class Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
9/07	Introduction to Psychology	1

9/09	Introduction to the Perspectives	1
9/10, 9/11 & 9/14	Research Methods	2
9/16	Intro to the Biological Perspective	3
9/17	Human Similarities; Language Development	3
9/19	Human Differences; Heritability	3
9/21 & 9/23	Neurons & Neurotransmitters	4
9/24	The Brain	4
9/25	Clinical Neuropsychology	--
9/28	Evaluating the Biological Perspective	Essay #1
9/30	<b>Exam #1</b> ; Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 & Essay #1	
10/01	Introduction to the Learning/Behavioral Perspective; Classical Conditioning	5
10/02	Skinner & Operant Conditioning	5
10/05	Evaluating the Learning/Behavioral Perspective	Essay #2
10/07	Intro to Cognitive Perspective	7
10/08	Social Learning & Gender	6
10/09	Bandura's Bobo Doll Study	--
10/12 & 10/14	Piaget & Cognitive Development	7
10/15	Intelligence	7
10/16	Reasoning; Cognitive Errors	7
10/19 & 10/21	Memory	8
10/22	Evaluating the Cognitive Perspective	Essay #3

10/23	<b>Exam #2;</b> Chapter 5, 6, 7, 8 & Essays #2, 3	--
10/26	<b>Fall Break</b>	
10/28	Intro to the Sociocultural Perspective/Group Beh.	9
10/29 & 10/30	Authority & the Milgram Study	9
11/02	Attitudes & Motivation	9
11/04	Cultural Psychology	10
11/05	Cross Cultural Relationships	10
11/06	Culture and the Self	10
11/09	Evaluating the Sociocultural Perspective	Essay #4
11/11 & 11/12	Freud & Psychodynamic perspective	11
11/13	Jung	11
11/16	Evaluating the Psychodynamic perspective	Essay #5
11/18	<b>Exam #3;</b> Chapters 9, 10, 11 & Essays #4, 5	--
11/19-11/20	Putting It All Together—Movies, Sex & Drugs	Essay #6
11/23	Interpretation of Dreams; Process of Interpretation	--
11/25-11/27	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	--
11/30 & 12/2	Erikson & the Development of Identity	11
12/03	The Humanistic Perspective	11
12/04	Kohlberg, Gilligan & Moral Development	7
12/7-12/11	Mental Disorders and Treatment	12
	<b>Final Projects Due 12/9</b>	
Week of 12/14	<b>Final Exam (as per college schedule)</b>	