**General Psychology**

**Spring, 2009**

**What:** Psychology 2

**When:** TTh 11:00-12:15

**Who:** John Terrell, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: MWF 2-3; T 5-6; Th 2:30-3:30

**Why:** Course description: This class will examine the many ways that scientists discuss and explain human behavior and mental processes. Lectures, videos, classroom demonstrations, activities, and assignments are designed to help you explore and understand this complex field of study. You will be encouraged and expected to be a participant in the teaching process by being involved in class activities and exercises. The exams will contain some things that are discussed in lecture but not in the text, and some things that are discussed in the text but not in the lectures. So, **both** **class attendance and reading the textbook are very important for doing well in the class.**

**Course outcomes** are as follows:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

A. explain the nature and origin of the empirical field of Psychology.

B. describe the relationship between historical figures and appropriate psychological theories.

C. identify psychological concepts relating to the nervous system, sensory and perceptual processes, states of consciousness, learning ability, memory, motivation and emotion, human development, personality, and stress management.

D. explain human behavior throughout the lifespan, biologically, behaviorally, cognitively, humanistically, psychologically, and culturally.

E. demonstrate knowledge of the empirical data related to the aforementioned concepts.

F. demonstrate knowledge of basic research methodology.

G. identify future directions in psychological research.

H. explain the impact of cultural issues in the formation of psychological concepts.

**Text:** Plotnik, R. (2005). *Introduction to Psychology.* (8th Edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth Publishing.

**The textbook for the course is required**.  Copies of the textbook can be purchased in the campus bookstore.  Please do not try to get through the course without the text.  There will be a copy of the text on reserve in the library also.

**What, again:**

Course Requirements: There will be three midterms and a final. All exams will be worth 100 points, and will be a combination of multiple choice and essay questions. Additionally, 100 points will be available by participating in class activities, debates, and test review exercises. If you are absent from class, you will not be able to receive the participation points for the activity from that day, so continued absences might become a problem in the number of points that you have earned. There will also be a term paper worth 100 points, which is discussed on the last page of this syllabus.

Exams:

Make-up exams will be allowed only in the rare case of extreme emergencies, and at the discretion of the instructor. Students are not generally given, and should not expect, a make-up exam to be allowed without written documentation of the emergency condition (illness, accident, family emergency, etc.), and then only if some notice is given in advance of the exam. **The lowest of your midterm exam scores will be dropped in the evaluation of your final grade.** This means that missing a midterm will not necessarily count against you, but missing two will certainly hurt your final grade. However, **all students must take the final exam in order to pass the course and no make-up exams will be allowed for the final exam.**

Attendance and Class Etiquette:

You should be on time for all classes, and especially for the exams, because very important information is often given at the very beginning (and at the very end) of the class period. If you are often late to class, you won’t receive the benefit of the participation points that are an important component of your grade. Also, tardiness and leaving early are both disruptive to the class, so a **½ Absence will be assigned to those students arriving late or leaving early.** **If you accumulate more than 4 absences in the first 9 weeks of class, you will be dropped from the course. You may be dropped from the class without warning for lack of participation due to absences at any time during the semester if you have more than 4 absences.**

***Turn off all cell phones and pagers before coming into class. Please refrain from talking to other students during lectures and class discussions, and be respectful of the opinions and experiences of all class members.***

Special assistance:

If, after the first exam, you are not testing well in this class, please seek assistance for studying and test preparation.   *If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e., Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities ACT (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.* If you have difficulty with test taking and need some assistance on how to prepare for exams, how to study for exams, or how to reduce your anxiety before taking an exam, please see me several weeks before the exam and I will offer you assistance. Everyone has the potential to do well. **Let’s do whatever it takes to make sure you get the extra help you need.**

**Me, again:**

There are two ways to reach me if you want to during the course of the semester:     
               1. You can leave me a voice mail message. Since it is a voice mail system you may call it anytime 24 hours a day.  Please leave a detailed message with a phone number and the time you would like me to call you back.     
   2. The best way to reach me quickly is to email me.  I usually check email every day and reply soon.  My email address is john.terrell@reedleycollege.edu.  
If you do not have an email account you may open one in the Library Computer Lab.

**Grades**: Final grades will be decided on the following scale. There will be a total of 500 points possible from the three 100-point midterms, the 100-point final, the 100-point paper, and 100 points available from in-class and participation activities (remember, your lowest test score will be dropped):

500-465 A (93%) 384-365 C (73%)

464-450 A- (90%) 364-350 C- (70%)

449-435 B+ (87%) 349-335 D+ (67%)

434-415 B (83%) 334-315 D (63%)

414-400 B- (80%) 314-300 D- (60%)

399-385 C+ (77%) Below 300 Don’t go here!

**When, again:**

**Topic Readings**

**Week 1 (1/12)**

Introduction Module 1

1. Historical schools of thought

2. Modern approaches

3. Cultural perspective

**Week 2 (1/19)**

Memory **1/19- Happy MLK Day!** Module 11-12

1. Sensory memory

2. Short-term memory

3. Reasons for forgetting

4. Recovered Memories

**Week 3 (1/26)**

Cognition Module 14

1. Errors and biases in reasoning and thinking

2. Nature of language

**Week 4 (2/2)**

Sensation and Perception Module 5-6

1. Structure of the senses

2. Function of the senses

3. Perceptual development

4. Visual and Auditory perception

**Week 5 (2/9)**

Consciousness Module 7-8

1. Continuum of consciousness

2. Sleep and dreams

3. Altered states

4. Hypnosis and meditation

**Week 6 (2/16)**

**Exam #1- (2/19)**

**(On exam day, please bring a Scantron 886-E and a #2 pencil. The Scantron form can be purchased in the book store.  You will need a total of 4 Scantrons for this course.)**

Social Psychology Module 25

1. Prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination

2. Attribution theory

3. Attitudes

4. Social influence: conformity, compliance, obedience

5. Interpersonal attraction and aggression

**Week 7 (2/23)**

Psychological Research Module 2

1. What psychologists do

2. Research methods

**Week 8 (3/2)**

Learning Module 9-10

1. Classical conditioning

2. Operant conditioning

3. Cognitive learning

**Week 9 (3/9)** **Exam #2- (3/12)**

Biological Bases Module 3-4

1. Basic units of the nervous system

2. The nervous system

3. The endocrine system

**Week 10 (3/16)**

Motivation and Emotion Module 15-16

1. Theories of motivation

2. Sexuality

3. Theories of emotion

**Week 11-12 (3/23-3/30)**

Personality Module 19-20

1. Psychoanalytical theory

2. Trait/Social cognitive theory

3. Humanistic theory

4. Biological theory

**Week 13 (4/6) Have a Great Spring Break!**

**Week 14 (4/13)**

Development **Exam #3- (4/16)** Module 17-18

1. Social Cognitive development through the lifespan

2. Moral development through the lifespan

3. Emotional development through the lifespan

4. Attachment

**Week 15 (4/20)**

Stress & Coping Module 21

1. Nature and theories of stress

2. Sources of stress

3. Coping with stress

4. Stress and personality types

**Week 16-17 (4/27-5/4)**

Disorders Module 22-23

1. Defining normal and abnormal behavior

2. Anxiety disorders

3. Mood disorders

4. Dissociative disorders

5. Somatoform disorders

6. Schizophrenia

7. Personality disorders

**Week 18 (5/11)**

Psychotherapy Module 24

1. Medical model

2. Cognitive-behavioral model

3. Humanistic model

4. Psychoanalytic model

**Week 19 (5/18)**  **Final Exam**

**Monday, 5/19**

**11-12:50**

***This syllabus is subject to change and/or revision during the academic term.***

**Have a GREAT SEMESTER-If you have any questions, just ask!**

**Term Paper**

1. Subject: Pick a topic that lies on the “borderline” of scientific psychology and write a paper that supports or disconfirms the subject. Possible topics include but are not restricted to

ESP

"Smart" drugs

Psychics

Animal experimentation

Astrology

Near Death Experiences

OR ANYTHING ELSE THAT INTERESTS YOU!

2. Length: 4 pages of text (normal margins, double-spaced, 12-point font, not including title and reference page.)

3. Cite at least 5 references (in either APA or MLA styles). Make certain that each side of the argument has at least two references in support. DO NOT OFFER YOUR OPINION WITHOUT EVIDENCE.

4. **Triple check** your paper for grammatical and spelling errors because those elements will be considered, with content and originality, in the evaluation of the assignment.

5. Due at the last class session before Spring break (those papers turned in early will receive more lenient grading).

Possible sources for the “skeptical” position:

Sagan, C. (1996). *Demon Haunted World*

Shermer, M. (1998). *Why People Believe Weird Things.*

Hines, T. (1988). *Pseudoscience and the Paranormal.*

Gilovich, T. (1991). *How We Know What Isn’t So.*

**The “P” Word**

Please note that plagiarism is a violation of Reedley College policy. Anyone deemed to have submitted a plagiarized paper will automatically receive a failing grade. Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to, failing to provide complete citations and references for all work that draws on the ideas, words, or work of others, failing to identify the contributors to work done in collaboration, submitting duplicate work to be evaluated in different classes without the knowledge and consent of the instructors involved, or failing to observe computer security systems and software copyrights.