Instructor: Brandy Lucas, Ph.D.

**Psychology 2: General Psychology**

Spring 2012

Tuesday/Thursday 11:00—12:15

E-mail: Brandy.Lucas@reedleycollege.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Text: Plotnik, R. (2009). Introduction to Psychology (9th Edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth Publishing.

**Course Description**

This class will examine the many ways that scientists discuss and explain human behavior and mental processes. Lectures, videos, classroom 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 include material from both the text and lecture; it is important that you attend class regularly in order to have all of the necessary information. I will include information in the lecture that is not available in the text, and I will not include everything from the text in the lectures. Students who read and take notes in class will have the best learning outcomes.

**Course Outcomes**

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

* Explain the nature and origin of the empirical field of psychology.
* Describe the relationship between historical figures and appropriate psychological theories.
* 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.
* Explain human behavior throughout the lifespan, biologically, behaviorally, cognitively, humanistically, psychologically, and culturally.
* Demonstrate knowledge of the empirical data related to the aforementioned concepts.
* Demonstrate knowledge of basic research methodology.
* Identify future directions in psychological research.
* Explain the impact of cultural issues in the formation of psychological concepts.

**Course Requirements**

**Exams:**

There will be four midterms and a final. All exams will be worth 100 points, and will be a combination of multiple choice and essay questions. Make-up exams will not be given except in the case of a documented emergency or a university-excused absence, and you must notify the instructor before the exam in order to arrange a time for the make-up exam. The lowest of your midterm exam scores will be dropped in the evaluation of your final grade (you will be graded on three of your midterms and the final). 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. The score on the final exam will not be dropped in the final grade evaluation.

**Attendance and Participation:**

Additionally, 100 points will be available by participating in class activities, discussions, debates, and/or 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 will become a problem in the number of points that you have earned. If you are in class but fail to participate in a meaningful way (as determined by the instructor,) you will receive no points for the exercise or discussion.

You are expected to be on time for each class period. If you arrive after the instructor has started lecturing, you will forfeit any participation points for that class period. If you are often late to class, this will impact your overall grade. If you accumulate 4 or more absences in the first 9 weeks of class, you will be dropped from the course.

Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated in class.  Disruptive behavior includes things like: leaving class early, coming in excessively late, working on assignments for other classes, talking with other students during class time, texting or using a cell phone in any way, or anything else deemed so by the instructor.  All cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off before class begins, and they must be stored out of sight for the entire class period. Any student who uses, checks, or refers to a cell phone, or other electronic device or has any such device in sight during an examination may expect to receive no credit and a failing grade for the examination.

**Term Paper**

1. Subject: Pick a topic that offers some controversy about the science of psychology, and offer both sides of the argument in your paper. Possible topics include but are not restricted to:

Explanations for mass murder

Medication for children

Gene “alteration” in fetuses

Aversion therapy for alcoholics

Deception in experiments

OR ANYTHING ELSE THAT INTERESTS YOU!

2. Length: 5 pages of text (normal margins, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, not including title and reference page.)

3. Cite at least 5 references in APA style.At least 2 of the references should be from a peer reviewed journal article (the others may come from books, journals, and certain internet sources). Your references should NOT come directly from internet sources (just random sites that might show up on google). Make certain that each side of the argument has at least two references in support. Any opinion that you might have about the topic should be supported by evidence from your references.

4. Please checkyour paper for grammatical and spelling errors because those elements will be considered in the evaluation of the assignment.

5. In order to help you improve your writing ability and grade on this assignment, there will be an interactive component in which you will read and edit a paper from one of your peers. This assignment will not only help give you feedback before I read your paper (and catch any grammatical/citation errors), but will also factor into your participation grade based on the quality of the feedback you give to your peer.

6. The first draft is due on March 13. You will turn in your feedback/critique of your peer’s paper on March 20, and then will turn in your final draft of the paper on March 27. It is in your best interest to turn in your paper on time; late papers will be penalized 5 points per day that they are late. If you do not turn in your first draft to be peer edited, you will automatically forfeit 20 points from your overall grade, and you will not be able to complete the feedback assignment (which will impact your participation points).

\*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.

**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.

**Grades**

Final grades will be decided according to the following scale. There will be a total of 700 points possible:midterms (300 points), final exam (100 points) research paper (100 points), pop quizzes/blackboard activities (100 points) and attendance/participation (100 points)

|  |
| --- |
| A 630—700 points |
| B 560—629 points |
| C 490—559 points |
| D 420—489 points |
| F 419 points and below |

I will keep your grades updated on blackboard so that you are able to track your grade over the course of the semester. If you believe that your grade is not accurately reflecting the amount of time and energy that you are putting into this class, please let me know. If you are having difficulty in understanding the material or taking the exams we can work together to improve your learning experience and/or grade in the course.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Week of: | Reading | Subject |
| 1 | January 10 | Module 1 | History, modern approaches, culture |
| 2 | January 17 | Module 2 | Psych research |
| 3 | January 24 | Module 3-4 | Nervous & endocrine systems  \*Exam 1 |
| 4 | January 31 | Module 5-6 | Sensation & perception |
| 5 | February 7 | Module 7 | Sleep and dreams |
| 6 | February 14 | Module 8 | Hypnosis and drugs  \*Exam 2 |
| 7 | February 21 | Module 9-10 | Classical & operant conditioning/Cognition |
| 8 | February 29 | Module 11-12 | Memory |
| 9 | March 6 | Module 13-14 | Intelligence/Thought and language |
| 10 | March 13 | Module 15-16 | Motivation/Emotion  \*Exam 3 |
| 11 | March 20 | Module 17-18 | Infancy, childhood, adolescence |
| 12 | March 27 | Module 19-20 | Freudian, Humanistic, Social Cognitive and Trait theories |
| 13 | April 3 |  | Spring Break! |
| 14 | April 10 | Module 21 | Health, stress, and coping  \*Exam 4 |
| 15 | April 17 | Module 22 | Assessment and anxiety disorders |
| 16 | April 24 | Module 23 | Mood disorders and schizophrenia |
| 17 | May 1 | Module 24 | Therapies |
| 18 | May 8 | Module 25 | Social psychology |
| 19 | May 15 |  | Final Exam: Thursday May 17 11:00-12:50 |