Psychology 300 – General Principles
Spring 2015

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TEXTS: Psychology, Hockenbury & Hockenbury, 6th Edition;
Psychology 300 PowerPoint, Stewart, 2nd Edition

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this course is to 1) provide you with a brief introduction to the major theories and topics of interest to psychologists, 2) increase your understanding and appreciation for the scientific research conducted by psychologists, 3) encourage critical thinking and careful analysis of psychological theories, research and other issues, and 4) aid in your personal adjustment to life.

More specifically, upon completion of the course, you should be able to (student learning outcomes):

- compare the major theoretical perspectives in psychology.
- describe the general subject areas of psychology
- differentiate between commonly used research methods in psychology and their applications
- apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings to personal, interpersonal, occupational, and social/community contexts
- incorporate systematic critical thinking in arriving at conclusions about behavior and mental processes
- examine the role that culture and diversity play in various aspects of human behavior and mental processes
- distinguish between the ethical implications of psychological research and the responsibility to pursue and use knowledge wisely

These objectives will be fulfilled through a combination of instructional methods: lecture, class discussion, video presentations, textbook study, a writing assignment, and testing.

STUDYING AND LEARNING IN THIS COURSE
There is no required homework (other than the writing assignment described later) in this class. Success is based upon your ability to learn from lectures, discussions, and the assigned textbook. Regarding the classroom portion of this course, you should take notes on whatever is covered in class. The material presented in class is critical to your learning and is designed to elaborate on, give examples of, and to stimulate critical thinking about the material that is presented in the textbook. The PowerPoint book is designed as a basic outline of class lectures. It will facilitate note taking and includes some additional information that will aid in summarizing key information. The textbook is also a central
aspect of the course and assigned chapters should be read prior to the class periods in which they will be discussed. When reading, it is usually best to focus on main points and general concepts. Even though the detail is often important to your overall understanding, you should not spend all of your time trying to memorize definitions and specific detail. Seeking an understanding of the material, while taking note of the important details, should be your goal. In general, class lectures and textbook information will supplement each other, with lectures providing highlights and discussion, and the textbook providing more detail and background. **The study questions found on my website will help you identify the information in lectures and the textbook that is most likely to show up on tests.**

**GRADING**
Your grade will be determined by your performance on five tests, a summary/analysis paper, several “two-minute essays,” and extra credit. The list of tasks or assignments (excluding extra credit which will be covered later in the syllabus) and the number of points you can earn from each is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test 1</th>
<th>Test 2</th>
<th>Test 3</th>
<th>Test 4</th>
<th>Test 5</th>
<th>Summary/analysis paper</th>
<th>Two-minute essays</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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The paper and two-minute essays will be graded on a 90% (A), 80% (B), 70% (C), 60% (D) scale. However, each of the five tests will be graded on a curved scale depending upon the performance of the class as a whole. As a result, it is impossible to determine the final grading scale for the class until after all the tests have been completed. As a rough guide only, if this semester is similar to previous semesters, an A will be earned by approximately 87% of the total, a B by approximately 75%, a C by approximately 61%, and a D by approximately 50%.

**TESTS**
Tests will consist of multiple-choice questions, the majority of which will come from the textbook. We will be covering much of the textbook material in class, but it will still be necessary for you to have a good knowledge of the basic material in the book. The study questions on my web site will help determine the information in the textbook not covered in class that is still important to know. Each test will cover the three chapters discussed in class over the previous three weeks, with the exception of the last test which will cover only the last two chapters. **There are no comprehensive exams and no final exam in this class.** You will need a Scantron form #882 for each test.

To encourage appropriate preparation for the tests, you will be allowed to use the front and back of one 3X5 note card during each test. What you put on the note card is up to
you, but the study questions on my website should provide a rough guide of the material you should know for each chapter.

It is important for students to arrive on time to every class, but especially so on the day of a test. **Be advised that if you arrive after everyone else has begun taking a test, you may not be allowed to take the test at that time.**

You are allowed to make up one test during the semester if you miss it for whatever reason. You don’t need to justify your absence (or your lateness) in order to take advantage of this benefit. All make-up tests, regardless of the particular test, will be held at the time of the regularly scheduled final exam for this class. If you miss more than one test, regardless of the reason, you will only be allowed to make up one of them. You are not allowed to make-up a test for which you received a low score.

**SUMMARY/ANALYSIS PAPER**

To help you gain a greater depth of knowledge in a specific area of your choosing, you are required to find a specific outside resource and provide a written summary of the source as well as a personal analysis of the issues and concepts involved. Resources may include a relevant newspaper, magazine, or journal article, or a relevant educational video presentation. Books, advertisements, pamphlets, Hollywood movies, or personal experiences are not acceptable as sources. Generally, acceptable articles have an identified author and include some discussion of psychological research/concepts. This is not a research paper, so you must use only **one source**. The purpose is to give you experience in thoroughly understanding and analyzing a single, specific published piece of information. In order to earn the best possible grade on this assignment, please pay attention to the following criteria:

- Source is relevant to psychology (ask me if unsure) and **a copy turned in with the paper**
- Source is of sufficient length (generally at least three pages of text - ask me if unsure) and quality to generate at least the required length paper (as indicated below)
- Source has at least some reference to academic research or concepts that have a scientific basis (the source does not have to be a journal article but should have some link to science)
- Paper is typed (double-spaced) with a standard size (12) font, and turned in on time
- Paper is at least **4 complete pages**, appropriately divided between a summary of the source and a personal analysis of the source (**the length of the analysis is more important, and therefore should generally be longer than the summary**)
- Basic rules of spelling and grammar are followed and paper is easy to read and understand
- Summary is accurate and comprehensive (for the main points) and **in your own words/style**
- Analysis shows evidence of considerable thinking about the article and the issues it raises. You may want to relate it to the information learned in this class, argue some of the points made in the article, discuss the implications, relate it to a personal experience, etc. The highest scores go to papers in which some kind of
theoretical discussion occurs. It's not enough to simply state that "the article was good," or that you "agree with it." Even when you illustrate your agreement with the article through a personal experience, you should add other discussion. It usually helps to present alternative views - play the "devil's advocate." At the same time, you should have opinions about the issues stated in the article and these should be presented in your paper. The analysis, which is mainly a reflection of your personal creativity and ability to think, is the most important part of the paper. In writing your paper, you should make it very clear what portions of your paper are summary and what portions are analysis.

This assignment is worth 60 points and is due during class time on the date indicated on the attached schedule. I generally do not accept e-mailed papers, but can make exceptions if requested. It will be accepted late but 3 points will be deducted for every day that school is in session (Monday through Thursday, excluding holidays) that the paper is late. Note that since the paper is due during class time, if it is turned in after class (to my office or the Behavioral/Social Science office) on the due date, it is considered one day late. If the paper is turned in the next school day, it is considered two days late, and so on.

ATTENDANCE (Two-minute essays)
I feel that attendance in class is always important. It shows commitment and a willingness to learn. Past experience has shown me that students who miss class do not do well. This is most likely because the lectures typically pertain directly to the information that will be on the tests. In addition, regular class attendance helps you keep track of important dates such as those for tests and papers. Being on time is also important since it is the courteous thing to do and because I often will give crucial information at the beginning of a class period that may not be repeated later.

The two-minute essays are a way of encouraging attendance. They are also a way to keep you focused on the material. As such, these essays will consist of a short response that you will provide to questions or prompts given in class. The questions or prompts will usually be related to the material discussed in class that day. Your responses will be graded, but usually if you have been awake in class and can communicate your thoughts or knowledge about basic information that was discussed, you will earn the 5 points possible for that day. Since one of the purposes of these activities is to encourage attendance, they cannot be made up if you are absent. If you miss more than a couple of these, you should plan on doing some extra credit (described in the next section) to make up the difference. If you miss 4 or more two-minute essays, you may be dropped from the class.

EXTRA CREDIT (“LAUNCHPAD”)
All students can do extra credit work, and many should in order to ensure the likelihood of a “good” grade in the class. The main extra credit work comes through the LaunchPad online access that is packaged with the textbook if you bought it at the bookstore (you can also purchase the online access separately through the LaunchPad website). Within LaunchPad are specific “LearningCurve” activities associated with each chapter that we will be covering. If you enroll in LaunchPad and complete the “LearningCurve”
activities by the due dates indicated, you will receive **two points for each chapter**. Since we will be covering 14 chapters, you can potentially earn **28 points** if you complete all of the “LearningCurve” activities. This may involve a significant time investment, but the trade-off will likely be nearly ¾ of a full letter grade improvement in the course. In addition, the “LearningCurve” activities are designed to help you learn the material in the textbook, and therefore may help you perform better on the tests.

To complete the “LearningCurve” extra credit work, you must register in LaunchPad by going to the appropriate website for your course section.

If you are in the Monday/Wednesday, 10:30 section, use this site:  
http://www.macmillanhighered.com/launchpad/hockenbury6edsm5/1253554

If you are in the Tuesday/Thursday, 7:30 section, use this site:  
http://www.macmillanhighered.com/launchpad/hockenbury6edsm5/1253558

When you get to the correct site, verify that it is the correct one by matching the course information with the course in which you are actually enrolled. Then follow the instructions, eventually using the access code that came with your book or purchasing one separately on the website.

Note that if you miss a test and make it up at the end of the semester (per the guidelines indicated above under “TESTS”), the extra credit will still be due at the time of the original test date. If the reason for the missed test is sickness or some other excuse that precludes you from completing and turning in the extra credit at the time of the test, please contact me for an extension. Generally speaking, any extension on the extra credit will be very short to ensure that the extra credit work is done as close as possible to the original date of the related test.

**EXTRA CREDIT (ALTERNATIVE)**

For students who wish to earn extra credit but who do not have access to the LaunchPad “LearningCurve” exercises, an alternative is provided. On my own website there are several “study questions” associated with each chapter. By providing responses to the questions in each chapter and turning them in by the due dates, you can earn the two points per chapter as indicated above. Your responses can be handwritten, or typed, and can be e-mailed to me or handed in physically, as long as they get to me by the due dates/times.

You will not be given double credit for doing both the LaunchPad “LearningCurve” exercises and the study questions on my website. Additionally, if you miss a test and make it up at the end of the semester (per the guidelines indicated above under “TESTS”), the extra credit will still be due at the time of the original test date.

**MY WEB SITE**

I have a web site that will prove to be very valuable to your performance in this class. The address is on the front of the syllabus. As you will see, the site includes study questions for each of the chapters we cover (to help prepare for the tests), an example of one of my tests, examples of good papers, an indication of your current points and grade
in the class, and several other items of interest. If you need help accessing the web site let me know.

**STUDENT CONDUCT**

Adherence to certain rules and guidelines will help ensure the appropriate atmosphere for a college class:

- Unnecessary conversations between students during lectures should be held to a bare minimum, and should generally be non-existent during tests.
- Usage of cell phones (including the sending of text messages) and any listening devices is not appropriate in class under any circumstance.
- Baseball type hats, visors, and any type of earphones are not to be worn during tests.
- Plagiarizing or cheating in any form is not acceptable. You may not use another’s words, writing style, or ideas in your own written assignment without giving proper credit. Likewise, copying another student’s answers on a test or completing a two-minute essay for another student is unacceptable.
- Tolerance and acceptance is to be accorded every individual in the class. If there are situations involving other students that interfere with your ability to succeed in the class, please let me know.

Failure to abide by these rules and guidelines may result in loss of points on specific assignments/tests and/or dismissal from the class. In the case of cheating or plagiarizing, I am required to report all incidents to my dean, which may result in a notation in the student’s file and possible dismissal from the college.
# TENTATIVE READING ASSIGNMENT AND TEST SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>TEST/ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week of:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 20-22</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>26-29</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2-5</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>Social Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Test 1: Ch. 1, 12, 11 on Feb 11/12 LearningCurve exercises (or alternative) due by time of test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-19</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Biology of Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 2-5</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Sensation/Perception</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Consciousness</td>
<td>Test 2: Ch. 2, 9, 3 on Mar 9/10 LearningCurve exercises (or alternative) due by time of test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>Summary/Analysis paper due Mar 23/24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 30-Apr 2</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 6-9</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Cognition/Intelligence</td>
<td>Test 3: Ch. 4, 5, 6 on Apr 6/7 LearningCurve exercises (or alternative) due by time of test</td>
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<tr>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>Motivation &amp; Emotion</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-23</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>Gender &amp; Sexuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>27-30</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td>Psychological Disorders</td>
<td>Test 4: Ch. 7, 8, 10 on Apr 27/28 LearningCurve exercises (or alternative) due by time of test</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 4-7</td>
<td>Chapter 15</td>
<td>Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Chapter 15</td>
<td>Therapy</td>
<td>Test 5: Ch. 14, 15 on May 12/13 LearningCurve exercises (or alternative) due by time of test</td>
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Make-up tests (if you missed one during the semester) will be given at the final exam time according to the formal college schedule.