

PSYC-101

Introduction to Psychology

Professor: Dr. Lilia Rissman **Course:** PSYC.101.02 (2231, Fall 2023)

Email: lrrgsh@rit.edu

Time: TuTh 5:00PM - 6:15PM (GLE-2580)

Office: EAS 3376

Office hours: Mon. 2-3 pm; Fri. 11am-12pm

Office hours are hybrid: in person or through zoom (<https://rit.zoom.us/my/lrrgsh>)

Course Description:

This is a great time to be learning about psychology, which is focused on understanding why humans think and behave the way they do. Psychology is the science of the mind: how we perceive others, remember lyrics, learn language, fall in love, grow up, and help each other. This course is a survey of the field with an emphasis on the importance of using the scientific method to measure human behavior, with a strong focus on current knowledge and the most interesting findings in the science of psychology. This is a student-oriented course emphasizing self-knowledge and a metacognitive approach, where participation and engagement with the material are topics of study as well as techniques for learning.

Required Text:

- Pomerantz, A. M. (2018). *My psychology* (3rd edition). New York: Worth, Macmillan Learning.
- Link to the textbook:
<https://rit.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#books/3942148/>
- Either the e-book or a physical copy is fine.
- Note: There are 3 editions. I have assigned the third edition – use an earlier edition at your own risk, as the content is different across the three editions.
- I have selected a subset of 15-30 pages from each chapter to assign, in order to focus some of the (over)abundant information in the textbook. I welcome and encourage you to read the rest of each chapter, but that content will not be included on quizzes or exams.
- Any additional materials will be posted on myCourses (Content) – for example, Putnam (2016) is due on Tuesday 9/5.

Course website:

This course will be managed through the RIT myCourses website. On myCourses, you can find materials, submit assignments and discussions, take quizzes, and keep up with announcements, feedback and grades. For the required research participation component of the course, you will also access the RIT SONA website (see below). Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and posted on myCourses announcements.

Student learning outcomes:

1. Psychology content
 - 1.1. define and explain basic psychological concepts
 - 1.2. interpret research findings related to psychological concepts
 - 1.3. apply psychological principles to personal growth and other aspects of everyday life
2. Scientific thinking
 - 2.1. describe the advantages and limitations of research strategies
 - 2.2. draw logical and objective conclusions about behavior and mental processes from empirical evidence
3. Key themes – provide examples of the following:
 - 3.1. Psychological science relies on empirical evidence and adapts as new data develop
 - 3.2. Psychology explains general principles that govern behavior while recognizing individual differences
 - 3.3. Biological, cognitive, and social factors interact to influence behavior and mental processes
 - 3.4. Our perceptions and biases filter our experiences of the world through an imperfect personal lens
 - 3.5. Learning about psychology can change our lives, organizations, and communities in positive ways

Schedule:

The course content is divided into three units, each composed of 4-6 topics. Each of the three units is followed by an exam.

Date	Day	Topic	Readings due	Assignments due
8/29	T	Introduction		
8/31	TH	Science of psychology	Chp 1: (1) What is Psychology? (4) The Science of Psychology	Be prepared to discuss: This American Life episode 806 (I Can't Quit You, Baby), 0-39:00
9/5	T	Psychology of Academic Learning	Putnam et al. (2016)	
9/7	TH	Brain & behavior	Chp 2: (2) Activity Within the Brain (3) The Brain and Its Parts	Topic Quiz 1
9/12	T	Sensation & perception 1	Chp 3: (1) The Fundamentals of Sensation and Perception; (2) Vision	

9/14	TH	Sensation & perception 2	Chp 3: (3) Hearing; (4) Smell and Taste; (5) Other Senses	Topic Quiz 2
9/19	T	Sleep & dreaming	Chp 4: (1) Sleep; (2) Dreams	
9/21	TH	Memory	Chp 5: (2) Three Steps of Memory (3) Types of Memory (5) the Misinformation Effect (pp 163-167)	Topic Quiz 3
9/26	T	Learning 1	Chp 6: (2) Classical Conditioning	
9/28	TH	Learning 2	Chp 6: (3) Operant Conditioning (until pp. 192); (4) Observational Learning	
9/29	F	Exam 1 review session		
10/3	T	EXAM 1		
10/5	TH	Multiculturalism	Chp 10: (1) Diversity Surrounds You (2) Multiculturalism	
10/10	T	FALL BREAK		
10/12	TH	Cognition 1	Chp 7: (1) Thinking	Topic Quiz 4
10/17	T	Cognition 2	Chp 7: (2) Language	
10/19	TH	Cognition 3	Chp 7: (3) Intelligence	Topic Quiz 5
10/24	T	Motivation & emotion 1	Chp 8: (1) Motivation	
10/26	TH	Motivation & emotion 2	Chp 8: (3) Emotion	
10/31	T	Development 1	Spielman 9.3 Stages of Development (pp. 299-318)	Topic Quiz 6
11/2	TH	Development 2		
11/3	F	Exam 2 review session		
11/7	T	EXAM 2		
11/9	TH	Gender & sexuality	Chp 10: (3) Gender and Sexuality	
11/14	T	Personality 1	Ch. 12: (1) What is Personality; (2) Psychodynamic theory	
11/16	TH	Personality 2	Ch. 12: (5) Trait theory of personality	Topic Quiz 7
11/21	T	Social psychology 1 (ZOOM ONLY)	Ch. 13: (1) Social cognition; (2) Social influence	
11/23	TH	THANKSGIVING		
11/28	T	Social psychology 2	Ch. 13: (3) Social Relations; (4) Prosocial behavior	
11/30	TH	Psychological disorders 1	Chp 14. (1) Why Do Psychological Disorders Develop? (4) Anxiety Disorders and OCD	

12/5	T	Psychological disorders 2	Chp 14. (5) Depressive and Bipolar Disorders; (8) Disorders of Childhood	Topic Quiz 8
12/7	TH	Therapy	Ch. 15: (1) Psychotherapies for individual clients	
12/12	T	Exam 3 review session		
12/14	TH	EXAM 3		

Graded items:

3 Unit Exams (13% each)	39%
7 Topic quizzes (1% each)	7%
Group Video Presentation	38%
Giving feedback on other students' presentations.....	6%
Attendance	10%
SONA requirement*	8 credits required,
<i>failure to complete all 8 credits leads to reduction of final grade by 3.3%</i>	

Graded components explained:

Exams: Exams will be online hosted through myCourses. The exams will be open-book, meaning you can consult the textbook/other readings and your notes. Please do not consult with other students or use Generative AI tools. To learn higher-level concepts and critical thinking skills, you need to first master foundational concepts and skills. Taking an exam without using AI allows you to demonstrate that you have mastered this foundational material.

Exams will consist of multiple-choice, short-answer questions, and short essay questions. Exams will cover material from the textbook and classroom lectures. Exams are semi-cumulative, meaning that some of the content will only be tested during the exam corresponding to the unit in which the content was covered (e.g., in Unit 2 we will cover grammatical structures of language, and you will only be tested on this content in Exam 2). Other content may appear on any of the exams (e.g., we will discuss the scientific method in Unit 1, and you may encounter questions about the scientific method not only in Exam 1 but also in Exams 2 and 3). I will specify in the study guides for each exam which content is cumulative and which is non-cumulative. The purpose of cumulative exams is to help you remember the most important, big-picture ideas of this course (like the scientific method!)

Before Exam 1 and Exam 2, I will offer review sessions during my Friday office hours. The Exam 3 review session will be on Reading Day (December 12; location to be determined). For

those students who cannot attend these review sessions, I will record and upload them to myCourses.

Students who need testing accommodations can choose to be tested through the Test Center operated by the Disability Services Office (<https://www.rit.edu/disabilityservices/test-center>). Makeup exams will be offered at my discretion.

Topic Quizzes:

To help you solidify the material and identify areas where you may need to focus your studying, you will complete a weekly quiz consisting of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. These will be conducted in-class and hosted on myCourses, so you will need to bring a device to class that you can use to take the quiz. These are not cumulative – they will only cover the material from the preceding week (i.e., whatever material was covered after the previous quiz). Topic quizzes are closed-book, meaning you should not use the textbook, the slides, your notes, or Generative AI tools. There are 11 topic quizzes and you may drop your lowest quiz score. Late/makeup topic quizzes will not be permitted.

Group Video Presentation:

Working in groups of 4-5, you will choose a psychological study that you believe is interesting and exemplifies the key themes of the course. You will then work with your group to create a 4-6 minute long video conveying the relevance of this study. You will present your video in class and it will be evaluated by both me and your peers. Groups will have staggered deadlines: starting on November 9, two groups will present their videos on each day of class for the remainder of the semester. One month prior to presenting your video in class, you will post a draft video on myCourses and will receive feedback from me as well as from a selection of your classmates. You will then have three weeks to revise your video before the in-class presentation. Along with your final presentation, you will submit a description of how you incorporated the feedback that you received on your draft and how the members of your team divided up the tasks of the project. Each member of your group will receive the same final grade.

In addition to submitting and revising your own video, you will provide feedback on three of your peers' videos. You will be assessed on the quality of feedback you give to your peers.

See the Group Video Presentation assignment on myCourses for more details.

Attendance: Attendance counts as part of your overall participation grade (allowing for up to 3 absences). Participation will be measured through Mentimeter/TopHat activities. Participating in class will allow you to process the content, ask questions, and share knowledge with your peers. Information that emerges in class meetings will be included on quizzes and exams. You

can miss up to 3 classes with no penalty. If you are ill, or for other reasons need to miss class more often, please email me to discuss a way to keep up and maintain your grade.

***SONA requirement:**

To help students learn more about research in psychology, all PSYC 101 classes require students to complete 8 credits worth of participation in research or research alternatives. All of our research is conducted through an online platform called Sona, so research participation credits are called Sona credits.

Sona credits must be completed by 5pm on the last day of classes. If you have fewer than 8 credits by that time, your grade will be lowered by one "step" (i.e., from B+ to B, from C- to D, from D to F). Each study lists how many credits it offers - 1 per 15 minutes plus a 1-credit bonus for face-to-face studies. So, this will take no more than 2 hours to complete.

Please visit <https://people.rit.edu/amsgss> for more information on how to make an account and complete the research participation requirement. Your instructor will also provide you with a 2-page handout explaining the requirement in more detail. The handout is also available at https://people.rit.edu/amsgss/Participants_Handout_101.pdf.

Grade percentage to letter grades:

93-100 = A

90-92.99 = A-

87-89.99 = B+

83-86.99 = B

80-82.99 = B-

77-79.99 = C+

73-76.99 = C

70-72.99 = C-

60-69.99 = D

<60.00 = F

I (Incomplete) given only for unavoidable circumstances, with written agreement between instructor and student.

Office hours and correspondence:

The best times to meet with me are during my office hours (stated at the top) and immediately after class. You do not need to make an appointment, you can simply drop in. If you would like to meet on zoom during my office hours, just send me an email as I won't automatically have my zoom room open. If you need to meet and none of these times work for you, please get in touch with me via email.

When you email me, please begin the Subject line with the text “PSYC 101.” I will prioritize messages based on urgency: I aim to respond to urgent messages rapidly but less urgent messages will be responded to within a few days. I rarely respond to email on the weekend. Please get in touch with me via email rather than through the myCourses page.

Policies and notes:

- **Academic integrity** is taken very seriously: *You are expected to complete and turn in only your own original work, produced exclusively for this course*; plagiarism will result in an F in the course. As an institution of higher learning, RIT expects students to behave honestly and ethically at all times, especially when submitting work for evaluation. I encourage you to become familiar with the RIT Honor Code (<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/p030>) and Academic Integrity Policy (<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d080>)
- **Title IX** violations are taken very seriously at RIT. RIT is committed to investigate complaints of sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault and other sexual misconduct, and to ensure that appropriate action is taken to stop the behavior, prevent its recurrence and remedy its effects. Please view the Title IX Rights & Resources at RIT. (https://www.rit.edu/fa/compliance/sites/rit.edu/fa.compliance/files/Syllabus_Language_Aug%202020.pdf)
- **Accommodations:** RIT is committed to providing academic accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request academic accommodations such as testing modifications due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Office. Contact information for the DSO and information about how to request accommodations can be found at www.rit.edu/dso. After you receive academic accommodation approval, it is imperative that you contact me as early as possible so that we can work out whatever arrangement is necessary.
- **If you have an illness** that is communicable to others (or if you are too sick to attend), please stay home and get some rest. Lecture slides will always be available on myCourses, and up to 3 absences are included in my expectations about attendance.