

Las Positas College
3000 Campus Hill Drive
Livermore, CA 94551-7650
(925) 424-1000
(925) 443-0742 (Fax)

Course Outline for PSYC 16

SELECTED TOPICS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Effective: Fall 2007

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

PSYC 16 — SELECTED TOPICS IN PSYCHOLOGY — 3.00 units

Selected topics, issues and controversies in contemporary psychology. Study of behavior as a personal, social, and biological phenomenon. Examination of information and theory for practical application. 3 hours.

3.00 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:

Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 4

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. describe theories and principles of selected topic in psychology employing current methods of inquiry available to social and behavioral sciences
2. describe the nature of a selected topic in psychology
3. describe current research relating to the selected topic
4. describe issues and controversies relating to the selected topic

V. CONTENT:

- A. Examination of specific topics in psychology such as: understanding current themes in psychological research; psychology and the media; psychology in the movies; historical approaches to mental health; psychological factors affecting older adults; the "recovered memory" controversy; memory; school violence; the psychology of personal growth; interpersonal relations; child abuse; obesity; substance dependency; careers in psychology; stress management; meditation; counseling skills; ethical issues in mental health; creativity; coping with anxiety.
- B. Examination of current research relating to the topic.
- C. Examination of prominent theories relating to the topic.
- D. Examination of issues and controversies relating to the topic.

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Discussion** -
- B. **Demonstration** -
- C. **Field Trips** -
- D. **Guest Lecturers** - Presentations/Guest Speakers
- E. **Lecture** -

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Lecture 1. "Stress and Disease." B. Readings 1. "Immunity, Stress, and Disease," Chapter 8 in Saplosky 2. Stress: "From the Aroused Brain to the Reacting Heart", from Cerebrum, Winter 2002 C. Class/small group Discussion 1. Identify current life stressors. 2. Describe physical reactions to stress. 3. Identify healthy and unhealthy coping styles. D. Writing Project 1. A 2-3 page essay discussing the effects of stress on health.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Class Participation
3. Home Work
4. Other:

a. Exams

1. Typical multiple choice question:

a. Memory for learned information (such as names and dates) is referred to as: a) episodic memory b)

- procedural memory; semantic memory; or d) priming.
- 2. Typical essay question:
 - a. Howard Gardner, in his book *Frames of Mind*, describes seven kinds of intelligence. How does this model help you understand figures such as Raymond Babbitt ("Rainman") and Forest Gump?
 - b. Homework
 - 1. Readings
 - 2. Essays and opinion papers
 - c. Class Participation

B. Frequency

- 1. Minimum of one midterm examination
- 2. Minimum of one multiple-page paper
- 3. One final examination

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. McGaugh, James L. *Memory and Emotion: "The Making of Lasting Memories."*, Columbia University Press, 2003.
- 2. Sapolsky, Robert M. *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: "A Guide to Stress, Stress-Related Diseases, and Coping."*, W.H. Freeman, 1994.
- 3. Schacter, Daniel L. *The Seven Sins of Memory: "How the Mind Forgets and Remembers."*, Houghton Mifflin, 2001.
- 4. Torrey, E. Fuller *The Invisible Plague: "The Rise of Mental Illness from 1750 to the Present."*, Rutgers University Press, 2001.
- 5. Wedding, D. and Boyd, M. *Movies and Mental Illness: "Using Films to Understand Psychopathology."*, McGraw-Hill, 1999.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: