

Introduction to Psychobiology and Cognition

(SP18_PSYC_OX_110_01J: Spring 2018; Class Nbr: 5513)

Class time: Tuesday/Thursday, 1:40 – 3:20 pm.

Location: Pierce Hall, room 239

Website: <https://canvas.emory.edu/courses/42818>

Instructor: Andrei Popa, Ph.D.

Office: 602 Emory St.

Email: andrei.popa@emory.edu

Walk-in hours: Tuesday/Thursday, 3:30 – 4:30 (No appointment necessary).

If your schedule conflicts with these times, email me with a few time frames that work for you and we'll set up an appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce you to the biological bases of cognition and behavior. We will examine the mechanics and functions of the nervous system and how these low-level operations – by influencing phenomena like learning, memory, motivation, or decision-making – make their way in everyday human functioning.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To understand what makes psychology a scientific endeavor, and how psychologists conduct research.
- To become familiar with and to think critically about several theoretical perspectives (e.g., sociocultural, cognitive, humanistic-existential, biological explanations, etc.) that have shaped past and present-day psychology.
- To learn about different levels of analyses and their significance for psychological science.
- To learn about the many factors that affect cognition and behavior and the necessity of multi-level explanations
- To learn about the methodology of neuroscience, its limitations, and potential.
- Identify basic brain structures and functions and describe their relevance to higher-level processes (e.g., sensation, perception, decision-making, learning, memory, motivation, etc.).
- Become familiar with cellular mechanisms that underlie cognition and behavior (e.g., Long-Term Potentiation; LTP).
- To apply this knowledge to everyday life
- To increase your knowledge, personal development, and appreciation for the scientific study of psychological phenomena.

TEXTBOOK/READINGS

[textbook] Carter, K. & Seifert, C. *Learn Psychology*. (1st edition or 1st edition revised)
<https://www.amazon.com/Learn-Psychology-Kenneth-Carter/dp/0763798983>

Mayr (2002). Variational Evolution. In *What Evolution Is* (pp. 91-99). New York: Basic Books. (text available in Canvas)

METHODS OF EVALUATION & FINAL GRADE

Grade component	% of final grade	Date	Notes
Exam 1	20.00%	February 22	Not cumulative
Exam 2	20.00%	March 27	Not cumulative
Exam 3	20.00%	April 24	Not cumulative
Final exam	30.00%	May 7, 2:00 – 5:00 pm	Cumulative, all material
Attendance	10.00%	(24 meetings = 100%)	

EXAMS (in-class, closed-books). All four exams may include multiple-choice questions, short answers, and/or definitions. The midterms (Exam 1, 2, and 3) are not cumulative, but the final exam will cover all material. Not everything in the textbook will be covered in class, and not everything we cover in class is covered in the textbook. Therefore, it is your responsibility to take careful notes during class and to closely read the textbook. As a general guideline, if I talk about it in class, it's fair game for the exam. A comprehensive study guide is available online.

Opting out the Final exam

Note that you may opt out the final exam if (and only if) your scores on Exams 1, 2, *and* 3 are higher than 93% (A) *and* if you attended at least 93% of all class meetings (~22 classes or so). If each of these scores is higher than 93% you may choose not to take the final exam; in this case, your overall grade will be A.

ATTENDANCE. It is in your best interest to come to every class (prepared and on time), to pay attention, and to take notes. Out of about 26 meetings, you can miss two without penalty. The rest will count towards 10% of the final grade. Note that being more than 15 minutes late counts as an absence. Also note that chronic absenteeism can result in the student's removal from the course.

CLASS PARTICIPATION. Class discussions are excellent learning opportunities. Meaningful participation, although not formally graded, may be used to boost up (never down) final letter grades when they are very close to the cutoff for a higher grade. This assessment is at the instructor's discretion.

EXTRA CREDIT. Extra Credit opportunities are included in each exam (~5% per exam).

Make-up examinations will only be offered in exceptional circumstances, such as serious illness with a doctor's note, a loved-one's wedding, etc. If you miss an exam, contact me via e-mail or in person within 24 hours (before or after) of an exam to discuss re-examination details. Note that the date of the final exam is set by the college; if you seek to reschedule it, please refer to the policy outlined below.

RESCHEDULING THE FINAL EXAM

Students must obtain the permission of the Senior Associate Dean of academic affairs to take a final exam earlier or later than scheduled. Permission is normally granted for documented family emergencies, documented medical reasons, or for participation in educational programs. Permission will also be granted for students scheduled to take three exams on a single calendar day (not three exams within a general twenty-four-hour period). Students with three exams on one calendar day must document their situation with the Senior Associate Dean no later than 5:00 p.m. on Reading Day. Students in this situation will be granted permission to work with one of their instructors to arrange to take one of their exams at an alternate date and time within the official exam week. Leaving early for rides or flights, vacations, relatives' or friends' weddings or graduations, jobs, or having two exams on one day, and other situations, are not considered valid reasons to request an earlier or later exam.

GRADING SCALE

A	≥ 93%	B-	80 - 82.99%	D+	67 - 69.99%
A-	90 - 92.99%	C+	77 - 79.99%	D	63 - 66.99%
B+	87 - 89.99%	C	73 - 76.99%	D-	60 - 62.99%
B	83 - 86.99%	C-	70 - 72.99%	F	< 60%

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Note that any grade of W or WF, including one for administrative course removal, will count against their attempted credit hours for financial aid purposes. Read more about the SAP policy here: http://studentaid.emory.edu/documents/sap/SAP_Policy_UOXF.pdf

COURSE POLICIES

(subject to change)

Oxford College of Emory University's ideals of inclusivity require that we foster an environment where people of diverse backgrounds, identities, abilities, and ideologies are affirmed, respected, and seen as a source of strength; where we strive to learn together, and ultimately thrive communally. If we at all fail to support these ideals, then we encourage discussion towards improvement, and we hope that this statement affirms your right to seek

those discussions via dialogue with faculty, staff, your peers, and the use of the “Speak Up!” system when needed.

As an active member of the Emory community, you are expected to know and follow the ethical standards outlined in the student’s handbook, the university’s honor code, and in the mission statement. This applies to social and academic interactions, within and beyond the classroom, offline and online.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- Arrive on time
- Seek my assistance at any time
- Read the assigned materials before class
- Regularly Check Your E-mail
 - Email etiquette guidelines: <https://students.tufts.edu/career-center/i-need/network/professional-email-etiquette>
- Respect yourself and others
- If you must use other technology than pen and paper, use it for note-taking only.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity includes a commitment to not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Violation of academic integrity in this course includes plagiarizing (submitting the work of another person as your own) and tampering with the work of another student. All students are expected to act with civility and personal integrity; to respect other students' dignity, rights, and property; and to help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their own efforts. An environment of academic integrity is requisite to respect for self and others and a civil community. All work done in this class is subject to the Oxford College Honor Code (link below). Work produced through academic misconduct (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarism, etc.) will be dealt with according to the policies of the Honor Code and will result in a failing grade for the entire course. Unless I tell you otherwise, all work in the course should be done on your own. The College imposes serious penalties for breaches of academic honesty and all cases of suspected breaches of honesty will be reported.

Honor code: <http://oxford.emory.edu/catalog/regulations/honor-code.html>

IF YOU HAVE A DISABILITY, PLEASE MAKE ACCOMMODATIONS

The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, please contact the OAS and complete the registration process. Faculty may not legally provide you with accommodations until an accommodation letter has been processed and discussed with them; accommodations do not start until this point and are not retroactive. Students registered with OAS who receive a letter outlining specific academic accommodations are thus strongly encouraged to immediately coordinate a meeting with their professors to discuss a protocol to implement accommodations that will (or may) be needed over the course of the semester. This meeting should occur as early in the term as possible. Contact Megan Bohinc in OAS for more information at (770) 784-4690 or oas_oxford@emory.edu

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Your feedback about this course is valuable to me, the psychology department, and the college administration. Your comments are taken seriously and the comments are used to improve the course in the future. At the end of the semester, you will be asked to complete an evaluation of this course. I hope that all members of the class will complete this form.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Instructors are encouraged, not required, to accommodate students' academic needs related to religious holidays. Please make every effort to negotiate your religious holiday needs within the first two weeks of the semester; waiting longer may compromise your instructor's ability to extend satisfactory arrangements. [If you need guidance negotiating your needs related to a religious holiday, the College Chaplain, Rev. Lyn Pace, \[ppace@emory.edu\]\(mailto:ppace@emory.edu\), Candler Hall 202, is willing and available to help. ***Please be aware that Rev. Pace is not tasked with excusing students from classes or writing excuses for students to take to their professors.*](#) Emory's official list of religious holidays may be found at http://www.religiouslife.emory.edu/faith_traditions/holidays.html.

CLASS SCHEDULE

The schedule below provides a general plan for the course. Although every effort will be made to follow the schedule, deviations may be necessary.

Day			Topic	Notes
1	Jan 18	TH	Course overview	
2	Jan 23	Tu	Psychology: an overview	
3	Jan 25	TH	Science: an overview	
4	Jan 30	Tu	Psychological Science, 1/2	
5	Feb 01	TH	Psychological Science, 2/2	
6	Feb 06	Tu	Evolutionary Thought, 1/2	
7	Feb 08	TH	Evolutionary Thought, 2/2	
8	Feb 13	Tu	Neuroscience: The Biology of Behavior	
9	Feb 15	TH	Neuroscience: The Biology of Behavior	
10	Feb 20	Tu	Sensation and Perception	
11	Feb 22	TH	Exam 1	
12	Feb 27	Tu	Learning	
13	Mar 01	TH	Learning	
14	Mar 06	Tu	Special topic: choice and preference	
15	Mar 08	TH	Special topic: behavior dynamics; a painless introduction to the computational method	
--	Mar 13	Tu	Spring break, no classes	
--	Mar 15	TH	Spring break, no classes	
16	Mar 20	Tu	Memory	
17	Mar 22	TH	Review	
18	Mar 27	Tu	Exam 2	
19	Mar 29	TH	Thinking	
20	Apr 03	Tu	Language	
21	Apr 05	TH	Intelligence	
22	Apr 10	Tu	Motivation	
23	Apr 12	TH	Emotion, Stress, Health	
24	Apr 17	Tu	Special Topic: a closer look at multiple influences on psychological phenomena	
25	Apr 19	TH	Review	
26	Apr 24	Tu	Exam 3	
27	Apr 26	TH	Concluding Remarks	
	May 07	M	Final exam (cumulative)	Exam time: 2:00 – 5:00pm

Final exam schedule: <https://inside.oxford.emory.edu/academics/registrars-office/course-registration/spring-2017-final-exam-schedule/>