

General Psychology Syllabus

PSY 101 Section XXXX – Fall 2021

INSTRUCTOR AND TEACHING ASSISTANT

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Welcome Message

Welcome to General Psychology! Have you ever wondered why people act how they do, and how you can get them to change? In this course you will explore answers to these questions using major perspectives of the field, including how biology influences behavior, how our environment shapes what and how we learn, how emotions and stress affect our well-being, and how other people get us to act differently and perceive ourselves differently. You will also learn practical skills, backed by scientific research, you can apply to school, relationships, and life in general, and will introduce you to the exciting world of careers in psychology.

Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes

In this course, my goal is for you to have the following learning outcomes:

1. Gain a foundational understanding of the subareas of psychology and apply these perspectives to understanding how we explain (and change) behavior.
2. Evaluate how nature (our genes and biology) and nurture (our environment and culture) work together to produce our experiences and behaviors.
3. Critically analyze scientific methods used in psychology. This includes understanding how to create clear hypotheses, operationalize variables, use scientific reasoning to answer questions about human behavior, and distinguish credible from non-credible sources.
4. Discover areas of psychology that excite or inspire you to apply these concepts to your own life, explore other classes in psychology, or even consider careers in psychology.

In addition to these broad learning outcomes, there are specific objectives listed for each week in the course schedule below.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Textbook

[*Psychology in Modules, 12th Edition*](#). Myers & DeWall.

There are options for the textbook:

- You can get a print hardcover (used or new)
- You can purchase or rent the e-book

If you choose to use the 11th or 13th edition of the textbook, please know that

- There may be questions on the quizzes or exams that are not covered

- Module numbers may not match

Technology

You will need the following technology and software to complete this online course:

- **Internet Connection:** Canvas can function with bandwidths as low as 512kbps, but I recommend a Broadband/DSL connection to most effectively view the online videos.
- **Computer:** The Canvas mobile app is free, and most of this course accessible on the app. Canvas also runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android, or any other device with an up-to-date web browser.
- **PDF Reader:** Some material in this course may be presented as a PDF. To view these materials, you will need the most current version of Adobe Reader.
- **Word Processor:** You will need a word processing application to complete some course assignments. There are many options when it comes to word processing software, such as Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or Apache Open Office.

Lectures

Recorded lectures and slides are posted for each week. The information on the slides and lecture notes should guide your reading in this class.

ASSIGNMENTS

Discussions

Discussions make up 20% of the course grade and cover Course Objectives 1, 2, and 4. There will be a discussion each week (except exam weeks). Most discussions will be based on listening to a podcast and posting an initial discussion question for your peers by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. Then you will respond to at least two of your classmates' questions by Friday at 11:59 p.m.

Homework Assignments

Homework makes up 20% of the course grade and covers Course Objectives 1 and 3. There will be three mini-lab assignments in Weeks 7, 11, and 14. Mini-labs are designed to help you think like a scientist and develop an imaginary psychological experiment. For each of the 3 mini-lab assignments, you will create a presentation and present the last one to the class for the final class discussion. There will also be several other small homework assignments.

Quizzes

Quizzes make up 10% of the course grade and cover Course Objectives 1 and 2. Each week you will have a quiz, which you can retake as many times as you like without any penalty. Your highest score will be counted. Some questions from the weekly quizzes will show up on your exams, so I encourage you to retake these quizzes and use them as study materials!

Exams

Exams make up 40% of the course grade and cover Course Objectives 1 and 2. There are 2 exams in this course, and each is worth 20% of your total grade.

- *Exam 1:* Foundations of Psychology, Research Methods, Physiological Psychology, Genes & Environment, Learning, Development, Consciousness, Perception, and Memory
- *Exam 2:* Motivation, Emotion, Personality & Social Psychology, Psychiatric Disorders, Psychiatric Treatment, and Health & Stress

Departmental Research Requirement

The research requirement makes up 10% of the course grade. All students in PSY 101 are required (by the department) to have a direct experience with psychological research. This participation in research is *mandatory* (although you can choose an alternative experience which involves writing up summaries of research articles). Students who are retaking the course may *not* use research credits completed during a prior semester to satisfy this requirement.

Please read the SONA Student Handout closely. You must complete 6 credits (6 hours) of participation. Directions on how to complete the research requirement are provided on the [Psychology Subject Pool Website](#)

Click on the *Subject Pool* link and follow the instructions for students. Note that the deadline to receive your credits is **Wednesday, November 25th at 5 p.m.**, two weeks before the end of the semester. The deadline for submitting article summaries is **Friday, November 27th at 5 p.m.** Please plan accordingly. Also, note that you **must activate your account before you can sign up for experiments or obtain credit for alternative assignments**. It may take a few days to activate your account. So don't procrastinate!

Extra Credit

You can earn up to 1% of your total grade in extra credit by completing the syllabus quiz.

COURSE GRADING

The course is graded out of 600 points, with all assignments weighted within each category as stated earlier in this syllabus. Grades will be assigned based on the following grading scale:

A = 90 – 100
B = 80 – 89
C = 70 – 79
D = 60 – 69
F = 0 – 59

COURSE SCHEDULE

The table below lists the modules, objectives, and major assignments for each week of the course.

Week	Module	Objective	Major Assignment(s)
1	Foundations of Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand what psychology is and how it developed as a field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion – Introductions Readings – Mod 1 Syllabus Quiz
2	Research Methods, Physiological Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand basic research methods Analyze the ethics of a study Describe how neurons communicate Define major brain structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings – Mods 2, 4, 5, 6 Discussion – Invisibilia How to become Batman Quiz
3	Genes, Evolution, Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate between collectivist and individualist cultures Compare environmental and genetic influences on gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings – Mods 10, 11, 12 Discussion – Invisibilia Everything Good Quiz
4	Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify major issues on which developmental psychology focuses Describe the major theories of cognitive and social development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings – Mods 13, 14, 15 Discussion – Hidden Brain Bringing Up Baby Quiz
5	Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the conditioning process Differentiate between reinforcement and punishment Define observational learning Explain how biology limits conditioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings – Mods 20, 21, 22 Discussion – Hidden Brain When everything clicks Quiz
6	Consciousness and Perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define consciousness Understand sleep and dreaming Describe how drugs impact consciousness Describe how info enters our brains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings – Mods 7, 8, 9, 17 Discussion – Radiolab Sleep Quiz
7	Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate memory models Describe how emotion and sleep influence memory encoding and retrieval Formulate a study plan based on the consciousness and memory modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings – Mods 23, 24, 25 Discussion – Radiolab Memory and Forgetting Create a Study Plan Quiz Mini Lab 1 – Consciousness
8	Review and Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate Unit 1 knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam 1

Week	Module	Objective	Major Assignment(s)
9	Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate drives and incentives • Understand physiological vs. psychological influences on sexual motivations • Critique Maslow's hierarchy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings – Mods 32, 34, 35 • Discussion – Invisibilia Future Self • Quiz
10	Emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe major theories of emotion • Identify the basic emotions • Identify ways of increasing happiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings – Mods 36, 37, 38 • Discussion – Invisibilia Emotions • Quiz • Mini Lab2 - Motivation
11	Psychological Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how disorders develop • Describe symptoms of anxiety, mood, and personality disorders • Describe impacts of traumatic brain injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings – Mods 48, 49, 50, 52 • Discussion – This American Life Edge of Sanity • Quiz
12	Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare major therapy modalities • Develop a basic therapy plan for case studies • Describe how drugs treat disorders • Identify ways to build resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings – Mods 53, 54, 55 • Discussion – Invisibilia The Problem in the Solution • Quiz
13	Social Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the fundamental attribution error and cognitive dissonance theory • Differentiate conformity and obedience • Compare major theories of prejudice • Identify what affects helping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings – Mods 41, 42, 43, 44 • Discussion – Invisibilia The New Norm • Quiz
14	Personality, Health and Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the major trait theories • Explain the stress response system and how stress impacts health • Develop a plan for coping with and reducing stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings – Mods 46, 39, 40 • Add to your Study Plan • Quiz • Mini Lab 3 – Pop Psych Beliefs
15	Study Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate your knowledge of research methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion – Pop Psychology Presentation
16	Review and Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate Unit 2 knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam 2

Please note: This schedule is subject to change. If it is updated for any reason, the class will be notified by email and updates will be posted to the course website.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Public Health Directives

Face coverings are mandatory for all faculty and students in the classroom. Students must follow all active UNLV public health directives while enrolled in this class. UNLV public health directives are found at [Health Requirements for Returning to Campus](#). Students who do not comply with these directives may be asked to leave the classroom. Refusal to follow the guidelines may result in further disciplinary action according to the [UNLV Student Conduct Code](#).

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the University community. We all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's educational mission. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the Internet or any other source without proper citation of the source(s). See the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Auditing a Course

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn, or of instructors to teach. Use of devices such as cellular phones and pagers, or other potentially disruptive activities are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. Students are specifically prohibited to record classes without instructor authorization, including online/remote classes (either audio only, or video and audio). The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative withdrawal of the student from the course.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic forced some instruction to be delivered remotely starting in Spring 2020, numerous students have asked instructors to record their synchronous classes, so that they can access them at their convenience. Instructors who agree to record their classes (audio only, or video and audio) should inform students in advance. Recorded lectures may not be broadly released to anyone, but made available exclusively to those students enrolled in the class during the particular academic term. Recorded lectures must be stored securely, and are subject to the Nevada System of Higher Education's Records Retention Policy, meaning that the recordings can only be deleted 120 days after the end of class (i.e., after grades are posted). Once this requirement is met, the recordings should be deleted. Class recordings are protected from disclosure, as they are deemed part of an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any

responsibility for student or employee violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional [copyright policy information](#) is available online.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [UNLV Disability Resource Center](#) (Student Services Complex, SSC-A, Room 143, <https://www.unlv.edu/drc>, telephone 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to a permanent disability, temporary or permanent medical need, or academic support due to pregnancy are encouraged to contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. Students who are already registered with the DRC should request their accommodations online each semester, and make an appointment to discuss their accommodations with their instructors.

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The Final Exam schedule is typically available at the start of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the end of the semester. See the [Final Exam Schedule](#).

Identity Verification in Online Courses

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus-Canvas.

UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#), which states that “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” is a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute, and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the [Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy](#), which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus-Canvas or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course for reason(s) beyond the student’s control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses, the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the period indicated, a grade of “F” will be recorded, and the student’s GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I” grade.

Library Resources

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the [Libraries' Research Consultation](#) website. You can also [ask the library staff](#) questions via chat and text message.

Missed Classwork

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Missed Classwork policy, under Registration Policies, on the [Academic Policies](#) webpage.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student submits official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a "Drop one" option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate's policy, and an infringement on the student's right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could be reasonably avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/School Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to academic recruitment activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, fine arts activities, liberal arts competitions, science and engineering competitions, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail

Rebelmail is UNLV's official email system for students and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students' Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways in which students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the University. Sending emails within WebCampus-Canvas is also acceptable.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC), at the Claude I. Howard Building, provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information

regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the [ASC website](#) or call 702-895-3177. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the [Writing Center](#), located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3–301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, telephone 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.

Diversity Statement

As an institution of higher learning, UNLV represents a rich diversity of human beings among its faculty, staff, and students, and is committed to aspiring to maintain a Campus environment that values that diversity. Accordingly, the University supports understanding and appreciation of all members of its community, regardless of race, sex, age, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, or political affiliation. Please see [University Statements and Compliance](#).

A successful learning experience requires mutual respect and trust between the students and the instructor. Accordingly, the instructor asks that students be willing to listen to one another's points of view, acknowledging that there may be disagreements, keep discussion and comments on topic, and use first person, positive language when expressing their perspectives.