

PSYS 100: Introduction to Psychological Science (Fall 2023)

Gordon C Baylis

Class Time and Location

Monday and Wednesday 13:50 to 15:10
KTH 1020

General information about this class can be found at <https://blackboard.wku.edu>

Professor: Gordon C. Baylis
Office: KTH 1030
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00 – 2:00
by appointment
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Course Description

An introductory course dealing with principles of behavior, scientific methods of psychology, measurement, learning, perception, motivation, development, personality, abnormal behavior, social behavior, intelligence, and other topics. This course will give you an appreciation of the many sub-specialties within Psychology.

Syllabus Statement

This course fulfills a portion of WKU's General Education Requirement, Category C (Social and Behavioral Sciences). Specifically, this course addresses the following general education goals and objectives:

- provides an understanding of society and human behavior in a manner that describes methods of inquiry appropriate to the scientific study of societal institutions and human behavior
- examines patterns of interaction pertaining to race, gender, ethnic identity, class, community, and other forms of social grouping
- evaluates the impact of heredity and environment on human development and individual behavior

Course Objectives

At the end of this course you should:

- appreciate the "big picture" concepts of the many sub-specializations within the overall discipline of Psychological Science.
- have become prepared for more advanced courses in Psychological Science.
- be a better student.
- have more fun in life.

Required Text: **Please read this before purchasing anything**

eBook:

Wade, Travis, Sommers & Shin (2021). Invitation to Psychology (8th edition).
Pearson Publishers

The e-book for this course can be accessed through Blackboard and is being provided by the Big Red Backpack program. To access the e-book, follow these instructions:

1. Login to Blackboard and select this course.
2. Down the left side, click on "Tools."
3. From the Tools icons on the right side, select "Course Materials."
4. You will see the icon for the e-book allowing you to access it.

Important: Opting-out of the Big Red Backpack will cause you to lose access to the e-book in Blackboard. This will happen a few days after the opt-out deadline passes for the term. If you decide to opt-out, please be prepared to purchase the e-book. To purchase it from The WKU

Store, you can visit them in-store or purchase through their website at wku.bncollege.com. (Be sure to select the term labeled as “opt-out” on their website.)

For more information regarding the Big Red Backpack program, please visit the university’s landing page for the program: <https://www.wku.edu/bigredbackpack/>

Statement on Covid-19

All students are strongly encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccine. In accordance with WKU policy, all students must call the WKU COVID-19 Assistance Line at 270-745-2019 within 4 hours of testing positive for COVID-19 or being identified as a close contact to someone who has tested positive. The COVID Assistance Line is available to answer questions regarding any COVID-19 related issue. This guidance is subject to change based on requirements set forth by federal, state, and local public health entities. Please refer to the Healthy on the Hill website for the most current information. www.wku.edu/healthyonthehill

Teaching Assistants

There are two teaching assistants:

TBD

TBD

They can be contacted by email at any time; feel free to arrange a meeting with either of them (f2f or Zoom).

Attendance

The easy way to do well in this class is to show up. If you want to make your life harder by not showing up after that, then I will not abridge your right to shoot yourself in the foot.

Exams

There will be three regular exams and a final exam, which has a cumulative part. The exams will cover material from both the book and the lectures. They will be composed of multiple-choice questions, plus one or two essay questions. Only the scores from the best exam plus the final will count. The smartest strategy is to take both of the exams and drop the lowest score.

Note: Exams will be given on Blackboard.

Makeup Exams

If you miss an exam for a university-sponsored activity, you must arrange to take a make-up exam with me before the scheduled exam. If you have to miss an exam for illness, family emergency, death in the family etc., you must let me know, and provide some documentation (e.g., note from doctor, obituary). If you miss an exam for any other reason, you have to accept this as an exam to be dropped.

Presentations

If we have learned anything from the last two years, it is the importance of scientists to be able to talk about science. It will never be possible to hide in the lab again. So, you will pick an article to present, and pick a time to present it. I have given some suggestions, but you can come up with your own ideas (please forward them to me for approval first), or you can ask me for an interesting paper in a certain area.

Woke?

I strongly believe in social, racial, and sexual justice. In apparent contradiction to that, I am a strong opponent of political correctness. How can this be possible? I think it is, but feel free to argue with me...

Movies

A lot of what lay people learn about psychological science comes from movies. One particular favorite of mine is the 2000 movie “Memento”. You should watch this movie and answer the following questions:

Does “Lenny” really have a neurological disorder, or is he faking?

Cite evidence in the movie

What disorder?

What can cause such a problem?

Total about half a page

Then, find another movie that portrays a psychological or neurological disorder. Tell me what you find convincing or unconvincing about the movie

Total about half a page

Papers

Periodically, paper titles will be announced across the semester. You need to write two of these – one in the first part of the semester; they will be short – the exact nature and deadlines will be explained when the first titles are announced. If you have a particular interest that you would like to write a paper about, then ask me and I will likely approve.

Research Component

Psychological science embraces the scientific method, and hence entails experimentation. To enhance your understanding of the research process in psychology, you are required to satisfy a research component as a part of Introduction to Psychology (PSYS100). Failure to meet the research requirements fully and on time will result in a grade of Incomplete for the course. (WKU policy is that an “X” automatically turns into an “F” unless removed within 12 weeks of the next full term.) You must complete the 12 credits in order to have the appropriate letter grade assigned. Many experiments are online.

Students are required to earn twelve (12) research credits. Students may earn credit by any of the following means, in any combination: 1) The student may volunteer to serve as a research participant in an approved study being conducted by Western Kentucky University Psychology faculty or students. 2) The student may take quizzes over psychology research articles. 3) The student may propose or ask for an equivalent alternative, which must be approved in advance by the Study Board Administrator (StudyBoard@WKU.edu). An account on the Department’s Experiment Management System (<http://www.wku.edu/psychological-sciences/studyboard/>) will be established for each student at the beginning of the semester. The system will automatically email each student with the login information. This website handles all research scheduling and credit administration. Only credits for which you register online will count.

Credits are earned as follows. Each fifteen (15) minutes of research participation is worth one (1) credit. There are studies listed on the website with credits that vary from one to eight or more. Each satisfactory score on an article quiz is worth one credit. Students interested in taking a quiz on an article can get details at the Study Board website (<http://www.wku.edu/psychological-sciences/studyboard/>)

Complete information about research participation, research credits, and the Study Board can be found at <http://www.wku.edu/psychological-sciences/studyboard/>.

Grading

Best two exams (18% each)	36%
Final exam	24%
Papers (6% each)	12%
Presentation	10%
Memento	7%
Other Movie	6%
Participation	5%

Calculating Your Final Grade

A	90+
B	80 – 89.9
C	70 – 79.9
D	60 – 69.9

Dropping This Class (why would anyone do that?)

In order to drop this class, you must go through normal university registration procedures rather than just not coming to class. If you stop coming to class do not assume that I will drop the class for you.

Blackboard

Materials will be available on Blackboard, quizzes and exams (except the final) are also there. Do not attempt to take exams using a phone, as the rate of dropped connections is high. You will also get reminders via blackboard which uses your official WKU email. You must forward this email to your preferred provider if you don't check it all the time, because if you do not respond to an email through blackboard that requires you to do this, you will be dropped from the class. There will be at least one such email in the first week of classes. You will be dropped if you don't respond.

Class Behavior

Please be respectful of your peers and of me. You must respect the safety of everyone else; any unsafe behavior will not be tolerated. Any bad behavior can distract those around you who are interested and trying to learn. I consider it part of my job to protect students who are interested in the class from the distracting behavior of others. Distracting behaviors include: eating, drinking, talking, text messaging, talking on cell phone, using a laptop for activities unrelated to the class, arriving late or leaving early. None of this is acceptable. If exceptional circumstances arise and you must arrive late or leave early please be seated near the door.

I will directly confront inappropriate behavior. If, after one warning, the inappropriate behavior continues, I will ask the student to leave the class for a week. If the student returns after a week and still behaves inappropriately, the student will be asked not to return. I have great respect for students who are trying to learn and intend to ensure that the class environment allows students the opportunity to learn.

Cheating and Fairness

Presenting the work of others as your own work is plagiarism; this includes copying answers from someone else's exam. Similarly, presenting work for which you have gotten credit elsewhere for this class is *self-plagiarism*. Both types of plagiarism will be considered academic dishonesty and will not be tolerated. Giving another student your answers is also academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty will result in an F in the course.

If you include definitions or any text from the book in your lecture notes, you must put the text in quotes and include the page number next to the quotes. Copying text from another student's notes or previous classes is unacceptable and considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty will result in an F in the course.

If you are ever concerned that you might be accidentally plagiarizing or something about this policy is unclear, please discuss the situation with me before you turn something in to be graded. Serious incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the University Disciplinary Committee to determine what action should be taken at the University level.

Student Disability Services

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability

Services in Downing University Center, A-200. The phone number is 270 745 5004. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from me without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Bottom Line – How to do well in this class

If you show up to class, study for the exams, and do the required things, you will do well. Being a scientist, I have studied the data: 95% of students who do these basics end up with an A or B. If you want to not show up, if you want to fail to submit papers on time, and if you want to forget to study, then yes, you can get a D, or even fail this class. You can make a choice to fail – but I have no idea why some people do this.