Course Description

Course title: Basic Concepts in Psychology
Course number: Psyc 100 (Section 001)
Course discipline: Psychology

Course description: Prerequisite to all 200-, 300- and 400-level courses in psychology. Introduction to psychology as a scientific discipline. Includes an examination of concepts and methods in learning, motivation, development, personality, and measurement.

Course date: Tuesday, January 24, 2006 through Tuesday, May 16, 2006
Location: Enterprise Hall, Room 80
Meeting day(s): Tuesdays and Thursdays
Meeting time(s): 9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.
Prerequisite(s): None

Course Goals & Objectives

This course surveys many fundamental areas within the field of psychology. A principal focus is on how psychology uses scientific methods to measure, understand, and explain individual and group behaviors. Behavior is conceptualized as an interaction between the person and the environment, and it may be influenced by biological predispositions and environmental experiences. To successfully complete this course, you must be able to answer factual questions about behavior and apply psychological principles to new situations.

Course Requirements & Grading

Attendance: You are responsible for all information from each class meeting, including information that may not appear in the textbook. If you miss a class, you should borrow notes from a classmate.

Required Experiment Participation: Each student is required to accumulate five hours of credit for participation as a subject in psychology experiments. For 5% of the grade, all students are required to serve for five hours as participants in psychological research. For students who choose not to participate, attendance at alternative lectures also meets this requirement. This is a course requirement, just as much as the exams. Failure to participate will result in a 1% reduction in the course grade for EACH hour short of the
required five, reducing your final grade by up to 5%. Experiments are posted online at http://experimetrix2.com/GMU/. Register for Experimetrix early, and plan to complete experiment participation requirements early in the semester. Do not miss an appointment you have scheduled, because there is a penalty for missed appointments.

Extra Credit

You may earn extra credit by participating beyond the required five hours in psychology experiments, up to a limit of ten hours. Extra participation will result in a 1% increase in the course grade for EACH hour beyond the required five, raising your final grade by up to 5%. For instance, if you participate for six hours your final grade is raised by 1%, 7 hours by 2%, 8 hours by 3%, 9 hours by 4%, and 10 hours by 5%.

Grading

There will be four multiple choice exams (including the final examination). The first three are not cumulative, but the final IS cumulative. Your grade will be the average of your BEST THREE of the four exams; that is, your lowest grade will be dropped. If you miss an exam for any reason, that will be the exam dropped; THERE WILL BE NO MAKEUPS. If you are satisfied with your grade after the first three exams, you may omit the final. Exam answers must be on Scantron answer sheets (Form 882-E) with 50 test items on each side, which you must purchase in advance at the bookstore.

University Honor Code

Each student is responsible for knowing the rules, regulations, requirements, and academic policies of the university. This is to remind students that the university honor code will be followed in this course.

Textbooks

Required reading  

MyPsychLab: An electronic package providing you with the e-book and access to the website is strongly and very highly recommended.

Your choice:
- Paperbound Text plus MyPsychLab (package): ISBN 0205463096 (recommended)
- Paperbound Text by itself: ISBN 02205415059 (required)

Reading assignments should be completed before each class. You will be an active and more effective learner if you have done your reading before each lecture.

Technology
This course will include lectures and classroom demonstrations, video presentations, and powerpoint presentations.

Instructor Information

Name  
John D. Wasserman, Ph.D.

Email  
jwasserm@gmu.edu

Office location  
David King Hall, Room 2052

Office hours  
Tuesdays 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and by appointment.

Telephone  
(703) 993-1748

Teaching Assistant  
Camelia Mircea: cmircea@gmu.edu

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. If you need to schedule testing time at the DRC, make sure you bring me the appropriate forms no later than the class preceding the test.

Class Dates, Topics, and Reading Assignments

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April 11  Life Span Development (cont.)
April 13  Stress, Health, and Coping  Chapter 10
April 18  Stress, Health, and Coping (cont.)
April 20  Psychological Disorders & Treatment  Chapters 11, 12
April 25  Disorders & Treatment (cont.)
April 27  Ex  am 3
May 2    Social Psychology  Chapter 13
May 4    Social Psychology (cont.)
Tuesday May 16  Ex  am 4: Final Cumulative Examination 7:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Add and Drop Deadlines

Last Day to Add  February 7, 2006
Last Day to Drop  February 27, 2006