Course and Instructor Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Slator
Email: slatore@stthom.edu
Phone: (713) 348-4078
Semester/Year: Fall 2015
Time/Location: M-W-F 9:10-10AM/Jerabeck 201

Course Description
Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. The scope of psychology is extraordinarily broad, covering both human and animal behavior, and ranging from the physiological activity of neurons and hormones, to the effects of emotions on how we think and act towards others, to the influence of social contexts and cultures on our own behavior. This course will provide you with a broad introduction to the vast field. It will provide a basic introduction to a variety of topics (e.g., development, learning, memory, abnormal behavior, social influence), psychologists’ approaches to collecting and evaluating evidence about behavior, as well as how psychological knowledge can be applied to understanding – and improving – everyday life.

Course Objectives
- Develop a solid working vocabulary of psychological terms
- Understand the scientific basis for psychological ideas and research findings
- Learn about important ideas, research findings and issues in psychology, and relate these to current perspectives in various subfields of psychology
- Use critical thinking and analysis to help you understand human behavior as a complex interconnection of factors
- Express your ideas and thoughts orally and in writing
- Cultivate the ability to think like a psychologist
- Learn about careers in psychology

Required Text

Assignments and Grading Scale
Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to actively participate while in attendance. Because your attendance and participation in class is critical to the learning process, you will be deducted 1 point for each day that you fail to show up and engage with the material. Please note that your level of participation is subject to my judgment. Should you choose to sleep, play on your computer, daydream, talk to classmates or text during class time, you will lose your point for that day. Should a student miss class on a day when there is an exam or quiz, not only will you lose the point for that class, you will only be allowed to make up the work if the student provides the instructor with an excuse recognized as being viable by the university (e.g. illness accompanied by a doctor’s note, athletic contest).
Exams (3 x 50 points): There will be three exams during the semester worth 50 points each. The exams will include multiple choice, true/false and short-answer questions that are designed to evaluate students’ knowledge of key issues/topics addressed in course lecture/discussion.

Writing Assignments (4 x 25 points): There will be three distinct writing assignments throughout the semester that will correlate with the chapters we are reading/subjects we are covering. Students will be given a handout with additional instructions and the details of each. Papers will be graded on the following criteria:

- Demonstration of critical thinking, scholarship, and ability to connect and apply the material
- Comprehensiveness and completeness of your responses
- Adherence to the written instructions
- Spelling and grammar

Group Presentation: (50 points) Groups consisting of two people will present on a specific topic from one of the following special topic areas: positive psychology, pathology and abnormal behavior, sport and/or exercise psychology, stress, psychology and the law, or psychology and gender. Groups can elect to focus on any aspect of the special topic. Each group will do a 15-20 minute presentation focusing on the practical information related to their specific topic. One class prior to your group presentation, you must turn in an outline of your presentation, along with the responsibilities of each group member.

The presentation should include the following:

- An overview of the topic—what it is, why it is important
- Practical information related to your topic
- Visual aids (overheads, PowerPoint, etc.)
- ALL group members are required to be in class the day of your presentation

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Cheating and Misconduct

Every member of the academic community is expected to uphold their pledge to the University of St. Thomas Honor Code. In this course, any student suspected of cheating on an exam or written assignment will be reported to the Chair of the Honor Council, and an investigation will ensue. Any questions that you may have about what constitutes an honor code violation in this class can be directed to the instructor.
Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities must contact the office of Counseling Services for Students with Special Needs (Disability Services) by calling 713-525-3162 or 6953. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations must speak with the professor during the first two weeks of class. All discussions remain confidential.
Course Calendar
Changes to the syllabus may be made at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student’s responsibility to keep up with syllabus changes. Please note that the syllabus is broken down by weeks. To the right, I have listed the topics we will cover in the order that we will cover them. The actual class dates that we will cover the material are variable.

Week 1 (3) Introduction to Psychology
Week 2 (3) The Biology of the Mind, Neuroscience and Technology
Week 3 (2) The Biology of the Mind, Neuroscience and Technology
Week 4 (3) Developing through a Lifespan
Week 5 (3) Exam One
Memory
Week 6 (3) Memory
Week 7 (3) Emotions, Stress and Health
Week 8 (2) Emotions, Stress and Health
Week 9 (3) Personality
Week 10 (3) Personality
Exam Two
Social Psychology
Week 11 (3) Social Psychology
Week 12 (3) Psychological Disorders
Week 13 (3) Psychological Disorders
Therapy
Week 14 (1) Exam Three
Week 15 (3) Student presentations