

George Washington University
Department of Psychology
PSYC 001: General Psychology

Course Syllabus Fall 2006

Times & Place

Section 14 (CRN #70754) Tues & Thurs: 11:10am – 12:25pm: Corcoran #302
Section 15 (CRN #73699) Mon & Weds: 12:45pm – 2:00pm: MPA #B07

	<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Teaching Assistant</u>
Name:	Dr. Stephen Forssell	Brandi Rima
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	Include the course name and section number in the subject line of all emails	
Phone:	202-994-6323	202-994-7681
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 2:00 to 3:00 pm Wednesdays 4:00 to 5:00 pm Or by appointment Box in 2 nd floor lobby	Weds 10:00 am to 12:00 noon Box in Hunt Lounge, 2 nd floor

Required Materials

- Gazzaniga & Heatherton, Psychological Science, 2nd Edition, 2006. Norton Publishers (see website for this text at www.wwnorton.com/psychsci)
- Selected additional readings as assigned to be distributed in class or placed on Blackboard

Course Objectives

- To survey the full range of the discipline of psychology in a manner free from theoretical bias
- To provide the student with an understanding of psychological models and theories
- To survey the range of real world applications of psychological theories
- To help students develop and sharpen scientific and critical thinking skills through examining current and historical methods of exploration of psychological and behavioral processes
- To demonstrate both the multifaceted nature of psychology in its many sub-disciplines and its link and importance to other disciplines of study
- To inspire students to reach their highest potential as scholars and thinkers

Course Content

The material for this course will come from three primary sources:

- (1) reading material
- (2) lecture materials
- (3) class participation and interaction

Academic Honesty:

Read and be aware of George Washington University's "Academic Integrity Code" concerning academic honesty, cheating, and plagiarism. All work in this class must be your own. My policy on cheating is simple: STUDENTS WHO CHEAT FAIL THE CLASS, not just the assignment. If you plan to (or feel that you might be tempted to) cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise misrepresent your work as original when it is not PLEASE WITHDRAW FROM MY CLASS IMMEDIATELY.

Scheduled reading assignments:

Listed under Course Schedule, readings are to be completed prior to that day's scheduled class. Additional readings will also be assigned and distributed during class sessions or made available on electronic reserve on Blackboard. Class lecture, discussions, and exercises will be based on these readings. You will be at a disadvantage if you are unprepared.

Class Communication and Progress Tracking

Class communications (information on experiments, announcements of general interest, etc.), lecture support material, and grade tracking (exams scores, results and answer keys, participation scores) will be facilitated via the Blackboard course management system. The Gradebook feature on Blackboard will chart your grades and course progress. Please note the significance of the following notations: A number for a given assignment indicates your score. A check mark "√" or an exclamation point "!" indicates you have completed an assignment, but it has not yet been graded. For in-class assignments, a dash "-" means a grade has not yet been entered. For online assignments, a dash "-" means you have not completed the assignment. A lock icon means you have saved work for an online assignment but have not yet submitted it. In order to get credit for online work you MUST click "submit" (not save). The front page of Blackboard will carry current course announcements. Other links will connect you with grades, the syllabus, exam and experiment information, copies of handouts, and more. You are responsible for checking the Blackboard site regularly. I will send out emails to students from the official registration list when an announcement is urgent, as with a cancelled or rescheduled class. This will go to your official GW email address. You are responsible for checking this email account regularly. Other non-urgent announcements will be posted on the front of the Blackboard course page. You are encouraged to use the group chat rooms for discussing class material and for exam preparation. You may email the instructor directly at the above email address. Your email MUST include both the course name and section number in the subject line to receive a response.

Attendance

Attending class should be considered mandatory for any student with a serious interest in the course subject matter. It is strongly suggested that you attend all scheduled classes. You are, however, personally responsible for your performance as a student, therefore you may choose whether or not you attend class. Leaving class early or coming late is never recommended. However, if you must, do so, sit near the classroom exit and leave or enter **quietly!** Missing class or any part of class has consequences: Students are responsible for material presented and/or discussed during class sessions whether or not this material is explicitly contained in assigned reading material. Because in-class participation is incorporated into the grade rationale, missing class will almost always affect your final grade. If you are concerned about your grade, you will not schedule travel, doctor's appointments, or family events during a scheduled class session. These are not exceptions.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL MATERIAL COVERED DURING ALL TIMES OF ALL CLASS SESSIONS, WHETHER YOU ARE THERE OR NOT AND REGARDLESS OF WHY YOU ARE THERE OR NOT.

If you miss a class or any part of it, **DO** get notes from another student. **DO NOT** ask your instructor or your teaching assistant to "tell you what you missed". The class is taught during the designated course times. If you want to be taught the material, **BE THERE!** I am, however, quite willing to clarify misunderstandings or key points and to answer questions you may have about the lecture or reading material during office hours.

Lecture Format and support materials

Lectures are presented in MS Powerpoint format. As a convenience to students, I place lecture slides on Blackboard prior to the lecture date. This will allow you to print out the presentations to take notes with, focusing more on content than on writing down information. The Blackboard site also has other tools for studying and keeping up with class materials including a link to the publishers' textbook website. **BEWARE!!!** Some students may get the idea that they can get by in the class merely by reviewing the slides on Blackboard without coming to class. This is most definitely NOT the case. The slides most often need additional explanation. Much of the material, including exam material, will be presented orally by the instructor - NOT on Powerpoint slides. Please also be aware that your instructor often makes additions and changes up until the lecture begins. Therefore the version of the presentation you have downloaded or printed may differ slightly from the final presented version. The availability of Powerpoint presentations is provided as a convenience ONLY. It is not a guaranteed feature of class instruction NOR is any unavailability of the presentations for any reason a valid excuse for not being prepared for exams or assignments.

Special Accommodations

Disability Support Services (DSS) students and student athletes must identify themselves to me **prior to an exam or an event-related absence.** Both must follow their respective policies and must submit the required paperwork in order to take advantage of special accommodations regarding exams and participations.

Getting the most out of class

I try very hard to make this class fun and enjoyable. After all, psychology **is** fun! However, just because it's fun doesn't mean it's easy. The course will involve work on your part. Your grade will reflect the amount of effort you put into the course. Be sure to keep up with the material, come to class, ask questions, participate, and become as invested in the material as you possibly can. If you do, you will do well AND have fun.

Grade Rationale:

Grading will be based on the following components:

	<u>Points</u>
Exam	100
Exam	100
Exam	100
Participation	100
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>400*</u>
<i>*this total will be reduced by 4 points for each unit of research not completed by due date (see below)</i>	

<u>Final grade point scale:</u>	
A	400-375
A-	360-374
B+	345-359
B	330-344
B-	320-329
C+	310-319
C	295-309
C-	280-294
D+	270-279
D	255-269
D-	240-254
F	239 & below

Examinations: (300 points)

Exams are worth 100 points each and include material from the readings, lectures, and class interaction. There will be four timed, multiple choice format exams: three (3) during the semester and one (1) during final exam time. Your 3 highest scores on these 4 exams will count toward your point total. You may not use your notes and texts during the exam and you may not confer with other students. None of the examinations are cumulative, including the fourth exam given during final exam sessions. This means each exam will cover only readings and material presented and discussed in class since the previous exam. However, you will be expected to be able to integrate your knowledge from the entire course across examinations, especially as it regards critical thinking and theoretical perspectives. Exam question booklets will be returned to you. Scantrons will be retained by the professor.

Note: I DO NOT GIVE MAKE UP EXAMS. Instead I automatically drop the lowest of your four exam grades. This is actually better than offering make ups, because if you are sick or if there is a family emergency, you do not have to make it up. Additionally, you do not have to notify me that you will not take the exam. Your grade will show as a "0" and will be dropped automatically. If you are fortunate enough not to have gotten sick or had an emergency during the semester, if you have taken the first three exams, and if you are happy with your grade as is, then you do not have to take the final. Alternately, if you take all four scheduled exams, the lowest grade of the four will be dropped and the top 3 exam grades counted in your point total. PLEASE BE CAUTIONED: It may be tempting to use your "free" exam at the beginning of the semester merely because you haven't studied or are otherwise unprepared. I strongly urge you NOT to do so. If you do and are faced with an actual crisis later in the semester that forces you to miss an exam, then you could be in danger of failing the course. IT IS ALWAYS IN YOUR BEST INTEREST TO TAKE THE SCHEDULED EXAMS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. If you do poorly, the grade can be dropped. But if you don't take the exam at all, you lose the opportunity to use the "free" drop exam in the future.

Under no circumstances will I provide an alternate exam date for the purpose of family functions, holidays, weddings, personal special events of any sort, or travel to or from these events. If you must miss an exam for any of these reasons, it will count as your dropped exam. With prior permission, however, you may take the exam with the other General Psychology section (*i.e.*, if you are registered for the Mon/Wed class, you can take the exam with the Tues/Thus class and vice versa). Exams are scheduled according to the official University academic calendar. IF THE UNIVERSITY SCHEDULE IS UNACCEPTABLE TO YOU, PLEASE WITHDRAW FROM THIS CLASS IMMEDIATELY. Alternate exams MAY be scheduled for official university business, and ONLY with proper documentation. The professor reserves the right to determine the format and timing of any and all alternate exams. Students are expected to observe all rules for the taking of exams as stipulated on the exam cover sheet. Key rules include that there will be no bathroom breaks during the exam and electronic devices of any kind (cell phones, laptops, etc.) are not permitted in the exam room. Mere possession of such a device during an exam, even if not specifically observed to be used for cheating, results in immediate failure of the exam. Be sure to arrive on time on exam days. If you arrive after the first student has turned in his or her exam, you will NOT be able to take the exam and will receive a score of "0". Students may challenge exam items by putting in writing an argument for the alternative (incorrect) option selected and why you feel your selection is correct. The professor may, at his discretion, offer full or partial credit for that item. Your right to challenge an exam item expires 15 days after the correct exam items have been posted to Blackboard or otherwise made available for review.

Class Participation (100 points): A great deal of learning will arise from interacting with classmates, asking questions, and relating your own knowledge and experiences of the subject matter. Your regular, active participation in class discussions, critical thinking, and asking of questions will be necessary for you to benefit from the course and complete it successfully. Throughout the semester there will be class exercises or discussions in which you will have the opportunity to earn points for writing brief (one page) reaction papers or summaries. Each exercise will be worth up to 10 points, depending on the quality of your written reaction. There will be no less than 12 participation opportunities to earn up to 100 points toward your final grade point total. Points accumulated above the 100 allocated for participation will NOT be considered "extra credit". Credit will be assessed as follows.

- 10 points: very good, thoughtful, thorough, displays understanding and critical thought
- 8 points: acceptable but not particularly thoughtful or insightful
- 6 points: completed but with minimal effort, shows little or no understanding or thought
- 0 points: no reaction paper submitted

You must be present in class to engage in participation exercises. Likewise, if you miss a participation because you are late to class or leave early, then you have missed it. There will be no "make up" participations – no exceptions! I do not reveal advance information about when participations will or will not be conducted. Some participations will be conducted on Blackboard with equally firm deadlines for completion. These will be announced only in class. Scores for participation will be posted to the Blackboard gradebook shortly after they have been completed. You are responsible for checking Blackboard to ensure proper credit for participations you have completed. You have 7 days from the date of posting to notify the professor or TA of an uncredited participation. Note: TURNING IN PARTICIPATIONS FOR OTHER STUDENTS IN THEIR NAME, OR KNOWINGLY ALLOWING ANOTHER STUDENT TO DO SO FOR YOU CONSTITUTES CHEATING AND IS GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE FAILURE OF THE COURSE.

Subject Pool Research Requirement (points deducted if not completed):

It is a Psychology Department requirement that all students in PSYC 001 fulfill a 3-unit research component. You have two options for fulfilling this requirement. Either you may participate in psychology experiments or you may complete research reports on journal articles (one article report equaling one unit of research participation). It is also possible to combine these approaches. For example, you may complete 2 units of subject pool research and one journal article review. Research participation is NOT EXTRA CREDIT. Four (4) points will be deducted from your final grade point total for each unit not completed. Please note also that **if you miss a scheduled appointment, you will be penalized with additional required units.** Details about the research system including the deadline for participating in research and for turning in your article reviews are listed in the official Experiment Guides available on Blackboard under the "Research Requirement" link. You should print and keep these guides to refer to for the full semester. CAUTION! Get started on doing experiments right away! Toward the end of the semester, participation slots fill up quickly. I cannot waive the research requirement under any circumstances. **Please note: Your professor has absolutely nothing to do with the experiment scheduling system, credits, make-ups, missed appointments, policies or other goings-on. DO NOT ask your professor questions about the psychology department research subject pool because he probably won't know the correct answer. Check the Subject Pool guidelines on Blackboard for information FIRST, then you may direct any questions to psychres@gwu.edu.**

Course Schedule

Note that this schedule incorporates both the Mon/Wed (section 15) and Tue/Thu (section 14) classes. You may attend either or both sessions and may take exams with the other section with advance permission. We will progress through most of the text from beginning to end. Please Note: For section 14, Exam #1 falls on the Tuesday after Yom Kippur. If you won't be in town for the exam, you **must** take it with the other class the following day, Wednesday the 4th. Review this schedule carefully now. Plan ahead and if you're smart you will NOT schedule travel during class times. This schedule is subject to change. Updates will be posted to Blackboard.

Section 14	Section 15	Topic	Readings
Tues Sept 5	Wed Sept 6	Course Intro	Chapter 1
Thu Sept 7 Tues Sept 12	Mon Sept 11 Wed Sept 13	Research Methods	Chapter 2
Thu Sept 14 Tues Sept 19	Mon Sept 18 Wed Sept 20	Genetics & Biology	Chapter 3
Thu Sept 21 Tues Sept 26	Mon Sept 25 Wed Sept 27	The Brain & Consciousness	Chapter 4
Thu Sept 28	Mon Oct 2	Review & Catch up	
Tues Oct 3	Wed Oct 4	Exam #1	
Thu Oct 5	Mon Oct 9	Sensation, Perception & Attention	Chapter 5
Tues Oct 10	Wed Oct 11	Learning & Reward	Chapter 6
Thu Oct 12 Tues Oct 17	Mon Oct 16 Wed Oct 18	Memory	Chapter 7
Thu Oct 19	Mon Oct 23	Exam #2	
Tues Oct 24	Wed Oct 25	Thinking and Intelligence	Chapter 8
Thu Oct 26	Mon Oct 30	Motivation	Chapter 9
Tues Oct 31 Thu Nov 2	Wed Nov 1 Mon Nov 6	Emotions & Health	Chapter 10
Tues Nov 7 Thu Nov 9	Wed Nov 8 Mon Nov 13	Human Development	Chapter 11
Tues Nov 14	Wed Nov 15	Exam #3	
Thu Nov 16	Mon Nov 20	Personality	Chapter 12
Wednesday November 22		No Class to Allow for Thanksgiving Travel	
Tues Nov 21 Tues Nov 28 Thu Nov 30	Mon Nov 27 Wed Nov 29 Mon Dec 4	Disorders of the Mind & Body Treating Mental Disorders	Chapter 13 Chapter 14
Tues Dec 5	Wed Dec 6	Social Psychology	Chapter 15
Thu Dec 7	Mon Dec 11	Catch-up and Wrap-up	
Mon Dec 18: 12:40 to 2:40 pm Tues Dec 19: 10:20 to 12:20		Section 15 Final Exam Section 14 Final Exam	

