

# Course description of general psychology

[Psychology](#), [Psychotherapy](#)



## Course Description

General Psychology is a survey course which introduces the student to the major topics in scientific psychology as applied to human behavior. Applications of these principles will be made to the human experience.

## Policies

Faculty and students/learners will be held responsible for understanding and adhering to all policies contained within the following two documents:

- University policies: You must be logged into the student website to view this document.
- Instructor policies: This document is posted in the Course Materials forum.

University policies are subject to change. Be sure to read the policies at the beginning of each class. Policies may be slightly different depending on the modality in which you attend class. If you have recently changed modalities, read the policies governing your current class modality.

## Course Materials

Kowalski, R., & Westen, D. (2011). Psychology (6th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

All electronic materials are available on the student website.

Week One: The Science of Psychology

## Details Due Points

Objectives 1. 1 Examine the major underlying assumptions of the various schools of thought in psychology. 1. 2 Explain how psychological research applies to various aspects of personal and social life. 1. 3 Determine what guidelines should be applied to the evaluation of psychological research and

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practices. 1. 4Identify ethical dilemmas that may arise in psychological research. 1. 5Describe the basic biological foundations of psychology. ReadingRead Ch. 1 of Psychology.

ReadingRead Ch. 2 of Psychology.

ReadingRead Ch. 3 of Psychology.

ReadingReview this week's Electronic Reserve Readings.

ParticipationParticipate in class discussion. Week 12

Discussion QuestionsRespond to weekly discussion questions. Week 11

Activities and Preparation

Branches of Psychology View the “ Branches of Psychology” video located in this week's Media Enhancements link.

Activities and Preparation

Complexity of Humans View the “ Complexity of Humans” video located in this week's Media Enhancements link.

Activities and Preparation

Perspectives in Psychology

View the “ Perspectives in Psychology” activity located in this week's Media Enhancements link.

Activities and Preparation

Classic Studies in Psychology Watch the “ Classic Studies in Psychology” video located in this week's Electronic Reserve Readings. Activities and Preparation

The Wonder of the Human Brain

Watch the “ Wonder of the Human Brain” video located in this week's

Electronic Reserve Readings. Individual Instructions

Choosing the Right Method Read the following:

The term experimental research describes the systematic process by which scientists seek to understand cause-effect relationships. When conducting experiments, researchers observe what happens when one or more variable is manipulated. The manipulated variable is called the independent variable. Scientists are interested in observing the effects of the independent variable(s) on the dependent variable. The dependent variable is the variable that is measured. When a scientist observes changes in the dependent variable in response to manipulation of the independent variable, a causal relationship may be inferred. When researchers test new drugs, they typically use experimental designs; that is, they manipulate the drug condition (some participants will receive the drug that is being studied and others will receive a placebo) and measure the effects of the manipulation on variables of interest, such as weight loss or blood pressure.

Non-experimental research also examines relationships among variables but makes no attempt to infer cause and effect. Examples of non-experimental methods include descriptive analysis, case studies and correlational studies. One common example of non-experimental research is survey research. Surveys are often administered to hundreds of individuals to better understand how particular variables (such as pet ownership and self-reported stress levels) are related.

Watch the “ Choosing the Right Method” video located in this week’s

Electronic Reserve Readings. Learning Team Instructions

Learning Team Charter Create the Learning Team Charter. Week 2 Individual

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Foundations of Psychology Paper Prepare a 700- to 1,050-word paper in which you examine the foundations of psychology. Address the following components:

- Identify the major schools of thought in psychology and examine their major underlying assumptions.
- Identify the primary biological foundations of psychology linked to behavior.

Prepare to discuss this paper in class.

Format your paper consistent with APA guidelines. Week 18

Individual

Week One Knowledge Check Complete the Week One Knowledge Check.

Week 12

Week Two: Learning

Details Due Points

Objectives 2. 1 Explore the conditioning processes involved with learning. 2.

2 Distinguish between classical and operant conditioning.

2. 3 Define unconditioned stimulus, conditioned stimulus, reinforcement, shaping, and extinction. 2. 4 Examine cognitive-social models of learning.

Reading Read Ch. 5 of Psychology.

Reading Review the Ch. 3 section “Research in Depth: Thinking With Two Minds?” of Psychology. Reading Review this week’s Electronic Reserve Readings.

Participation Participate in class discussion. Week 22

Discussion Questions Respond to weekly discussion questions.

Week 21

Activities and Preparation

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Introduction to Broken Brains Watch the “ Introduction to Broken Brains” video located in this week’s Electronic Reserve Readings. Activities and Preparation

Language Resides Solely in the Hemisphere of the Brain Review the Ch. 3 section “ Research in Depth: Thinking With Two Minds?” of Psychology.

Watch the “ Language Resides Solely in the Left Hemisphere of the Brain” video located in this week’s Electronic Reserve Readings.

Activities and Preparation

Spatial Awareness Resides in the Right Hemisphere of the Brain Review the Ch. 3 section “ Research in Depth: Thinking With Two Minds?” of Psychology.

Watch the “ Spatial Awareness Resides in the Right Hemisphere of the Brain” video located in this week’s Electronic Reserve Readings. Activities and Preparation

Positive Reinforcement View the “ Positive Reinforcement Tutorial” activity located in this week’s Media Enhancements link.

Activities and Preparation

The Shaping Process

View the “ The Shaping Process” activity located in this week’s Media Enhancements link. Individual Instructions

Resources: University of Phoenix Material: Understanding the Research Process

Read Understanding the Research Process located in Week Two and begin working on the assignment, which is due in Week Three. Individual Phobias and Addictions Paper Prepare a 750- to 1, 050-word paper in which

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you discuss phobias and addictions as related to classical and operant conditioning. Phobias and addictions are two emotional difficulties which learning theorists can account for. Include the following components:

- Explore how phobias can be developed through classical conditioning.
- Explore how addictions can be developed through operant conditioning.
- Distinguish between classical and operant conditioning.
- Explain what extinction means and how it is achieved in both classical and operant conditioning.

Format your paper consistent with APA guidelines. Week 28

Learning Team Learning Team CharterSubmit the Learning Team Charter.

Week 22 Individual

Week Two Knowledge CheckComplete the Week Two Knowledge Check.

Week 22

Week Three: Memory, Thought, Language, and Intelligence

DetailsDuePoints

Objectives3. 1Examine the processes of memory and information processing.  
3. 2Describe short-term memory and long-term memory in relationship to each other. 3. 3Compare and contrast language, thought, reasoning, and problem solving. 3. 4Explore the definitions of intelligence and the validity of intelligence measurements. 3. 5Articulate the relationship between memory and intelligence. ReadingRead Ch. 6 of Psychology.

ReadingRead Ch. 7 of Psychology.

ReadingRead Ch. 8 of Psychology.

ReadingReview this week's Electronic Reserve Readings.  
ParticipationParticipate in class discussion. Week 32  
Discussion QuestionsRespond to weekly discussion questions. Week 31  
Activities and Preparation  
Memory in the BrainView the " Memory in the Brain" activity located in this week's Media Enhancements link. Activities and Preparation  
Learning and Memory Watch the " Learning and Memory" video located in this week's Electronic Reserve Readings. Activities and Preparation  
Theories of Language Acquisition Watch the " Theories of Language Acquisition" video located in this week's Electronic Reserve Readings.  
Individual

Understanding the Research Process AssignmentSubmit the Understanding the Research Process Assignment. Week 38 Learning Team Gardner Intelligence PaperPrepare an 8- to 10-slide Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentation in which you discuss the theory of multiple intelligences developed by Howard Gardner. Select three intelligences and discuss how each can have an impact on your personal success. The following is a list of the eight intelligences:

- Linguistic
- Musical
- Logical-mathematical
- Naturalist
- Spatial
- Bodily-kinesthetic



- Intrapersonal
- Interpersonal

Include detailed speakers notes for each slide.

Format your references consistent with APA guidelines. Week 313 Individual  
 Week Three Knowledge Check Complete the Week Three Knowledge Check.  
 Week 32

Week Four: Motivation and Personality

Human Development

Details Due Points

Objectives 4. 1 Examine basic theories of motivation.

4. 2 Compare and contrast theories of personality in terms of how they explain an individual's unique patterns and traits. 4. 3 Determine the usefulness and the limitations of personality testing. 4. 4 Identify basic theories of development.

4. 5 Distinguish between the influences of heredity and environment on psychological development. Reading Read Ch. 10 of Psychology.

Reading Read Ch. 12 of Psychology.

Reading Read Ch. 13 of Psychology.

Reading Review this week's Electronic Reserve Readings.

Participation Participate in class discussion. Week 42

Discussion Questions Respond to weekly discussion questions. Week 41

Activities and Preparation

That's My Theory View the "That's My Theory" activity located in this week's Media Enhancements link.

## Individual

Life Span Development and Personality Paper  
Resources: Articles located through the University Library or other sources

Select a famous individual from the 20th or 21st century. Obtain faculty approval for your selection prior to beginning this assignment. Conduct research concerning the background of your selected individual to determine what forces impacted his or her life from the viewpoint of developmental psychology. Prepare a 1,050- to 1,400-word paper in which you address the following items:

- Distinguish between the influences of heredity and environment on the person's psychological development. Be sure to specify which area of psychological development: moral, emotional, or other.
- What family issues or social support systems may have influenced the person's developmental growth and adjustment?
- Select two different theories of personality and apply them to your selected figure, and answer the following question: How does each theory differ in terms of how it explains the individual's unique patterns or traits?
- Explain which theoretical approach you believe best explains the individual's behaviors and achievements. Make sure to explain why you made this choice.

Use a minimum of three sources and be prepared to discuss your paper in class. Format your paper consistent with APA guidelines. Week 411

Learning

Team

Abnormal Psychology and Therapy Outline  
Resource: Sample Outline from the Center for Writing Excellence

Create an outline in which you address the following:

- Compare and contrast normal and abnormal psychology.
- Examine at least two mental disorders and two mental illnesses from the perspective of psychology.
- Identify therapies used for each school of thought in psychology for treating mental disorders. Week 42

Individual

Week Four Knowledge Check Complete the Week Four Knowledge Check.

Week 42

Week Five: Social Psychology and Therapy

Details Due Points

Objectives

1. Analyze precursors and consequences of human interaction in terms of social psychology concepts.
2. Explore basic concepts of human interaction from a social psychology perspective.
3. Define abnormal psychology in contrast to “normal psychology.”
4. Examine mental disorders and mental illness from the psychological perspective.
5. Compare and contrast therapies designed for each school of thought in psychology for treating mental disorders.

Reading Read Ch. 14 of Psychology.

Reading Read Ch. 15 of Psychology.

Reading Read Ch. 16 of Psychology.

Reading Read the “Social Influence” section of Ch. 17 of Psychology.

Reading Review this week’s Electronic Reserve Readings.

Participation Participate in class discussion. Week 52

Discussion Questions Respond to weekly discussion questions. Week 51

## Activities and Preparation

Hidden in Plain Sight: Looking for Mental Illness Watch the “ Hidden in Plain Sight: Looking for Mental Illness” video located in this week’s Electronic Reserve Readings. Activities and Preparation

Disorders and DiagnosisView the “ Disorders and Diagnosis” activity located in this week’s Media Enhancements link.

## Individual

Social Influences on Behavior PaperResources: Articles located through the University Library or other sources Prepare a 1, 050- to 1, 400-word paper in which you examine fundamental concepts of human interaction from the perspective of social psychology. Describe at least two examples of how human behavior changes based on social situations. In your description be sure to address the following:

- Describe the specific behaviors and the context in which they occurred.
- Using social psychology concepts, provide an analysis of possible precursors and consequences of the behaviors.
- Identify any associated phenomenon with your selected behaviors, such as social facilitation, social loafing, or groupthink.

Format your paper consistent with APA guidelines. Week 510

## Learning Team

Abnormal Psychology and Therapy PaperPrepare a 1, 050- to 1, 400-word paper in which you discuss abnormal psychology and therapy. Address each one of the following items:

- Compare and contrast normal and abnormal psychology.
- Examine at least two mental disorders and two mental illnesses from the perspective of psychology.
- Identify therapies used for each school of thought in psychology for treating mental disorders.

Use a minimum of three sources.

Format your paper consistent with APA guidelines. Week 513

Individual

Week Five Knowledge Check Complete the Week Five Knowledge Check.

Week 52

Optional Discussion Questions

Week One Discussion Questions

- What guidelines should be applied to the evaluation of psychological research and practices? What ethical dilemmas might arise in psychological research and how might they be avoided?
- How does psychology as a scientific discipline differ from the casual observations we make about the world in everyday life? What are the similarities?
- What do you think the term paradigm means in science? What do you think the term paradigm means in the field of psychology? To what do you attribute the similarities and differences?
- In what ways do you see psychology used in the environment where you work? In what ways do you see psychology used in your everyday life? What are the similarities? What are the differences?

- How do you see psychology linked to the process of education? How can it be used to improve education?
- In what ways do you see the application of psychological research in the various aspects of personal and social life? Explain.
- What guidelines should be applied to the evaluation of psychological research and practices? What ethical dilemmas might arise in psychological research and how might they be avoided?

#### Week Two Discussion Questions

- How do we see observational learning used in the workplace? How do we see observational learning being used in our everyday life? Is observational learning effective? Why or why not?
- How do classical conditioning procedures differ from operant conditioning procedures? How are they similar? Give a detailed example of each type of learning.
- Why would learning language as a toddler be difficult to explain through the application of operant psychology shaping procedures?
- What are the Gestalt principles? What do these principles reference?
- What is the reinforcement schedule that is found in gambling? How does that schedule affect the resistance of the behavior to extinction?
- How do we see observational learning used in the workplace? How do we see observational learning being used in our everyday life? Is observational learning effective? Why or why not?

#### Week Three Discussion Questions

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- How limited is short-term memory when compared to long-term memory? Is the retention of information conscious or semiconscious? Explain your answer.
- Do our thoughts require expression in the form of language? Is it possible to think in the absence of language? Why or why not? How are our thoughts represented?
- To what extent do you agree with the notion that language develops according to a Language Acquisition Device, as suggested by Noam Chomsky? How do you think toddlers develop complex language skills so quickly?
- Do you agree with Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences? Why or why not?
- Is there a general intelligence that can be measured by tests? If so, what might be some of the things that you could use as test items that would tap into this general form of intelligence that would not be overly affected by cultural matters? If not, why not?
- How is reasoning related to logical arguments? Is this form of reasoning superior to what one might come to on his own? Why or why not?

#### Week Four Discussion Questions

- What could parents and teachers possibly do to facilitate cognitive development in Piaget's Formal Operational stage?
- The ability to perform certain tasks appears to change over time. How can we determine if these changes are the result of maturation or learning? Does

either maturation or learning take precedence over the other? Explain your answer.

•What factors make up the Five Factor Model of Personality? Which factor is the most important? Which factor is the least important? Explain your answers. •As most Americans do not practice rites of passage, how do we know when adolescence ends and adulthood begins? What psychological features do we expect to see in adolescents? What psychological features do we expect to see in adults? •What are the positive aspects of peer groups during adolescence? Which of Erikson's stages describes the psychological issues of adolescence? In your opinion, which stage is the most important? Why?

•What events that typically occur during early adulthood correspond to Erikson's stage of intimacy vs. isolation? In your opinion, which event is the most influential? Why?

•How does moral development change for developing individuals? Does it change for everyone? Why or why not? Why do some people fail to develop basic moral values?

•Why are psychologists and other helping professionals particularly prone to burnout during middle adulthood?

•How do you and your parents—or people of their generation—differ in abilities requiring fluid intelligence, in contrast to crystallized intelligence? What do you think about the notion that intelligence declines with age?



•Do you think people in mourning behave differently according to their culture? Why or why not? In your opinion, is grief a universal emotion? Why or why not?

#### Week Five Discussion Questions

•How might social psychology be influenced by cultural factors from one society to another? Provide an example.

•What factors should be considered in distinguishing between normal and abnormal behavior? What relationships of importance might exist between social psychology and abnormal psychology?

•What are the benefits of using diagnostic labels to identify and describe abnormal behavior? What are the risks of using diagnostic labels to identify and describe abnormal behavior?

•What are the apparent symptoms of anxiety in terms of physiological, behavioral, and cognitive indicators? If both a parent and a child experience anxiety in similar situations, how would you account for the influences of heredity, preparedness, and vicarious conditioning?

•What sociocultural factors contribute to the difference in rates of depression between men and women? What biological factors contribute to the difference in rates of depression between men and women?

•As a consumer of mental health services, which type of therapy would you prefer if you did not like to talk about your problems? If you were suffering

from a phobia? If you had recurring nightmares since childhood? If you wanted to improve your marriage?

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