

Introduction to Psychology as a Natural Science Fall 2013(Section 001)

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Office: NMM 319
Office Hours: TBA
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Final Exam: December 9-13
Location: Dansby Hall 213
Time: MWF 10-10:50
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Required Text: Gray, P. (2010). Psychology, 6th Ed. (2010)

Course Description and Objectives

This course will cover the natural science aspects of psychology at an introductory level. Topics covered will include genetics and evolution, the scientific method, neurons and the central nervous system, learning and memory, sensation and perception, and stress-related psychopathologies. The course is designed to provide a basic understanding of these areas for students interested in further pursuing a future in the biological sciences. Course material will consist of the *Psychology* text book by Gray (2010, 6th edition), handouts, including scientific journal articles, and lectures. Regular class attendance is strongly recommended because portions of the lecture will cover material not found in the textbook or handouts.

Grades

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Exams: There will be a total of 4 exams, including a comprehensive final. Exams will be held in class on the date listed on your syllabus. Each midterm exam will consist of a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer questions, and is worth 100 points each. The final exam will be in the same format, but will be worth 150 points. Exam questions will be taken from topics discussed in the text, lectures, handouts and videos. The Final Exam is semi-cumulative; approximately 70% will be derived from new material (everything after Exam III) and 30% from old material (everything prior to Midterm III). We will have a final exam review session on the last day of class. **Finally, you will be allowed to drop your lowest midterm (but not final) exam from your overall grade.**

(Total Possible Points: Midterm: 2 X 100 = 200 + Final: 150=350)

Research Paper: You will be required to complete a 3-4 page term paper (not including references and cover page). You must use standardized margins (no more than 1" on all sides) and font size no greater than 12. You will be free to choose the topic for the paper. However, the topic must: 1) be related to material covered in class and 2) cleared with the instructor. The paper should be written as a review on your chosen topic and must include at least five references. Further instructions on the term paper will be discussed in class. **Due dates:** Topics (for approval by the instructor) must be turned in by November 1, 2013. Due date for the term paper in its *final format* is December 4, 2013 by 5:00 pm (sent via email - preferred, dropped off at my psychology department box or hand delivered to me at NMM 319). If you turn in your paper after 5:00pm on December 4, 10% will be deducted from your grade for each hour it is late. Papers will not be accepted after 11:59 pm on December 4, and you will receive a zero.

(Total Possible Points: 50)

Therefore, a total of 400 points are possible for the semester; your grade will be assigned as follows:

390 - 400 points =	A+
375 - 389 points =	A
360 - 374 points =	A-
350 - 359 points =	B+
335 - 349 points =	B
320 - 334 points =	B-
310 - 319 points =	C+
295 - 309 points =	C
280 - 294 points =	C-
270 - 279 points =	D+
255 - 269 points =	D
240 - 254 points =	D-
Below 259 points	F

Bonus Class/Research Participation: Throughout the semester there will be opportunities to participate in class activities, including a sheep brain dissection lab (details TBA) as well as a number of research projects and seminars. Atlanta is also a hotbed of neuroscience research and there will be many opportunities to attend talks and presentations during the semester. You will receive bonus points if you attend one these talks AND turn in a 1 page summary of what you learned. Summary papers must be turned in within one week of the talk. Participation in these activities, worth 5-10 points each, is strongly recommended and you may accumulate up to 30 bonus points which will be added to your final grade. Bonus credit will not be accepted after the last day of class.

Class Attendance: Class attendance is REQUIRED, as stated in your course catalog, and you should make every effort to attend class ON TIME. If you must miss a class due to illness or participation in school activities (athletic events, attendance at a conference, etc.) you should notify the instructor prior to class and provide written documentation detailing the reason you will be absent. Finally, as stated in the course catalog, you are allowed 3 unexcused absences during the semester. **Students who exceed the maximum number of unexcused absences may be administratively dropped from the course or receive a failing grade.**

Note on Make-Up Exams:

No make-up exams will be given without written documentation verifying an acceptable reason for the missed exam. Acceptable reasons and documentation include severe illness (medical note required), family emergency (must have appropriate documentation), out-of-state collegiate athletic events, and other situations deemed acceptable by the instructor. Unacceptable reasons include over-sleeping, not studying, traffic and parking dilemmas, car maintenance problems, etc. In order to qualify for a make-up exam, you must notify the instructor through e-mail, telephone, or in person **within 24 hours** of the missed exam. The make-up exam must be taken within 72 hours of the original exam date. **All make-up exams will be given in essay format.**

Week	Topic Description	Reading
August 21, 23	Introduction/History of Psychology	Chapter 1
August 26-30	Research Methods	Chapter 2
September 2	Labor Day-No Class	None
September 4, 6	Genetics	Chapter 3
September 9-13	Evolution	Chapter 3
September 16	Exam I – Chapters 1, 2, 3 and Handouts	
September 18, 20	The Neuron and Neuroanatomy	Chapter 5
September 23-27	Sheep Brain Lab ; Learning Processes	Chapter 4 + Handouts
Sept 30-Oct 4	Motivation and Emotion	Chapter 6
October 7	Exam II – Chapters 5, 4, 6 and Handouts	
October 9, 11	Sensation and Perception	Chapter 7
October 14-18	The Visual System	Chapter 8
October 21-25	Memory Formation and Consciousness	Chapter 9
October 28-Nov 1	Social Influence on Behavior; Paper Topic Due	Chapter 10
November 4	Exam III – Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10	
November 6, 8	Stress and the Brain	Handouts
November 11-15	Mental Disorders	Chapter 16
November 18-22	Treatment for Mental Disorders	Chapter 17
November 25	Video: The Frozen Addict	None
November 27-29	Thanksgiving Break	None
December 2	Final Exam Review Session	Review Handout
December 4	Term Paper Due	None
December 9-13	Final Exam Week	

Other Important Notes

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to adhere to the College's policy for academic honesty outlined in the course catalog. Lack of knowledge of this and related policies is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. *Students caught violating the College's policy for academic honesty will receive a failing grade for the semester and be reported to both the department chair and dean of student services.*

Disabilities: Morehouse College is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with documented disabilities. **Students with disabilities or those who suspect they have a disability must register with the Office of Disability Services ("ODS") in order to receive accommodations.** Students currently registered with the ODS are required to present their Disability Services Accommodation Letter to faculty immediately upon receiving the accommodation. If you have any questions, contact the Office of Disability Services, 104 Sale Hall Annex, Morehouse College, 830 Westview Dr. S.W., Atlanta, GA 30314, (404) 215-2636.

WebCT: Copies of the syllabus, PowerPoint slides of the lectures and other important information will be posted on WebCT.

Syllabus: The syllabus is not a contract between instructor and student, but rather a guide to course procedures. The instructor reserves the right to amend the syllabus when conflicts, emergencies or circumstances dictate.