

# Introduction to Psychological Science

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Fall 2018

Course Number	Time	Location	Office Hours
PSY 141A	T/Th 11:50–13:10pm	RKC 102	Tuesdays, 1:30–2:30pm & Wednesdays, 12:00–1:30pm

## 1 Overview

The goal of this course is for you to learn to think like a psychological scientist. We will discuss how experiences and genes shape the brain, and how the brain shapes our behaviors, thoughts, and emotions. In this course, you will learn the scientific methodologies (observational, experimental, and survey) psychologists use to study brain and behavior, and how to critically evaluate sources and communicate effectively about the study of psychology. This course will introduce you to cognitive, biological, cultural, social, developmental, and abnormal psychology. We will also discuss the history of psychology, methods used for psychological research, and some controversies in the field.

You will be expected to come to each class prepared to discuss the assigned reading. Material covered in class and in your reading is more likely to be on the exams. Although you may choose to use a laptop to take notes, this is strongly discouraged. Research shows that students learn better when they take notes by hand.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mueller, P. A., & Oppenheimer, D. M. (2014). The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking. *Psychological Science*, 25 (6), 1159–1168. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797614524581>

Hutcheon, T. G., Lian, A., & Richard, A. (in press). The impact of a technology ban on students' experience and performance in Introduction to Psychology. *Teaching of Psychology*.

## 2 Readings

**Primary text:** Gazzaniga, M. S. (2018). *Psychological Science*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. W. W. Norton: New York, NY. ISBN 9780393624045

This course uses the textbook *Psychological Science*. You can purchase this textbook from the bookstore, or online. Please use a recent version (i.e., the fifth or sixth). You should not feel required to purchase additional electronic materials for this textbook, although they are available. Occasional supplementary readings will be posted on Moodle. Your enrollment key is **decenterF18**, which is case sensitive. When you should read these is detailed in the schedule below.

## 3 Intro Psych Assessment

All three sections of *Introduction to Psychological Science* this semester will be involved in a new initiative of the Psychology Program to assess the way we teach the course—this helps us enormously, and will take only very little of your time. There will be a short survey (approximately 45 minutes) at the beginning and at the end of the semester. The surveys will be in the evening, in **Olin LC 115**, on Wednesday, September 12 at 6:15pm and on Wednesday, December 5 at 6:15pm. Please put these dates in your calendars. Your responses will be anonymous. There will be no way to link them to you or to your grades in the course. (There will also be pizza.)

## 4 Grading

Your grades in this course will come from exams, quizzes, writing assignments, and participation in class and in experiments.

All told, you can earn 200 points in this course:

Points	Assignment
40	Exam 1
40	Exam 2
40	Exam 3
20	4 Quizzes
20	Experiment design
30	Translation writing assignments
10	Experiment participation
200	(Total)

## **4.1 Testing**

### **4.1.1 Exams**

There will be three exams, made up of short-answer questions, including multiple choice, in which you will be expected to demonstrate your understanding of course materials. The second and third exams will include some information from the previously-discussed material.

### **4.1.2 Quizzes**

There will be four quizzes during the semester. They will be entirely made up of short-answer questions which test your knowledge of the material learned recently. You will be given advance warning before quizzes.

## **4.2 Writing Assignments**

There will be several writing assignments during this course. Papers should be submitted on Moodle as PDFs named with your last name and the assignment name (e.g., “Dainer-Best experiment participation”). They are due by the beginning of class on the day indicated on the syllabus. Late assignments will have an additional 10% of points deducted for every day they are late, e.g., if your experiment design paper is two days late, you will lose 4 points.

### **4.2.1 Experiment Design**

After learning about research methods used to conduct psychological science, you will be given the opportunity to design your own research study. At least one scientific article should be cited in APA style. (You may also cite the textbook.) This paper will be limited to 3–4 pages. You will be given several possible topics on which to develop your experiment. You will receive feedback from your peers and have the opportunity to revise.

### **4.2.2 “Translation”**

In two papers of 2 pages each, you will be asked to translate a psychological topic into language that anyone could understand. Your papers are expected to cite sources in APA style, even if your only source is the textbook. Topics will be provided, one based on something covered in class and the other on closely reading a journal article.

### **4.2.3 Experiment Participation**

Part of learning about psychological science is participating in psychological experiments—this also allows you to learn a bit about the studies being conducted at Bard. You thus should plan to participate in **two** experiments during the semester. You should register on Sona, by going to the Bard Psych Research website. There, you must click “Request Account” and follow the instructions. Once logged in, you will see the list of experiments currently available alongside time-slots. After participating, you should write a brief (one page maximum) summary and turn it in via Moodle. Describe your experience and what you understood the goals of the experiment to be. Please begin looking for experiments early; waiting until the end of the semester may result in no remaining time-slots. Your first experiment participation should be turned in before the second exam. If you do not wish to participate in any experiments, alternative assignments are also available; please discuss with me.

## **5 Class Policies**

### **5.1 Accommodations**

If you have already been approved to receive accommodations by the Disability Support Coordinator, please contact me and we can meet privately to discuss what you will need within the first two weeks of the semester. We will work together to make this course a supportive learning environment for all students.

### **5.2 Attendance**

I expect you to attend class and participate in discussions. If you must miss a class, please let me know by sending me an email explaining your absence. Attendance will be taken each time our class meets. More than two unexcused absences will result in losing one point from your class grade for each additional day you miss.

### **5.3 Plagiarism**

I expect you to be familiar with what plagiarism is and is not. You may not present someone else’s work as your own without proper citation. You may not copy someone else’s work. You may not simply reword text from another source without giving credit. Please cite others’ work where relevant, and use your own writing. If you are not sure about the definition of plagiarism, or whether something constitutes plagiarism, please consult with me or with someone at Bard’s Learning Commons. Students caught plagiarizing will be reported to the Academic Judiciary Board, will get no credit for the assignment, and may fail the course.

## 6 Schedule

The schedule may change over the course of the semester. Changes to assignment dates will be announced via email or Moodle. You are responsible for following the readings, showing up to class prepared for discussion, and turning in assignments on-time.

Date	Topic	Chapter	Additional Reading	Due
Sep 4	Introduction to Psychological Science		Syllabus	
Sep 6	History of Psychological Science	1		
Sep 11	Research Methods	2		
Sep 12				Intro Survey
Sep 13	Research Methods II			
Sep 18	Reading Scientific Articles; Replication		Plötner et al.; Engber	
Sep 20	Neurological Basis of Behavior	3		
Sep 25	Biopsychology II		Bortolotti and Widdows	
Sep 27	Sensation and Perception	5		
Oct 2	Cognitive Neuroscience			
Oct 4	<b>Exam I</b>			Exam I
(Oct 9)	No class/Fall break			
Oct 11	Consciousness	4	Chabris et al.	
Oct 16	Learning	6	Siegel	Translation 1
Oct 18	Learning II			
Oct 23	Memory	7	Dunlosky et al.; Kassin and Kiechel	
Oct 25	Language and Thought	8		
Oct 30	Intelligence		Sacks	Exp. Design
Nov 1	Developmental Psychology	9		
Nov 6	Developmental II			
Nov 8	Emotions	10		
Nov 13	Health Psychology	11		Exp. Partic. 1
Nov 15	<b>Exam II</b>			Exam II
Nov 20	Psychological Disorders	14		
(Nov 22)	No class/Thanksgiving			
Nov 27	Psychological Disorders II			
Nov 29	Treatment of Psychological Disorders	15	Bures	Translation 2
Dec 4	Social Psychology	12		
Dec 5				Intro Survey
Dec 6	Social Psychology II		Shariatmadari	
Dec 11	Personality	13	Caspi et al.	
(Dec 13)	No psychology classes for Boards			

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Date	Topic	Chapter	Additional Reading	Due
Dec 18	<b>Final Exam</b>			Exam III
Dec 20	No class			

Citations follow for the above-mentioned readings which supplement the textbook. PDFs are available on Moodle.

- Bortolotti, L., & Widdows, H. (2011). The right not to know: The case of psychiatric disorders. *Journal of Medical Ethics*, *37*(11), 673–676. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jme.2010.041111>
- Bures, F. (2008, June). A mind dismembered: In search of the magical penis thieves. *Harper's Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://harpers.org/archive/2008/06/a-mind-dismembered/>
- Caspi, A., McClay, J., Moffitt, T. E., Mill, J., Martin, J., Craig, I. W., ... Poulton, R. (2002). Role of genotype in the cycle of violence in maltreated children. *Science*, *297*, 851–854. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1072290>
- Chabris, C. F., Weinberger, A., Fontaine, M., & Simons, D. J. (2011). You do not talk about Fight Club if you do not notice Fight Club: Inattention blindness for a simulated real-world assault. *i-Perception*, *2*(2), 150–153. <https://doi.org/10.1068/i0436>
- Dunlosky, J., Rawson, K. A., Marsh, E. J., Nathan, M. J., & Willingham, D. T. (2013, September/October). What works, what doesn't. *Scientific American Mind*, *24*(4), 46–53.
- Engber, D. (2018, June). Does the trolley problem have a problem? *Slate*. Retrieved from <https://slate.com/technology/2018/06/psychologys-trolley-problem-might-have-a-problem.html>
- Kassin, S. M., & Kiechel, K. L. (1996). The social psychology of false confessions: Compliance, internalization, and confabulation. *Psychological Science*, *7*(3), 125–128. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.1996.tb00344.x>
- Plötner, M., Over, H., Carpenter, M., & Tomasello, M. (2015). Young children show the bystander effect in helping situations. *Psychological Science*, *26*(4), 499–506. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797615569579>
- Sacks, O. (1995). Prodigies. In *An anthropologist on mars* (ebook ed., pp. 134–178). New York: Vintage Books.
- Shariatmadari, D. (2018, April). A real-life Lord of the Flies: The troubling legacy of the Robbers Cave experiment. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2018/apr/16/a-real-life-lord-of-the-flies-the-troubling-legacy-of-the-robbers-cave-experiment>
- Siegel, S. (2016). The heroin overdose mystery. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *25*(6), 375–379. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721416664404>