

**The University of Texas at El Paso**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 1301, CRN 21075)**  
**Spring 2017**

**Instructor:** Abdolhossein Abdollahy Zarandi, PhD

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**Office:** Department of Psychology

**Class Days:** Mondays and Wednesdays: 12:00 pm - 1:20 pm

**Location:** Undergraduate Learning Center 342

**Office Hours:** Mondays from 10 am to 12 pm (to make an appointment, please email me.)

### **Course Description**

This course, “Introduction to Psychology”, presents a synopsis of the science of psychology which studies the human (and animal) mental processes and behavior. The mental processes include perception, memory, imagination, learning, thinking, language, reasoning, intelligence, motivation, judgment, decision making, and problems solving. Largely initiated and directed by the brain, they interact with and give rise to normal (and abnormal) behavior and emotions that, in the course of an individual’s lifetime, manifest themselves in non-social and social situations. Some sample observations and findings garnered from this synopsis follow: modern psychology came into existence, hundreds of years ago, partially as a result of thinkers thinking about how the human mind may work in the same way that things like clocks, automata, and dolls work; most mental processes operate beyond and off the radar of our conscious awareness; even slight hassles such as sporadic arguments with a partner or spouse can bring down your physical health; and one can train pigeons to play ping pong. All in all, this course mostly revolves around the interesting theme of how people think, feel, and behave based on the laws and principles of nature and nurture.

### **Course Objectives**

The main objective of the course is to motivate students to add to and revise their knowledge of human thinking and behavior. This expected updated knowledge pertains to becoming familiar with other people’s ideas and research work in the domain. This objective can be attained by carrying out activities that can take the form of attending classes, reading the textbook material and lectures content, taking quizzes and exams, asking questions, giving answers to others’ questions, joining peer discussions, and showcasing their ideas in writing. Another objective of the course is to help students deeply and critically think about how they may want to apply their newly-acquired knowledge in their real life. This, of course, is continuous with another objective which is honing one’s skills to write a paper in psychology. And finally, a final objective is to prepare students, particularly psychology students, to enter into subsequent courses in which the mental processes and behavior are looked at more closely and precisely.

## Course Text

Hockenbury, Sandra E., Nolan, Susan A., & Hockenbury, Don H. (2017). *Discovering Psychology* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition). Worth Publishers. ISBN-13: 978-1-319-10297-5

## Course Format

Mondays: lectures and student participation

Wednesdays: lectures and student participation

## Course Assignment

### Research Participation or Research Papers Summarization

This introductory course has an instant gift for you. It gives you the opportunity to engage in psychological research by taking part in the research taking place in the department of psychology -- on the condition that you are at least **18** years old. In this endeavor, you will become familiar with how psychologists test their hypotheses on the human (and animal) mental processes and behavior.

In this research participation requirement, you will be able to earn 8 credits. If you participate in 6 hours of research involvement, you will receive 8 units of research credit. This participation will give you **10** points (percent) of the final grade as shown below -- in the Course Assessment section. To participate, you can go to the UTEP psychology research participation system by clicking on this link: <https://utep.sona-systems.com/default.aspx>. You can also ask the psychology office for more information. We will talk about this more in the first sessions of the class.

**Please note** that there is an alternative to the meeting above-mentioned research participation requirement. If you, for some reason, are not in a position to take part in a departmental research activity, you can do something else **instead**. You can pick eight experimental research papers from a psychology journal called *Psychological Science* (available from the UTEP website e-journal section), read them carefully, and write a summary of each paper containing the following sections:

- A) title
- B) question
- C) hypotheses or predictions
- D) participants' information
- E) measures
- F) procedure
- G) statistical methods
- H) discussion

Each summary will be written in at least **200** words. So your final paper -- containing all the **8** summaries -- will consist of at least **1600** words. If you choose to do this alternative requirement,

you will receive **10** points (percent) of the final grade.

You are free to write your paper in any style you like as long as it can get its message across. But please make sure to include the above-mentioned headings in your paper. On the other hand, the American Psychological Association has an array of recommendations for writing in psychology. Those recommendations have been gathered in a book called “Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> Edition).” Find a paper copy at the UTEP main library or on an El Paso Public Library branch book shelf. You can also get more information by googling this phrase: “apa style.” You can use these guidelines to shape your paper. But keep in mind that we will talk more about this paper throughout the semester. As for this paper submission method, on the Blackboard homepage, you will see an icon for uploading; just click on the icon labeled “Research Papers Summarization” and post your digital paper copy. And finally, like almost all class papers, there is a deadline for this paper. The deadline is **April 28, 2017**. We will talk about this option in the first session of the class.

### **Class Participation**

Class participation is important and has its own points as shown below. Class participation involves two parts: Part 1) showing such behaviors and attitudes as active listening to the lectures and to other students, making comments during class discussions, asking questions, and being respectful to others and Part 2) taking part in a collaborative in-class activity. In this activity, students are expected to read each book chapter, draw out 3 questions from each chapter, write them on a sheet of paper with their names on top, and bring those questions to class in each session (usually on Mondays). Students are expected to discuss selected questions and other questions that will be presented by me (the instructor). Usually, students will be asked to form groups of 2, 3, or 4, discuss the presented topics and report the results of their discussions, in writing, at the end of each class session. Twenty percent of the final graded will be allocated to class participation.

### **Quizzes and Exams**

You will take, throughout the semester, two unannounced quizzes, a midterm exam, and a final exam (see Course Assessment below). The quizzes and exams consist of multiple choice items and each question on the quizzes and exams counts one percent towards the final grade. The exams dates are specified in the course timetable (see below). Each quiz begins at 12 pm and takes 15-20 minutes to finish. Finally, it is to be noted that the content of the quizzes and exams will come from both the lectures and the textbook chapters.

### **Quiz and/or Exam Misses**

The students that miss the quizzes and/or exams will not be able to make up, but the military and athlete students on active duty, students with unique issues (e.g., serious illness, pregnancy, mental health problems, family problems, various emergencies), students with disabilities, and students observing religious holidays will be able to make up or deal with their quiz/exam misses

through other quiz/exam-related options. If possible, these students will let the instructor know about their absence before the quiz/exam.

### **Class Attendance**

Class attendance is beneficial because you can learn better when you are physically present. Also, there will be two unannounced quizzes throughout the semester. Missing a quiz means losing an influential portion of the final grade. Finally, as stated above and below, twenty percent of the final grade will go to the in-class activities. Thus, class attendance will bring you a lot of benefits.

### **Email Response Policy and Email Communication Rules**

I will respond emails within 24 hours on all weekdays. Students are welcome to email me for any questions and comments. When you want to send me an email, please use your UTEP email account, include a relevant subject word or phrase, clearly ask your question (s) or make your comment (s), and end off your message with your full name.

### **Classroom Behavior**

Please turn off your cell phone on arrival. Don't talk when others are talking. If you want to ask a question or make a comment, raise your hand and try not to interrupt others as they speak. Don't use your computer for irrelevant activities such as emailing, visiting a social network profile, playing games, watching videos, listening to music and so on. These activities prevent you from focusing on lectures and other class engagements and may distract other students.

### **Course Assessment**

- 1. Quiz 1 (10 points or percent)**
- 2. Quiz 2 (10 points or percent)**
- 3. Midterm Exam (25 points or percent)**
- 4. Final Exam (25 points or percent)**
- 5. In-Class Participation (20 points or percent)**
- 6. Research Participation OR Research Papers Summarization Paper (10 points or percent)**

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<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points or percent</b>
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## Grading Scale

90% - 100% = A

80% - 89.9% = B

70% - 79.9% = C

60% - 69.9% = D

00% - 59.9% = F

## Disability

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass).

## Academic Conduct, Discipline, and Integrity

It is assumed that students are implicitly aware of the principles of academic conduct, discipline, and integrity. But having an explicit knowledge of the principles will be highly beneficial for anybody working within the realm of academia. The following link provides a wide-range information about academic conduct and discipline at UTEP. Please read the file carefully and enthusiastically:

<http://admin.utep.edu/LinkClick.aspx?link=HOOP-Section+II.pdf&tabid=30181&mid=63285>

## Course Timetable and Lecture Topic

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### Week 1

**January 16: No Classes**

**January 18: CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Research Methods**

### Week 2

**January 23: CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Research Methods**

**January 25: CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Research Methods**

### Week 3

**January 30: CHAPTER 2: Neuroscience and Behavior**

**February 1: CHAPTER 2: Neuroscience and Behavior**

**Week 4**

**February 6: CHAPTER 2: Neuroscience and Behavior**

**February 8: CHAPTER 3: Sensation and Perception**

**Week 5**

**February 13: CHAPTER 3: Sensation and Perception**

**February 15: CHAPTER 3: Sensation and Perception**

**Week 6**

**February 20: CHAPTER 5: Learning**

**February 22: CHAPTER 5: Learning**

**Week 7**

**February 27: CHAPTER 6: Memory**

**March 1: CHAPTER 6: Memory**

**Week 8**

**March 6: Midterm Exam**

**March 8: CHAPTER 7: Thinking, Language, and Intelligence**

**Week 9**

**March 13: No Classes**

**March 15: No Classes**

**Week 10**

**March 20: CHAPTER 7: Thinking, Language, and Intelligence**

**March 22: CHAPTER 8: Motivation and Emotion**

**Week 11**

**March 27: CHAPTER 8: Motivation and Emotion**

**March 29: CHAPTER 9: Lifespan Development**

**Week 12**

**April 3: CHAPTER 9: Lifespan Development**

**April 5: CHAPTER 10: Personality**

**Week 13**

**April 10: CHAPTER 10: Personality**

**April 12: CHAPTER 11: Social Psychology**

**Week 14**

**April 17: CHAPTER 11: Social Psychology**

**April 19: CHAPTER 13: Psychological Disorders**

**Week 15**

**April 24: CHAPTER 13: Psychological Disorders**

**April 26: CHAPTER 14: Therapies**

**Week 16**

**May 1: CHAPTER 14: Therapies**

**May 3: Review**

**May 12: Final Exam at 1 pm – 3:45 pm**

**This syllabus is subject to change.**