

Professional Development PSYC 3102

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Contacting Me: I am happy to help you and answer any questions you have about the course content, requirements, assignments, et cetera. ***If you have a question for me***, you should e-mail me and we can arrange a time to communicate (in person or electronically). ***If you want to make an appointment to see me***, e-mail me and give me at least 4 times over the next few days when you will be available to meet. I will then respond to your e-mail with the time that will work for me. Finally, ***it is your responsibility to review the relevant class document(s) before you ask me***. If you e-mail or ask me a question that is in the syllabus or another source, I may respond by simply saying something like “see syllabus” or “see assignment.” If you don't understand something that is in the syllabus or another class document, please be specific in your question so I know that you have reviewed the document and are uncertain about something.

Text & Class Materials: There is not a text for this class. We will use materials (documents, videos, etc.) that have been created by myself, other faculty at UTEP, or other individuals who made the material publicly available by posting it on the web. All class materials that I link to on the web are things that I have reviewed and think are (mostly) accurate and useful, but I may not agree with every single thing that is said (because there are different views on how to best prepare for a career). If there are instances where I have significant disagreements with something, I will let you know and/or provide links to an opposing point of view.

Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes: Psychology is a very diverse (and important) scientific discipline and the information and skills that are conveyed in various Psychology courses are relevant to many different careers, which is both good and bad. It is good because individuals who earn a Bachelor of Arts or Science in Psychology have many career options after graduation. It is bad because students may take all of the courses necessary for graduating WITHOUT taking the specific courses that will best prepare them for their desired career. This can occur because one Psychology course may provide very good knowledge and skills for certain careers (e.g., health care fields) but is not as useful for other careers (e.g., human resource jobs). A primary objective of this course is to get you thinking about different careers that you might pursue after graduation so that you can take the courses and develop the skills that will be most useful to you in these careers. Upon successful completion of this course, you should

- Have a general understanding of different career paths that are well suited for psychology majors
- Understand the requirements of the psychology major and how it is best navigated to achieve one's career goals
- Understand career options available to students who complete different levels of training in psychology (BA or BS, MA, PsyD, PhD)
- Have knowledge about important resources that will allow you to explore your personal career interests in the future
- Have a better understanding of how various sub-disciplines and courses in psychology can contribute to different career paths

- Be able to better identify knowledge, skills, experience, and achievements that will be important for you to reach your career objectives (including getting into graduate school)
- Be able to prepare and write a resume, vita, personal statement, and cover letter that will be necessary when you apply for positions

Toolbox: You will need a number of tools to participate and do well in this course. They are:

- Computer (with web browser and other standard programs such as PDF viewer) – If you do not have your own computer, there are computers in the UTEP library and other locations that you can use.
- Internet access – The entire course will be run through Blackboard. All course content will be posted on Blackboard (as either files that can be downloaded or links to other websites), all quizzes will be taken on Blackboard, and all assignments will be distributed and turned-in on Blackboard.
- E-mail account – You are expected to have and regularly check your UTEP e-mail account (or the alternative e-mail account that is on file at UTEP).
- Software that allows you to access text documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. Microsoft Office is the most common software for this, but computers often come with basic versions of MS Office that is limited in certain ways. As a UTEP student, you should be able to get a free version of MS Office, but there are other programs that do the same thing that are free to everyone (and in my opinion better). One is called LibreOffice which can be found here at <https://www.libreoffice.org/> (it is free but please consider donating if you use and like it). LibreOffice can read and save things in MS Office format and also an “open” format. I am letting you know this because I use LibreOffice and may send you materials in this format. If you have a basic version of MS Office, you may not be able to open the file and will then need to let me know and wait for me to change the format.
- VPN connection to UTEP (not required but useful when working away from the UTEP campus). You can learn about this here – <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74367>. It is especially useful when you are trying to access electronic documents (books & journal articles) that are free to you as a UTEP student but not free to the general public.

Grading: Your grade will be based on the components listed below. You will receive a numerical score for each component that will be weighed according to the indicated percentages. Your final grade in the course will be based on the standard percent distribution (90% and greater = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 60-69% = D; less than 60% = F).

- **Quizzes:** 40%
- **Assignments:** 60%
- **Extra-credit** It will be possible to earn some extra-credit during the semester.

Class Week and Due Dates: A class week will start Monday morning and end Sunday at midnight. The learning modules, quizzes, and assignment(s) for each week will be available at the beginning of the week. All quizzes and assignments for any given week **MUST be completed by Sunday at midnight. You will NOT be allowed to make-up a quiz or assignment for any reason (including technical problems with your computer or Blackboard).** If you do not take a quiz or do not upload an assignment by the end of the week (11:59 PM Sunday), you will receive a “0” for that quiz/assignment.

Learning Modules: Each week you will have one or more learning modules that you will need to review. Learning modules may be: an electronic document (PDF, text document, spreadsheet, presentation), video, web page, or audio file. You should carefully review the learning module(s) assigned each week as they will provide information that will be useful/necessary for the week’s quiz and/or assignment.

Quizzes: There will be quizzes most weeks that are designed to assess your understanding of the information in the learning modules. The quizzes will be on Blackboard and available during that week. **These quizzes should be taken individually without help from others.** Gathering around a computer with friends to take a quiz, taking screen shots or writing down the correct answers and sharing them with others does not help your learning and is collusion (a form of academic dishonesty – see below). As mentioned above, **no makeup quizzes will be allowed for any reason** (including technical problems with your computer or Blackboard that prevent you from accessing or completing a quiz). If you miss a quiz, you will receive a grade of “0” for that quiz. Missing a quiz or two may not hurt your final quiz grade too much because some quizzes will not be used to compute your final grade (see below). **You should NOT try to take your quiz on a phone** because connections to Blackboard via a phone seem to have more technical problems than those via a computer.

Quizzes will typically be short (between 4-8 questions) and often focused just on a single learning module (some learning modules may not have an associated quiz). So, if you have just one learning module a given week, you will probably have one quiz. If you have two learning modules, you will probably have two quizzes, et cetera. If a quiz covers information from two or more learning modules, this will be clearly indicated.

Your final quiz grade will be the average (mean) of all quizzes after a few quizzes on which you do the worst are dropped. The number of quizzes that will be dropped will be a function of the total number taken – 1 quiz will be dropped for every 6 that are taken. So, if there are 18 quizzes in the course, the lowest 3 grades will be dropped and your final quiz grade will be based on your best 15 quiz grades. If there are 24 quizzes in the course, the lowest 4 will be dropped and your final quiz grade will be based on your best 20 quiz grades. The number of quizzes varies slightly from semester to semester but will probably be around 20 (which means that grades from 3 quizzes will be dropped).

Assignments: Most weeks you will have an assignment that asks you to explore some topic or issue that was a focus of the week. The nature of these assignments will vary but in most cases they will ask you to seek out and write about information that is relevant to you. You will soon learn that there are hundreds of careers that are well-suited for people with a psychology degree. We cannot review all of these different career options, the knowledge and skills needed for each, and the psychology courses that will be most helpful for acquiring that knowledge and skills required for each career. This course is designed to provide you with enough information so you can go out and learn about careers that interest you and then make good decisions about which courses will provide you with the best set of knowledge and skills to succeed in those careers. The purpose of the assignments is to give you practice in doing these things. I hope that you find these assignments to be informative and interesting and that they allow you to discover more about yourselves and careers. The work that you put into these assignments now will prepare you for more fulfilling careers later. **No makeup assignments will be allowed for any reason** (including technical problems with your computer or Blackboard that prevent you from accessing or uploading and assignment) and **if you miss an assignment you will get a “0” on that assignment.** Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard (assignments submitted via e-mail or some other means will not be accepted). To help protect you against a technical problem with uploading and assignment, you will always have two chances to upload assignments (but this must be done by the deadline).

The difficulty and time it will take you to do assignments will vary. The easier ones that may take only a few minutes might be worth 10 points whereas later ones that take a few hours might be worth 50 points. Your final assignment grade will be the average (mean) of **ALL** assignments. So, it is important that you try to turn-in all assignments and especially important for ones that are worth more points (e.g., because missing a single 50-point assignment will

hurt your grade more than missing 4 10-point ones). I strongly suggest that you check the assignments early in the week so you have an idea about how long each will take. You do not want to miss an assignment that is worth a lot of points because you didn't look at it until late Sunday and do not have time to complete it. A portion of most assignment grades is just doing the work – if you turn-in something where it is clear that you made a good attempt, you will get some points on that assignment. Another significant portion of most assignment grades is it appears professional. Points will be deducted for assignments that are unprofessional – contain grammar or spelling mistakes, are not understandable, have a sloppy appearance, use inappropriate language, et cetera.

Discussion Boards: In past semesters, students have suggested that there be discussion boards in this course; they also recommended that these not be graded. Thus, this course has discussion boards and they are NOT part of your grade. There will be many assignments and activities in the course that are relevant to and interest all of you. I hope that you will take advantage of the discussion boards to share information, connect with others who have similar interests and career goals, and help one another.

Extra-Credit: There will be a few opportunities to earn extra-credit in the course by doing extra-credit assignments. These extra-credit assignments can be especially helpful if you miss an assignment. The nature of the extra-credit assignments and how they can help your grade will be described when one is assigned. When there are extra-credit assignments, they will be announced on Blackboard and will be available to the entire class. There will be no extra-credit assignments after the last week of classes when all other assignments are complete.

Blackboard: Blackboard sometimes becomes inaccessible and the problems are usually resolved within an hour or two. Blackboard outages are NOT an acceptable reason for missing quizzes or assignments except in extreme cases (e.g. outage lasting 24 hours or more at the end of a week). It is YOUR responsibility to plan ahead and make sure that your work is completed before the deadlines. **I strongly suggest that you do NOT wait until late Sunday night to and turn-in an assignment.** If Blackboard or your Internet connection is down, you may miss the window and not be able to turn-in an assignment.

Withdrawal: The last day for you to withdraw from this class and get a “W” is listed in the class schedule. You must withdraw by this date to get a “W”.

Academic Honesty: You are expected to know and follow UTEP policy regarding academic conduct and honesty. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, **cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.** *Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test or falsifying research data on laboratory reports.* *Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person as ones' own.* *Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act.* **Any act of academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.** UTEP's student code of conduct and discipline can be found here:

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

Accommodations and Disabilities: I am happy to make reasonable accommodations for students who have limitations due to long-term or transient disabilities. If you have a disability and need accommodations, contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in Union Building East #106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. If you want me to make any accommodation for you, it is your responsibility to personally communicate with me **BEFORE** any quiz or assignment for which you need accommodations.

Grade Inquiries: If you wish to inquire about a grade on an assignment, you must personally see me.
I cannot discuss grades or tell you your grade over the phone or via e-mail.

Information contained in this syllabus: I reserve the right to modify any information in this syllabus and class schedule provided that (1) I give reasonable advance warning, and (2) students are not unfairly disadvantaged by the change.

Appendix

University Support Services: These are just a few of the support services and resources available for students at UTEP:

- The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) (<http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>)
 - Union Building East #106; cass@utep.edu; 747-5148
 - CASS provide students with disabilities, accommodations and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals.
- Career Center (<http://sa.utep.edu/careers/>)
 - Union Building West #103; careers@utep.edu; 747-5640
 - The career center offers one-on-one career advising assistance, résumé and CV critiques, mock interviews, internships/co-op, job listings, employer contacts, job fairs, graduate/professional school assistance, Career Closet, online resources and much more!
- Counseling Center (<http://sa.utep.edu/counsel/>)
 - [http://uwc.utep.edu/Union Building West #202](http://uwc.utep.edu/Union%20Building%20West%20#202); 747-5302
 - Counseling Center offer confidential counseling services in English or in Spanish and can assist you as you decide on a career or work through personal concerns.
- Writing Center (<http://uwc.utep.edu/>)
 - Library Building # 227; uwc@utep.edu
 - The Writing Center has workshops and one-on-one consultations to help students improve writing.
- Technology Center (<http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74082>)
 - helpdesk@utep.edu; 747-4357
 - The technology center can help with a variety of technology related issues including computer repair, equipment checkouts, and poster printing.