

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE  
A.C.E.: PSYCHOLOGY

THE FUTURE? BRING IT ON!  
(You want some a' this?)

PY 1040 A3 Basic Psychological Processes, Winter, 2003  
Lecture Period: T,R: 1:00 - 2:20 PM  
Instructor: Dr. Bruce Galenza  
Telephone: 539 - 2994  
E-mail: bgalenza@gprc.ab.ca  
Office: C403  
Office Hours: M,W: 10:00 - 12:00, T,R: 8:30 - 12:00

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Kassan, Saul (2001). Psychology (3rd ed),  
Prentice Hall.

We will not follow the text chapter by chapter. Topics will be introduced in the lectures and students are expected to find and read the topics in the text, using the index. Extra readings will be recognized, going beyond lecture material will be rewarded.

**THE COURSE:** This course is designed as an introductory course in psychology for freshmen, and will give students an understanding of themselves through the study of the basic concepts, principles, theories and methods used in the scientific study of human behaviour. This course will examine concepts of the human experience from nine of the major perspectives of psychology. Toward the goals of expanding students' horizons of self knowledge, this course will induce students to begin the life-long process of getting to know themselves, and starting to create themselves.

**GOALS:** This course may be different from almost any other course you have ever taken. There will be no memorizing meaningless lists of facts or definitions; students must learn the material, organize it for themselves so that they understand it, and apply it to their own lives such that they can reflect upon how these principles have been at work creating the people that they are now. Further, students are required to develop the skills of discussing, both through written and verbal communication, their knowledge of course material.

Please be aware that your normal strategies for passing classes may not work here, and new strategies may have to be developed; do so quickly. There are 9 minor summary papers (2-3 pages minimum, typed and double spaced) are assigned, and a final examination.

**OBJECTIVES** (How the papers will be marked):

As a result of taking this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. define and explain the theories, concepts, principles, and perspectives listed below in their own words.
2. give practical examples from their own lives as to how these concepts and principles have been at work to develop the persons they are now.
3. develop the skills of structuring, organizing and interrelating knowledge of these perspectives, not simply a rote listing of details and definitions, as demonstrated by writing structured, organized, related, interrelated, and applicable summary papers and taking part in class discussion.
4. begin to develop the skills of evaluation of the concepts and principles of these perspectives on the basis of how well they describe and explain the students' behaviour and that of others, by using higher order cognitive skills of independent thought, logic, reason and data, rather than relying on authority, tradition, emotion, personal feelings, or personal experiences.
5. express themselves in written and verbal form using higher academic standards of grammatically correct and properly spelled Standard English.

**COURSE CONCEPTS, PRINCIPLES AND PERSPECTIVES:**

**I. I AM WHAT I DO.**

1. Animistic and mechanistic perspectives, Behaviourism, environmental determinism, reflexes, learning, Pavlov's classical conditioning, conditioned and unconditioned stimuli and response, association, acquisition, extinction, stimulus generalization and discrimination (chapters 1, 2 and 5).
2. Behaviourism, environmental determinism, learning, Skinner's operant conditioning, the three term contingency, reinforcement and punishment, extinction, stimulus generalization and discrimination, positive and negative contingencies, stimulus control (chapter 5).
3. Nature, genetic transference and variability, natural selection, evolution, genetic determinism of behaviour, Wilson's socio-biology, animal parallels, biobehaviourism, nature with nurture (chapters 2 and 3).

4. Critical thinking, the scientific perspective, theories versus opinions, evaluation of theories, operational definitions, measurement, description, correlation, controlled experimentation.

Options: a) Evaluate any theory covered to date using the criteria of a theory or using logic and evidence. b) Discuss how principles of science (theory and evidence) are used in psychology. c) Design a controlled experiment that would test a prediction of any discussed theory (chapter 1).

## II. I AM WHAT I FEEL

5. Motivation, Hull, Maslow, external versus intrinsic, McClellan (chapter 8), Emotion, nature and nurture contributions, Darwin's reflexive theory, James-Lange, Schachter and Singer's two factor theory (chapter 9).

## III. I AM WHAT I THINK.

6. Sensation and Perception: sight, audition, discrimination of quantity and quality, neural coding (chapter 2 and 3).

7. Bandura's social learning theory, internal symbolic representation, modelling, reciprocal determinism (chapter 5).

8. Atkinson and Shiffrin's information processing theory, intelligence, models of human information processing, sensory, short, and long term storages, structures and processes, metacognition (chapter 6).

9. Schema theory, prototypes, stereotypes, frames, story schemas, scripts, person schemas, self schemas (chapters 4, 6, and 7).

## IV. I AM WHAT I AM

Final Exam: The Big Picture: what is psychology, what does it seek to do, how does it do it, how well does it succeed (chapters 1 through 9).

### COURSE OUTLINE:

Jan 7	Orientation
Jan 9-14	Classical Conditioning
Jan 21	Paper #1 due.
Jan 16-23	Operant Conditioning
Jan 30	Paper #2 due.

Jan 28-30 Feb 6	Socio-biology Paper #3 due.
Feb 4-13 Feb 20	Critical Thinking Paper #4 due.
Feb 18-Mar 4 Mar 11	Motivation-Emotion Paper #5 due.
Mar 6-13 Mar 20	Sensation-Perception Paper #6 due.
Mar 18-20 Mar 27	Social Learning Theory Paper #7 due.
Mar 25-Apr 1 Apr 8	Information Processing Paper #8 due.
Apr 3-8 Apr 10	Schema Theory Paper #9 due.
Exam Day, TBA	The Big Picture

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

There is so much more to learn than we can cover in our limited class time. Make the most of your college experience by reading the text (and other sources) beyond what is called for in the papers. It will also make your papers all the more insightful.

My preferred teaching style is interactive lecture, derived from the teaching philosophy that little is learned until responses are made (either verbally or written).

I am extremely available for student consultation, and I will be more than happy to proof students' rough drafts and to further discuss course material.

Late papers will be marked, but penalized 2 points per day. As adequate time is allotted between the end of the unit and the due date, no excuses other than medical or other major emergencies will be accepted. Papers with spelling and grammatical errors will be penalized. Papers with multiple errors will be returned unmarked.

**ASSESSMENT:** Research psychology recognizes the authority of, and bases its judgements on, carefully collected data, as opposed to opinion, tradition, or authority. In keeping with this philosophy: rather than me imposing my authority on you and telling you what you must know and then arbitrarily assigning cut-off points for grades through non-standardized tests, you as a class will inform me what you are capable of, through my careful measurement of your performance. Students will be assessed according to their relative position within the class. This will be explained fully in the first class period.

Assessment will be based on the nine papers and final exam, each weighted at 10%. Following the final grade assignments, students will be subjectively assessed for bonus points on the basis of their involvement in, and contributions to, the class.

**A GENTLE WARNING:** Some students try to copy work from textbooks or other published writing and claim it as their own. This form of cheating is called plagiarism or theft of intellectual property. This is easy for me to spot; the difference in writing style between undergraduates and professionals is immediately obvious.

Other students may try to buy papers from the Internet, or copy from other students. This is also easy for me to spot, as a purchased paper is invariably different in scope from the highly specific requirements of this course. I also change course content somewhat from term to term, so finding information in your paper from last term's course is a dead give-away.

If you cheat, you will be removed from this class, given a "1" for the term, and I will write a letter to the administration recommending you be suspended from college.