

**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE**  
**PY1040: BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES**

**Course Outline**

**Fall Semester, 2003-04**

**Instructor: Kendel Tang, Ph.D.**

**Office Number: C427**

**Office Hours : 2:30 – 4:00 pm MW**

**Office Phone Number: 539-2867**

**Email: [tang@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:tang@gprc.ab.ca)**

**Course Credit Hours: 3 (UT: Alberta)**

**Student Contact Hours: 3/wk**

**Delivery Mode: Lecture and Discussion**

**Course Description:**

Basic Psychological Processes (PY1040) is a general introductory course in psychology. It is designed to familiarize students with the terminology, concept, principles, research approaches, and ethics of the science of behaviour and mental processes. Specifically, this course will examine the various theoretical approaches to psychology, the scientific methods used to study behaviour and the mind, the relationship among brain processes, genetics, and behaviour, the nature and operational complexities of sensation, perception, body rhythms and mental states, learning, memory, cognition, and language.

This course will analyze the results of empirical studies that attempt to describe, explain, predict, and control or influence behaviour with the ultimate goal of understanding human beings and enhancing human functioning. Emphasis will also be placed on learning how psychologists and other professionals approach the study of basic psychological processes. Students will also be encouraged to look for applications of psychological principles in daily life and the importance of psychology to future occupational endeavour.

**Course Objectives:**

The course is intended to help students achieve the following objectives:

1. To differentiate the various approaches to psychology and their methods of studying behaviour and the mind.
2. To understand the relationship between various brain processes and behaviour as well as the methods used to study brain functioning.
3. To analyze the psychological processes of sensation, perception, body rhythms and mental states, learning, memory, and cognition and intelligence.
4. To understand the structure and function of language, the relationship among genes, learning, and behaviour and the components of critical and creative thinking.
5. To assume greater responsibility for one's own learning through active involvement in class activities and course assignments.
6. To develop an appreciation for the complexity of human behaviour and its underlying psychological processes.
7. To demonstrate some applications of empirically established psychological principles to daily life.

**Texts:**

**Wade, C., Tavris, C., Saucier, D., & Elias, L. (2004). Psychology (Canadian Edition). Toronto: Pearson Education Canada, Inc.**

(Note: Use of the accompanying Study Guide is highly recommended.)

Hacker, Diana. (2003). Rules for Writers. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's (This is highly recommended for writing papers in psychology and other subjects.)

## Grading System:

<u>Alpha Grade</u>	<u>4-Point Equivalence</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>
A+	4.0	
A	4.0	<u>Excellent</u>
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	<u>First Class Standing</u>
B	3.0	
B-	2.7	<u>Good</u>
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	
C-	1.7	<u>Satisfactory</u>
D+	1.3	<u>Poor</u>
D	1.0	<u>Minimal Pass</u>
F	0.0	<u>Failure</u>

Marks in the course will be weighted as follows:

Midterm Exam	.....	20%
Final Exam	.....	30%
Typewritten Paper*	.....	10%
Average of Chapter Tests	.....	30%
Class Involvement (based mainly on test results, class participation, assignments, and written or oral questions).....		<u>10%</u>

Total: 100%

## ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

Students will be held accountable for lectures delivered, readings assigned, and for any announcements that will be made in class. If any student is unable to attend a particular class, it will be his/her responsibility to find out what was missed. For optimal learning and readiness for class participation, students are expected to attend class regularly (no less than 80% attendance) and to have read the assigned chapter before coming to class on the date indicated on the timetable. Past class records show that very rarely can a grade of 8 be obtained by a student with less than 80% class attendance. Similarly, a student can rarely obtain a grade of 5 with less than 50% class attendance.

Due to limited class time, not everything in the assigned chapter readings can be discussed in class. Students are responsible for ensuring that they understand the contents of the assigned chapters by further discussing the material with the instructor and/or with fellow students outside of class time. Tests and exams will cover information presented in the lectures (which may or may not be found in the textbook) and material discussed in the textbook (which may or may not be covered in the lectures). This is intended to develop independent learning, which is expected of mature learners. Students are strongly encouraged to seek clarification of facts, concepts, and principles that they find difficult to comprehend by asking the instructor even outside of class time.

If a student foresees that he/she will be unable to write an exam or a test at a scheduled time due to illness or an emergency, the student should notify the instructor as soon as possible, preferably one day in advance. A message may be left on the instructor's voice mail (539-2867) together with the phone number where the

student may be reached to arrange for an alternative date to write the test, if feasible. Failure to notify the instructor will result in a grade of zero for the test that was missed. If a student is unable to write the final exam at the scheduled time because of illness or emergency, he/she should notify the instructor in advance and submit an application to the Registrar's office for permission to write a deferred exam (see the College calendar re: deferred exams). Students are strongly advised against making any plans that will prevent them from writing tests or exams on the scheduled dates. A note from a doctor or a college advisor is required to write a re-scheduled test, if illness is the reason for the student's inability to write the originally scheduled test.

Students are encouraged to see the instructor after class in his office or in the hallway to talk about any concerns or to further discuss the course material. Appointments may be arranged outside of posted office hours. No appointment is necessary to see the instructor during office hours. It is important to know that the instructor considers himself as the students' ally in the learning process.

**Please keep this course information sheet for future reference.**

**Student's Record of Test Marks:** Test 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Test 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Test 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Midterm Exam \_\_\_\_\_ Final Exam \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Note Regarding the Typewritten Paper:**

This paper consists of an application of a psychological principle in daily life. The topic of this paper could be an observed behaviour, past or present, one's own or someone else's, a human's or an animal's. The behaviour should be described and then explained as to why it occurred or is occurring using a psychological or learning principle discussed in the course. If space permits (at least three pages but no longer than five, double-spaced, including a reference page) prediction and control of the observed behaviour may be included in the paper. In other words, state how one can predict the future occurrence of the observed behaviour and how it can be changed or controlled. Your paper should have a title and the following side headings: Description of the Behaviour, Explanation of the Behaviour, Prediction of the Behaviour, and Control of the Behaviour. The last two side headings are optional. The use of the APA (American Psychological Association) style of writing a paper is mandatory. Grammatical and spelling errors will reduce your paper's grade. A kind warning to those who may be tempted to plagiarize someone's ideas or written work: the College calendar (p. 40) explicitly states penalties for plagiarism, with the maximum penalty of expulsion from the College. Instructors are generally aware of Internet sources of ready-made term papers.