



**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND EDUCATION**

**COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2020**

**PY1040 (A2): BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Bruce Galenza      **PHONE:** 780-539-2994  
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**OFFICE HOURS:** There shall be no office hours as I may not be in my office but I'll be monitoring my emails constantly.

**FALL 2020 DELIVERY:** Remote Delivery. This course is delivered remotely. There are no face-to-face or onsite requirements. Students must have a computer with a webcam and reliable internet connection. Technological support is available through [helpdesk@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:helpdesk@gprc.ab.ca).

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:** This first introductory course in psychology gives students an understanding of themselves and other people through the study of basic concepts, principles, theories, and methods used in the scientific study of behaviour. The course covers research methods in psychology, the biological bases of behaviour, neurophysiology, sensation, perception, learning, states of consciousness, memory, and cognition.

**PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:** None

**RECOMMENDED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

Chapters of the open-sourced textbook are posted to the D2L site for this course. However, as I shall not be testing you on this one particular textbook, any good introductory psychology text will suffice.

**DELIVERY MODE(S):** Remote lecture/Discussion

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** As a result of taking this course in Introductory Psychology, students will gain the abilities to define, explain, and give examples through short summary essays the following basic concepts of psychology:

1. The Scientific Perspective: formal thinking skills, determinism, mechanism/monism (Dates covered in lecture: Sep 8)
2. The genetic determinism of behaviour (Nature): Wilson's Sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, genetic transference and variability, natural selection, evolution, reflexes, fixed action patterns, animal parallels (Sep 8-10).
3. The environmental determinism of behaviour through Behaviourism (Nurture): learning, Pavlov's Classical Conditioning, conditioned and unconditioned stimuli and response, associations, acquisition, extinction, stimulus generalization, and discrimination (Sep 15).
4. Skinner's Operant Conditioning: The three term contingency, reinforcement and punishment, extinction, stimulus control, generalization and discrimination, positive and negative contingencies (Sep 17-22).
5. Nature with Nurture determinism: Evolutionary psychology, Epling & Pierce's Biobehaviourism, natural selection of learning potential, enabling and constraining influences of biology, species-specific learning differences (Sept 24-29).
6. Cognitive determinism: Bandura's Social Learning theory, latent learning, internal symbolic representation, Tolman's cognitive maps, observational learning (Sep 29-Oct 1).
7. Critical thinking and the scientific perspective: Theories versus opinions, evidence, evaluation of theories, operational definitions, measurement, description, correlation, controlled experimentation, quasi-experimental designs, statistics, hypothesis testing (Oct 6-20).
8. Neurophysiological determinism: The brain, the biological basis of behaviour, emotion, and cognition, structures and functions, lateralization and specialization, biological rhythms, dreams, and drugs (Oct 22-29).
9. Sensation: Vision, audition, transduction, discrimination of quantity and quality of environmental energies, neural coding, psychophysics, feature detection (Nov 3-5).

10. Perception: Feature Analysis, Perceptual Organization, Gestalt, Constructivism, prototypes (Nov 10).
11. Atkinson and Shiffrin's Information Processing model: Cognitive determinism, intelligence, sensory, short, and long term storages, modelling structures and processes, metacognition (Nov 12-17).
12. Craik and Lockhart's Levels of Processing: Principles of semantic encoding (Nov 19-24).
13. Schema theory: Categories/prototypes, stereotypes, frames, story schemas, scripts, narratives, person schemas, self-schemas, formal and informal/irrational thought, intelligence (Nov 26-Dec 3).

**\*Please note that the above objectives are also the course schedule and its tentative timelines.**

**LEARNING OUTCOMES: GENERAL GOALS:** This course may be different from any other course you have ever taken. There will be no memorizing 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. We will not follow the text chapter by chapter. Thirteen major theories and perspectives of human behaviour and cognitive processes will be introduced in the lectures moving from the simplest to the most complex; students are expected to find and read the topics in the text using the Index as a guide. Extra readings will be recognized; going beyond lecture material will be rewarded.

**BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES:** Seven minor summary papers (2-3 pages minimum, typed and double spaced) are assigned, plus a comprehensive 30% final examination that will include an eighth paper. 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 discussions.
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.

#### **PAPER TOPICS:**

1. The genetic determinism of behaviour (Nature): Wilson's Sociobiology, mechanistic perspectives, monism, evolutionary psychology, genetic transference and variability, natural selection, evolution, reflexes, fixed action patterns, animal parallels. Suggested thesis: "Genetically Hardwired Nervous Systems." Paper due Sep 17.
2. The environmental determinism of behaviour through Behaviourism (Nurture): learning, Pavlov's classical conditioning, conditioned and unconditioned stimuli and response, association, acquisition, extinction, stimulus generalization and discrimination, Skinner's operant conditioning, the three term contingency, reinforcement and punishment, extinction, stimulus control, generalization and discrimination, positive and negative contingencies. Suggested thesis: "Learning as Behaviour Change." Paper due Sep 29.
3. Nature with Nurture determinism: Evolutionary psychology, Epling & Pierce's Biobehaviourism, natural selection of learning potential, enabling and constraining influences of biology, species-specific learning differences. Suggested thesis: "Natural Selection of Learning Potential." Or: Cognitive and reciprocal determinism: Bandura's social learning theory, latent

learning, internal symbolic representation, Tolman's cognitive maps, observational learning. Suggested thesis: "Representation of Internal Cognitive Processes." Paper due Oct 8.

4. Critical thinking, the scientific perspective, theories versus opinions, evidence, evaluation of theories, operational definitions, measurement, description, correlation, controlled experimentation, statistics. Suggested thesis: "Scientific Empiricism." Paper due Oct 27.

Options:

- Discuss how principles of science (theory, evidence, and reason) are used in psychology.
- Identify and discuss the use of the scientific method in any published study in psychology.
- Propose and design a controlled experiment that would test a prediction of any theory.
- Carry out an experiment that would test a prediction of any theory.

5. Neurophysiological determinism: The brain, the biological basis of behaviour, emotion, and cognition, structures and functions, lateralization and specialization, biological rhythms, dreams, and drugs. Suggested thesis: "Neurological Substrate." Paper due Nov 5.

6. Sensation and Perception: vision, audition, discrimination of quantity and quality of environmental energies, neural coding, psychophysics, feature detection, feature analysis, Gestalt, ecological optics. Suggested thesis: "Sensory Transduction" and/or "Perceptual Construction." Paper due Nov 17.

7. Cognitive determinism through Atkinson and Shiffrin's information processing model: intelligence, sensory, short, and long term storages, structures and processes, metacognition, Craik and Lockhart's depth of processing principles. Suggested thesis: "Modelling Cognitive Structures and Processes" and/or "Semantic Encoding." Use 1040 principles as examples for semantic encoding. Paper due Dec 1.

8. Final Exam: Part One: 10%. Cognitive determinism: Schema theory, categories/prototypes, stereotypes, frames, story schemas, scripts, narratives, person schemas, self schemas, formal and informal/irrational thought, intelligence. Suggested thesis: "Epistemology." Part Two: 20%. The Big Picture: what is psychology, what does it seek to do, how does it do it, how well does it succeed. Suggested thesis: "Psychology." Papers due TBA.

**TRANSFERABILITY:** UA, UC, UL, AU, GMU, BU, CUE, KUC

**\*Warning:** Although we strive to make the transferability information in this document up-to-date and accurate, **the student has the final responsibility for ensuring the transferability of this course to Alberta Colleges and Universities.** Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at Alberta Transfer Guide at <http://transferalberta.alberta.ca/transfer-alberta-search/#/audienceTypeStep>

**\*\* Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.**

**EVALUATIONS:** Assessment will be based on eight papers: the first seven worth 10% of your final grade; the eighth worth 30%. 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, and attendance. All papers shall be submitted to the drop box on D2L and shall be returned the same way.

### **GRADING CRITERIA:**

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is less than C-.

<b>Alpha Grade</b>	<b>4-point Equivalent</b>	<b>Percentage Guidelines</b>		<b>Alpha Grade</b>	<b>4-point Equivalent</b>	<b>Percentage Guidelines</b>
A+	4.0	95-100		C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94		C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	00-49

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:** This is adult education. You will be treated as such and are expected to behave accordingly. It is expected that all students will display a professional attitude and behaviour in the classroom. This includes reliability, respect for and cooperation with your fellow students and the instructor, attention to fellow students' questions and instructors' responses, determination to achieve first-class work, effective time management, and constructive response to criticism. Engaging in cell phone behaviour will result in bone spurs on the back of your skull and you being asked to leave the classroom.

**STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and there will be penalties. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the section on Plagiarism and Cheating in the College policy titled Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-Academic at (<https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/fetch.php?ID=68>).

Instructors reserve the right to use electronic plagiarism detection services on written assignments. **Instructors also reserve the right to ban the use of any form of electronics (cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, tablets, scanning pens, electronic dictionaries, etc.) during class and during exams.**

\*\*Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available at <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/>

**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 exam answers 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 happy to proof students' rough drafts of exam answers and to further discuss course material.

Missing three or more lectures or coming in late without being excused will result in you being barred from writing the final exam.