

COURSE OUTLINE - Winter 2026

PY1050(A3): Social and Individual Behaviour - 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

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OFFICE HOURS:			

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This second introductory course in psychology follows PY1040 and 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 biological and cognitive development, emotion and motivation, social psychology, personality theories, mental and behavioural disorders, treatment of mental and behavioural disorders, and stress and health.

PREREQUISITE(S):

Completed the following:
PY1040 - Basic Psychological Processes (3)

COREQUISITE(S):

None

REQUIRED 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): On-Campus

Lecture and Discussion.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

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. Eight major topics will be introduced in the lectures and 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: 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, properly punctuated, and correctly spelled Standard English.

TRANSFERABILITY:



Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page

<http://www.transferalberta.alberta.ca>

**** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a 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:

Eight minor summary papers (2-3 pages minimum, typed and double spaced) are assigned, each worth 10 points and a final, handwritten examination in the gym, summarizing the course, worth 20%.

1. Emotion: nature and nurture contributions, Darwin's reflexive theory, James-Lange, Schachter and Singer's two factor theory; Motivation: Hull, Maslow, extrinsic versus intrinsic, McClellan. Due date Jan 27th.
2. Social Psychology: Social perception, attribution theory, conformity, obedience, attitude formation and change, schema theory, natural thinking. Feb 5th.
3. Biological and social development: nature with nurture, pre-natal development, the neonate, child, adolescent, and adult. Feb 24th.
- 4 Cognitive Development: Piaget's cognitive developmental theory, intelligence, maturation, schemes, assimilation and adaptation, stages of intellectual development, sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operations, formal operations. Mar 5th.
5. 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. Identify and discuss the use of the scientific method in any published study in psychology.
- d. Design or carry out a controlled experiment that would test a prediction of any discussed theory from 1040 or 1050. Mar 12th.

6. Personality: psychic determinism, Freud's Psychodynamic theory, nurture against nature, id, ego, and superego, the four stages of personality development, the defence mechanisms, or either Humanism, Behaviourism, or Cognitivism. Mar 24th.

7. Disorders: normal and abnormal, anxiety, somatoform, dissociative, mood, depression, schizophrenia, DSM V. Apr 2nd.

8. Treatment: psychoanalysis, behavioural, humanistic, cognitive, drugs. Health and Stress: Selye, prediction and control, pain, meditation, consciousness redux. Due April 14th.

Final Exam date TBA.

GRADING CRITERIA: Research psychology recognizes the authority of, and bases its judgements on, carefully collected data, as opposed to opinion, tradition, or authority. Psychology always makes its decisions by measuring and comparing, and so shall I. 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 blindly and according to their relative position within the class. This method will be explained fully in the first class period; a handout is available if requested.

GRADING RUBRIC:

Papers will be graded according to the extent that students have achieved the following criteria:

1. Written organized and structured papers reflecting the students' organized and structured schemas of knowledge concerning the concepts in the field of Learning.
2. The thesis shall be clearly stated and shall form the organizing structure for the entire paper such that all discussed points shall relate to that thesis (1 point).
3. All concepts shall be placed correctly in their proper context within the field of Psychology. Students shall present the Big Picture of the concepts before rushing to the details (1 point).
4. The essential elements of theories and principles shall be identified, abstracted out, defined, explained, and examples generated thereof (5 points).

5. Proper sequencing of ideas and concepts, written from the general to the specific, and from the simple to the complex. Organization shall follow the logical or chronological sequences inherent in these theories and principles. Papers shall show cohesion, a unified whole. Concepts shall be linked to the thesis, used to support that thesis, concepts shall stay on topic, and there shall be no padding. (2 points).
6. There shall be a complete lack of extraneous information, unnecessary detail, or padding, demonstrating the students' ability to differentiate the essential information from the optional. Writing shall be precise and concise, terms shall be defined. (1 point).
7. Students shall express themselves in written and verbal form using higher academic standards of grammatically correct, properly punctuated, and correctly spelled Standard English (-2 penalty points).
8. APA format is required (-2 penalty points).

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

Grading Chart

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Expected Percentage of Class Receiving		Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Expected Percentage of Class Receiving
A+	4.0	2%		C+	2.3	16%
A	4.0	3%		C	2.0	13%
A-	3.7	7%		C-	1.7	9%
B+	3.3	9%		D+	1.3	7%
B	3.0	13%		D	1.0	3%
B-	2.7	16%		F	0.0	2%

The Percentage Guidelines listed below will apply only if thirty or more students are enrolled and a perfectly normal distribution results. Deviations from the assumptions of normality will result in modified percentages. In short, this is NOT grading on the curve.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Jan 6:	Introduction
Jan 8 - 13	1040 Review and Bonus Point Presentations
Jan 12 -20	Emotion/Motivation
Jan 27	Paper #1 due.
Jan 22 – 29	Social Psychology
Feb 5	Paper #2 due.
Feb 3 - 10	Biological Development
Feb 24	Paper #3 due.
Feb 12 – 26	Cognitive Development
Mar 5	Paper #4 due.
Mar 3 – 5	Critical Thinking
Mar 12	Paper #5 due.
Mar 10 - 17	Personality
Mar 24	Paper #6 due.
Mar 19 -26	Disorders
Apr 2	Paper #7 due.
Mar 31 -Apr 9	Treatment/stress
April 14	Paper #8 due
Exam Day	TBA Final Exam

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 while meeting deadlines, and constructive response to criticism.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/polytechnic-leadership/policies-directory>.

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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. Further, it can be seen when the student shows no knowledge during class discussion of what was in the paper that he or she has just submitted.

A third way of cheating is to buy or borrow papers from students who took this course from me last year. Please be forewarned that I have changed the course material, student requirements, and textbook substantially from last year, and papers from previous years will be radically different and easily identified.

If you cheat in any way, I will recommend an academic misconduct be filed, which can result in a zero for the paper, an "F" for the term, suspension, or expulsion. Please see the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy for information on academic misconduct and how NWP handles it."

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. Note that there are no assigned papers for many parts of the text; however, you are still responsible for this material..

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. Writing workshops are offered by our library; go sign up.

Papers in hard-copy form are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late papers will be graded but penalized 2 points per day to a minimum of 2 points. As adequate time is allotted between the end of the unit and the due date, no excuses other than medical situations, major emergencies, or single parenthood will be accepted. You may have three free papers where I will indicate spelling and grammatical errors but not penalize them. After that, papers not written to university standards will be penalized two points.

Pre-writes are welcome up to 48 hours before the due date and must be submitted as an e-mail attachment. Please append your prewrites as a Word document, to my e-mail address. Do NOT use pdf files, Brightspace, Google, Clouds, or your own personal college workspace that I cannot open.