



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND EDUCATION: PSYCHOLOGY

PY 2090 A3: CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IN PSYCHOLOGY – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours

COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2011

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Bruce Galenza

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OFFICE HOURS: Mon 10:00 – 11:30, Tues 8:00 – 1:00, Wed 10:00 – 1:00, Thur 8:00 – 1:00, Fri 8:00 – 10:00, weekend mornings.

RECOMMENDED TEXT/SELECTED READINGS: TBA

Hacker, D. (2000). A Pocket Style Manual. Bedford/St. Martin's.

Hacker, D. (2002). Research and Documentation in the Electronic Age. Bedford/St. Martin's.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: In this course, students have an opportunity to discuss a variety of controversial issues in the field of psychology. The topics covered will vary with the instructor who teaches the course. This year's course will be a discussion and interpretation of contemporary and controversial issues in the field of human behaviour such as sex, drugs, rock 'n' roll, violence, politics, and religion, described, explained, and interpreted from the perspective of psychological theory.

PRE-REQUISITES: PSY 1040 and 1050. Suggested: Advanced courses in Learning, Cognition, Social, Personality, Developmental, and Brain.

CREDIT/CONTACT HOURS: 3

DELIVERY MODE(S): Lecture/Discussion/Student Presentation

BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES: Four major area papers (8-10 pages minimum, typed and double spaced) are assigned. Students will write four major papers and present their findings in four minor class presentations and will take part in class discussions. As a result of taking this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. define, explain, analyse, and interpret current social issues and problems from the perspective of psychological principles, theories, and concepts.
2. 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.
3. 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 chosen social issues 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.
4. express themselves in written and verbal form using higher academic standards of grammatically correct and properly spelled Standard English.

THE ISSUES TO BE COVERED: Students may choose what topics they wish to cover within the general themes listed below or may follow the professor's more narrowly-defined lead.

- #1. Rogers' Student-Centered Education (Jan 7th – 19th, presentations Jan 21st - 26th, papers due Jan 28th).
- #2. Sex: Gay and straight, deviations, pornography (Jan 28th – Feb 11th, presentations Feb 16th – 18th, papers due Mar 2th).
- #3. Violence: Youth, media, domestic (Mar 2nd – 11th, presentations Mar 16th - 18th, papers due Mar 23rd).
- #4. Religion: Belief systems, narratives, cults (Mar 23rd – Apr 1st, presentations Apr 6th – 8th, papers due Apr 13th).

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- 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 graded, 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 and major emergencies will be accepted. Papers with spelling and grammatical errors will be penalized. Papers with multiple errors will be returned ungraded.

ASSESSMENT: Research psychology recognizes the authority of, and bases its judgments 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 four major papers, each equally weighted. 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. 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.

If you cheat, you will be given a "0" for the paper, an "F" for the term, and I will write a letter to the administration recommending you be suspended from college.

**** 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**

GRADING CRITERIA:

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE			
GRADING CONVERSION CHART			
Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A⁺	4.0		EXCELLENT
A	4.0		
A⁻	3.7		FIRST CLASS STANDING
B⁺	3.3		
B	3.0		GOOD
B⁻	2.7		
C⁺	2.3		SATISFACTORY
C	2.0		
C⁻	1.7		
D⁺	1.3		MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0		
F	0.0		FAIL
WF	0.0		FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline