

**MINERAL AREA COLLEGE**  
**PSY 113 GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY**  
**INSTRUCTOR: MATT SOPKO, M.A.**  
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The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the study of human and animal behavior, including our rapidly growing knowledge of how we think and act.

General Psychology will afford the student a survey of a wide variety of areas and approaches to the study of behavior including its history, the biological basis of behavior, learning and memory, motivation and emotion, and mental health areas, just to name a few.

It would be convenient if we could understand the nature of the mind without understanding the nature of the brain. Unfortunately, it is difficult, if not impossible to theorize effectively on those matters in the absence of knowledge about how the nervous system works. Therefore, an introduction to the nervous system is an important component of this course.

TEXTBOOK: Gazzaniga, M. S. and Hetherton, T. H. Psychological Science. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, Norton Publishing, 2003.

**I. COURSE COMPETENCIES AND OBJECTIVES :**

A. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, major views, research methodology, ethical values, and concepts that characterize the nature of psychology as a social science discipline.

1. identify and describe the major goals and historical contributions of psychology.
2. compare and contrast the major theoretical perspectives of discipline (e.g., behavioral, humanistic, etc.) and describe the advantages and limitations of each.
3. describe the basic steps of the scientific paradigm.
4. compare and contrast different research designs, including the types of questions that are appropriate for each.
5. identify and explain the importance of ethical principles in the research process.
6. identify, explain, and use concepts representing theory and research in the general domains of learning and cognition, biological bases of behavior, individual differences, and developmental changes.

B. Assess the complexity of individual differences in human behavior.

1. define behavior in overt and covert terms.
2. identify and describe the biological, cognitive, psychological, and sociocultural factors that contribute to human behavior.
3. explain how individual differences influence perceptions, motives, emotions, beliefs, and interactions with others and vice versa.
4. analyze and integrate theoretical perspectives to produce comprehensive and multi-faceted explanations of human behavior.

C. Describe the dominate themes, persistent questions, and conflicts in psychology.

1. describe the interaction of heredity and environment.
2. identify variability and continuity of behavior, mental, and social processes, within and across species.
3. analyze free will vs. determinism.
4. explain subjective vs. objective perspectives.
5. describe the interaction of mind and body.

D. Examine the application of psychological concepts and principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.

1. identify and describe the major applied areas of psychology.
2. identify the appropriate application of psychology in solving problems such as the pursuit and effect of healthy life styles, stress management, and the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders.
3. describe how psychological knowledge can be used to explain social issues and inform public policy.
4. give instances of how psychological concepts, theories, and research findings related to everyday life.
5. identify and describe awareness of one's own perceptions, motives, emotions, and beliefs.

E. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate effectively in groups.

1. To interact in small groups with peers in order to prepare and lead class discussions.

## II. LEARNING EXPERIENCES:

The classroom experience will consist of lecture, classroom discussion, group activities, and the use of video material, when applicable. Class discussions will include the opportunity for discussing current issues pertinent to assigned topics as they arise during the course work.

### III. EVALUATION—GRADING

Students' theoretical progress will be assessed by:

Four multiple-choice exams on which students are given some choice in which questions on the exam are to be answered, that is, students are allowed to "pass" on a small number of exam questions.

The final grade will be determined by averaging the three highest of each student's four exam scores and the attendance grade (see Course Policies). The following scale will be used to determine your final grade:

<u>Percent Correct</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
<60%	F

### IV. COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance: Each student will start the semester with 100 attendance points. Two points will be deducted for each unexcused hour of absence throughout the semester. The final attendance grade will count for 25% of each student's grade in the class. Further, "Excessive Absences" for this course shall be defined as: Seven hours of absence or two missed exams which may result in a student being dropped from class. It is advised that the student be familiar with college policies regarding attendance, change of class schedule, and withdrawal from classes as stated in the Student Handbook.

Make-up Exams: All make-up exams will be given at the next regularly scheduled class meeting. Since the student is aware that an exam has been missed, it is the student's responsibility to be prepared for examination at the appropriate time. The final exam must be taken at the time scheduled per the college calendar.

### V. SPECIAL NEEDS:

Accommodations for students with special needs will be provided on an as needed basis. Students with special needs should contact me or Lisa Leftridge, Access Director.

### VI. OFFICE HOURS:

As an adjunct faculty member, my office hours will be arranged by appointment. Occasionally, I may be able to meet with students on a drop-in basis. My office is in Room C-7 of the Arts & Sciences Building and my office phone number is (573) 518-2250. Please feel free to call anytime and leave a message on the answering machine if the office is closed.

## VII. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Incidents of academic dishonesty, for example, plagiarism, cheating on exams, etc., will be reported to the Dean of Arts & Sciences and may result in, but not limited to receiving an F for the course or being dropped from the course.

## VIII. TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE:

Chapter 1: Introduction to Psychological Science

Chapter 2: Research Methodology

Chapter 3: Genetic and Biological Foundations

Chapter 4: The Brain

FIRST EXAM: Chapters 1-4

Chapter 5: Sensation, Perception, and Attention

Chapter 6: Learning and Reward

Chapter 7: Memory

Chapter 8: Cognition

SECOND EXAM: Chapters 5-8

Chapter 9: Motivation

Chapter 10: Emotion, Stress and Coping

Chapter 11: Cognition and Language Development

Chapter 12: Social Development and Gender

THIRD EXAM: Chapters 9-12

Chapter 14: Personality

Chapter 16: Disorders of Mind and Body

Chapter 18: Treating Disorders of Mind and Body

FINAL EXAM: Chapters 14, 16 & 18 – Finals Week