

PSY 141B: Introduction to Psychological Science, Spring 2020

Wednesdays and Fridays 1:30 p.m. – 2:50 p.m. in Olin LC 118

Instructor

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Office hours: Tuesdays 11:00 a.m. – noon, Fridays 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

How does the mind create the reality we perceive? How do experiences shape the brain, and how do processes in the brain influence thought, emotion, and behavior? This course investigates these and similar questions by studying the science of the human mind and behavior. The course covers topics such as memory, perception, development, psychopathology, personality, and social behavior. We will focus on the biological, cognitive, and social/cultural roots that give rise to human experience, and consider how behavior differs among people, and across situations. Writing, speaking, group, and hands-on laboratory experiences will augment readings from the text, popular culture, and research journals.

REQUIRED READING MATERIAL

Breedlove, M. (2015). *Principles of Psychological Science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Non-textbook readings are listed on the schedule below. All non-textbook readings are available on the course google classroom site. You should bring non-textbook readings to class and be prepared to discuss them on the appropriate day.

COMPONENTS OF THE COURSE GRADE

Exams (300 points)

For this class, there will be 3 exams. Exam dates are firm but the material covered may vary slightly from the syllabus depending on how the course progresses. Any deviations from the syllabus will be made clear prior to each exam. Exams will contain multiple-choice and short answer questions encompassing material covered in class, the textbook, and assigned readings. Exams will be worth 100 points each. The third exam will be cumulative but the majority of the material (~75%) will be from topics presented after the second exam. Students are expected to take all exams on the schedule dates. In an extreme circumstance, the student should contact me at least 24 hours prior to the exam and I will decide on what will be done. Make up exams will only be scheduled with a written excuse from the Dean of Students or a medical professional.

Quizzes (60 points)

Over the course of the semester, there will be seven unannounced quizzes that will occur at the start of lecture. The purpose of these quizzes is to make sure you are keeping up with the assigned reading and are looking over your notes between lectures. Material on quizzes will be based on content presented in the previous lecture and any assigned reading for that class. Quizzes are worth 10 points each and your lowest quiz grade will be dropped in the calculation of your final grade. Students arriving late to class on the day of a quiz will receive a zero for that quiz. If a student is absent the day of a quiz, they will receive a zero. Make-up quizzes will only be offered with a written excuse from the Dean of Students or a medical professional.

Observational Study (30 points) – Due Wednesday, February 12th at 1:30 p.m.

As we will learn in class, observational research is a technique that provides researchers with the opportunity to record and observe behavior in a real-world setting. For this assignment, you will conduct an observational study on differences in student behavior during the morning (8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.) and evening (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.). Assignments should be submitted through the course google classroom site. Assignments handed in late will automatically lose 3 points and lose three points for each additional day they are late. More detailed information about the observational study is available on the course google classroom site.

Writing Assignment #1 (30 points) – Due Friday, February 21st

Propose an experiment that could conceivably be conducted on campus. Your description of the experiment should be sufficient for a reader to conduct the experiment by themselves. You should include the following terms (in a way that makes apparent you know what they mean): independent variable, dependent variable, random assignment, construct, operationalization, and control group. Finally, you should include a brief description about the results you expect to find and how these findings can meaningfully contribute to our understanding of human behavior. Assignments should be submitted through the course google classroom site. Assignments handed in late will automatically lose 3 points and lose three points for each additional day they are late.

Writing Assignment #2 (30 points) – Due Friday, April 17th

A critical skill for psychologists is the interpretation and evaluation of empirical research. In this assignment, you will serve as a journal reviewer. In this role, you will summarize and critique the Kassin & Kiechel (1996) article available on the course google classroom site. Your summary should include a description of the rationale and methods used in the article, the relevant results, and the author's interpretation of the results (~1–2 pages double spaced). In addition, you should come up with at least two critiques or concerns with the article and the ways in which the study could be improved (~1 page). Finally, do you agree with the reviewers' decision to publish the article? Assignments should be submitted through the course google classroom site. Assignments handed in late will automatically lose 3 points and lose three points for each additional day they are late.

Group Presentation (20 points) – Friday, March 13th

During the second week of class you will be broken into groups of three to four students. On Friday, March 13th, each group will give a 5 to 10-minute presentation on one of the “Forty Studies That Changed Psychology” reported by Hock (2013). Your group will be assigned one study to present the class. Your presentations should include the background, description of methods, description of results, and the significance of the findings. Every group member must participate in the presentation to the class. Failure to present will result in a grade of 0 for that student.

Data Collection (20 points) – Due Wednesday, April 29th

An important part of psychological science is the generation of novel hypotheses and designing studies to test these hypotheses. To gain hands on experience with these issues, towards the end of the semester you will be provided with a survey and asked to collect and submit data from 10 participants. More details of the data collection will be provided over the course of the semester.

Journal Entries (20 points) – Must be completed by Friday, May 1st

Four times during the semester, you will select a process, phenomenon, theory, or psychological tendency from the course content and connect it to an experience from your own life. The body of each entry should begin with a description of an event or something you encountered in four of five sentences. This description should be detailed enough that someone who was not there would understand, but should be limited to less than a page. Next, you will describe how this is relevant to the course. Journal entries can be submitted at any time, but all entries are due by Friday, May 1st.

Attendance (20 points)

Students are expected to attend class. Students attending all classes will receive 20 points towards their attendance grade. Students missing 3 or 4 classes will receive 15 points towards their attendance grade. Students missing 5 or 6 classes will receive 10 points towards their attendance grade. Finally, students missing more than 6 classes will receive 0 points towards their attendance grade.

Research Participation (30 points) – Must be completed by Friday, May 8th

One of the best ways to learn about psychology is to see what goes on in the lab: how does psychological science happen; how are hypotheses generated, and how are experiments conducted? A lot of exciting research is happening right here at Bard, and much of it makes use of college undergraduates (e.g. you) as participants. You will earn 5 points for each hour (credit) of research you participate in (for a maximum of 30 points). Participation must be completed prior to Friday, May 8th.

To receive credit:

1. Visit <http://bardresearch.sona-systems.com/> and click on “Request Account” on the right side of the screen. This will prompt you for some basic information. Note: you must use a Bard email to complete this step. **MAKE SURE YOU INDICATE PSY 141B AS YOUR COURSE.**
2. Log in with your new id and select an interesting and available study in which to participate.
3. Show up and participate in the study you selected. I will receive an email confirmation of your participation.

Alternative Assignment: If you do not wish to participate in research studies or are under 18 years of age, you may submit an alternative research assignment. If you are interested in this alternative assignment, please speak to Prof. Hutcheon for additional information.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

POINT ALLOCATION		GRADING SCALE
Exam 1	100	A = 100% – 93%
Exam 2	100	A- = 93% – 90%
Exam 3	100	B+ = 90% – 87%
Quizzes (6 X 10 points)	60	B = 87% – 83%
Observational Study	30	B- = 83% – 80%
Writing Assignment #1	30	C+ = 80% – 77%
Writing Assignment #2	30	C = 77% – 73%
Group Presentation	20	C- = 73% – 70%
Data Collection	20	D = 70% – 60%
Attendance	20	F = less than 60%
Journal Entries (4 X 5 points)	20	
Research Participation	30	
Total Points	560	

FINAL GRADE = ((Total Points Earned)/560) *100

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with a documented disability who need reasonable academic accommodations should contact me as soon as possible to discuss your needs. I can only accommodate your needs if you allow me sufficient time to prepare. Informing me of a need on the day of an exam or on the date an assignment is due is NOT sufficient. As stated in the college handbook, “Students who claim physical, learning, or psychological disabilities should register with the Disability Support Coordinator at the start of the semester or as soon as the diagnosis is made.” Additional information can be found on the Bard College Learning Commons website (<http://inside.bard.edu/learningcommons/>).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are assumed to have read the Bard College Handbook and are familiar with the school's policies regarding Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty. Violations of these policies are taken extremely seriously and one violation will result in a failing grade for the course and a referral to the Dean of Students for further action. Specific violations include (but are not limited to):

- Use or provision of prohibited assistance during quizzes or exams
- Sharing of writing assignments
- Plagiarism (which includes **both** the use of **words** and **ideas** without attribution)

IMPORTANT COLLEGE WIDE DATES AND DEADLINES.

Wednesday, February 5th: Drop/add period ends

After this date, you can no longer add a class to your schedule.

Wednesday, February 26th: Late drop period ends and Pass/Fail/D Grading Deadline

This is the last chance to drop a course from your schedule without it appearing on your transcript. It is also the last chance to choose the option of taking this course for a grade of pass/fail/d.

Wednesday, April 9th: Last day to withdraw from a course

If you withdraw from this course between February 26th and April 9th, you will have a W on your transcript but it will not impact your GPA. After April 9th, you cannot withdraw from a course and the grade you earned will go on your transcript.

Psychology 141 Course Schedule – Spring 2020

Wednesday, January 29th – Welcome to PSY 141!

Friday, January 31st – Research Methods I

Reading: Breedlove pp 3 – 19; Gilbert (2006)

Wednesday, February 5th – Research Methods II

Reading: Breedlove pp 29 – 58

Friday, February 7th – Neuroscience I

Reading: Breedlove 63 – 84; Kiesler & Baral (1970)

Wednesday, February 12th – Neuroscience II

Reading: Breedlove: 85 – 105

Visit: Mouse Party (<https://learn.genetics.utah.edu/content/addiction/mouse/>)

Observational Study Due

Friday, February 14th – Sensation & Perception I

Reading: Breedlove 193 – 211; Seth (2019)

Wednesday, February 19th – Sensation & Perception II

Reading: Breedlove 211 – 231

Friday, February 21st – Learning I

Reading: Breedlove: 307 – 322

Writing Assignment #1 Due

Wednesday, February 26th – Learning II

Reading: Breedlove 323 – 347; Siegel (2016)

Friday, February 28th – EXAM 1

Wednesday, March 4th – Attention

Reading: Breedlove 429 – 434; Chabris et al (2011).

Friday, March 6th – Memory I

Reading: Breedlove: 351 – 377;

Podcast: Revisionist History “Free Brian Williams”

Wednesday, March 11th – Memory II

Reading: Breedlove 378 - 392; Dittrich (2017)

Friday, March 13th – GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Wednesday, March 18th – Developmental Psychology I

Reading: Breedlove 137 – 173.

Friday, March 20th – Developmental Psychology II

Reading: Breedlove 143 – 189; White et al. (2017)

Wednesday, March 25th and Friday March 27th – Spring Break, No Class

Wednesday, April 1st – Thinking and Decision Making I

Reading: Breedlove 434-447, 452-480

Friday, April 3rd – Thinking and Decision Making II

Reading: Zimmer (2018)

Wednesday, April 8th – EXAM 2

Friday, April 10th – Motivation and Emotion I

Reading: Breedlove 499 - 519

Wednesday, April 15th – Motivation and Emotion II

Reading: Breedlove 550 - 570; Dutton & Aron (1968)

Friday, April 17th – Social Psychology I

Reading: Breedlove 661 – 672; 684 – 689

Writing Assignment #2 Due

Wednesday, April 22nd – Social Psychology II

Reading: Breedlove 641 – 660.

Friday, April 24th – Personality and Health

Reading: Breedlove 611 – 637; 571 - 591

Wednesday, April 29th – Abnormal Psychology I

Reading: Breedlove 693 – 713.

Data Collection Due

Friday, May 1st – Abnormal Psychology II

Reading: Breedlove 713 – 729; Wells & Papageorgiou (1998)

Wednesday, May 6th and Friday, May 8th – Board Week, No Class

Journal Entries Due on May 8th

Research Participation must be completed by May 8th

Wednesday, May 13th – FINAL EXAM