

fPsychology 100
Foundations of Psychology
Haverford College
Fall, 2013

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Office Hours: Before class and by appointment.

Course Description: Psychology is the study of mind, brain, and behavior and over the past century, has gained tremendous insight into how the mind works and why people behave in the ways that they do. The intent of this course is to examine some of the different facets of human behavior that comprise the self relative to the world in which we live.

As is true of most disciplines, behavior is multidimensional in nature and can be addressed from several different perspectives. The four focused upon here, namely, the biological, cognitive, social, and personality approaches, can be argued to represent the core dimensions of human behavior. In the outline which follows, the set of issues addressed within each topic area have been highlighted. The course ends with a discussion of stress and health to illustrate the collective influence of these dimensions on a given behavior.

Readings: All readings for the course are posted on Moodle for Psy 100.

Grading Criterion:

Exam One	100 points
Exam Two	100 points
Exam Three	100 points
Paper	50 points
Experiment Participation	21 points
Course Evaluation	<u>5 points</u>
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	376 points

Exams: The 3 exams weigh most heavily toward your grade and primarily consist of short essay questions along with some multiple-choice and/or fill-in-the-blanks. Each exam is non-cumulative and only covers material since the previous exam. Extensions are only granted under extreme circumstances or bona fide medical emergencies, and must be requested prior to the exam.

Paper: The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to the process of writing and evaluating a research paper in Psychology. An added dimension is the use of the lay press and media in order to demonstrate how news agencies sometimes miss the point of scientific research.

First select one of the press treatments that can be found on Moodle. I have posted several of these and there should be at least one that interests you. The next part of your assignment is to use PsychInfo or PubMed (electronic databases that can be accessed through the library website) to find the original article cited in the press treatment. After you've accessed this article and have carefully read the research that is reported, the last part of your assignment is to write a paper that will allow readers to understand the purpose of the focus article. In particular, your paper should address the following issues from the actual research article:

- 1. Background:** Describe the questions or set of issues that motivated this research. What theoretical issues are of interest and more generally, why was the study done? What is the big picture that the article is a part of? (8 pts.)
- 2. Study variables and hypotheses:** Describe the specific variables examined in the experiment. Identify the independent variables (the factors manipulated) and the dependent variables (the measurements taken). See Chapter 2 in the Gray text for a more detailed discussion of independent and dependent variables. What is the hypothesized relationship between the two sets of variables? (8 pts.)
- 3. Methods:** What subjects were used? How were the variables manipulated and measured? Describe the relevant aspects of the procedure and methodology in enough detail so that one could replicate the study. (8 pts.)
- 4. Results:** What was found? (8 pts.)
- 5. Discussion:** How did the authors interpret their results? What conclusions did they offer? (8 pts.)
- 6. Personal Evaluation:** What is your assessment of the authors' conclusions? Are the conclusions warranted based on the data presented? If not, why not? What are some future directions for research in this area? Lastly, please critique the "press treatment" of the article. Did they get it right or not? What parts did they oversimplify, overstate, or simply get wrong? If there were multiple press treatments, were some better than others? (10 pts.)

When writing your paper, be sure to clearly indicate each of these subheadings in a Bold font. In addition, do not rely on quotes from the paper but, instead, state ideas in your own words.

In addition to your written work, you should also hand in a copy of the research article, and a copy of the press treatment that you critiqued. **Papers and supporting materials are due on Wednesday, September 25 at class-time.** Penalties for lateness will be assessed by 1/3 grade step for each 24 hour period that the paper is late (e.g., B+ to B; B to B-).

Experiment Participation: The final requirement of the course is to participate in three experiments over the course of the semester. These studies are ones conducted by faculty members within the Psychology Department and represent a diverse range of topics. To learn more about these experiments, go to Moodle and click on those links pertaining to Experimentrix.

Lecture Outline

I. Biological Bases of Behavior

A. Overview of Biological Psychology

B. Psychology as a Science

- The scientific method
- Anatomy of an experiment

Reading:

Gray, P. Chapter 2: Methods of Psychology. From *Psychology*. Worth Press.

C. Brief History of Psychological Science

Reading:

James, W. What is an instinct?

Gray, P. Chapter 1: The History and Scope of Psychology. From *Psychology*. Worth Press.

D. Levels of Analysis

- Evolutionary – universals of human nature; emotions as an example; learning or instinct? snake phobias
- Physiological – neurological substrates of behavior
 - Some basic neuroanatomy
 - Split brain studies

Reading:

Gray, P. Chapter 3: Genetic and Evolutionary Foundations of Behavior. From *Psychology*. Worth Press.

Ohman, A. & Mineka, S. (2003). The malicious serpent: Snakes as a prototypical stimulus for an evolved module of fear. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(1), 5-9.

McEwen. Chapter 9: Anatomy of the Mind.

Gray, P. Chapter 5. The Nervous System. From *Psychology*. Worth Press.

II. Cognition: The Study of Knowing

A. Historical and Philosophical Origins of Cognitive Psychology

- British Associationists
- Behaviorism and Reactions to this Approach
- Assumptions of the Cognitive Paradigm

B. Attending to Environmental Events

- Different types of attending
- Resource Allocation Theory
 - o What determines what we selectively attend to?
 - o What determines our ability to successfully divide attending?

Reading:

Gray, P. Chapter 9: Memory and Consciousness. From *Psychology*. Worth Press. (pp. 331-336)

Manhart, K. (2004). The limits of multitasking. *Scientific American Mind*, 62-67.

Furnham, A. & Bradley, A. (1997). Music while you work: The differential distraction of background music on the cognitive test performance of introverts and extroverts. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 11, 445-455.

C. Perceiving Information From the World Around Us

- The Perception of Structure and Organization
 - o Bottom-Up Processing
 - Notion of invariants and affordances
 - Gestalt laws of organization
 - o Top-Down Processing
- Innate vs. Learned Perceptual Abilities
 - o Restored vision in the blind
 - o Infant development
- Individual Differences in Perception
 - o Evidence for a Pollyanna effect

- Gender differences

Reading:

Gray, P. Chapter 8: Vision From *Psychology*. Worth Press. (pp. 297-321).

D. Memory

- Distinction Between Short-Term and Long-Term Memory
- Characteristics of Short-Term Memory
- Characteristics of Long-Term Memory
- What Determines How Well Events are Remembered?
 - Distinctiveness
 - Elaboration
 - Visual Imagery
- Retrieval, Forgetting, and Distortions
 - Schacter's Seven Sins of Memory
- Different Types of Memory Systems
 - Episodic (Autobiographical) Memory
 - Semantic Memory
 - Schemas
 - Implicit Memory

Reading:

Gray, P. Chapter 9: Memory and Consciousness.

Schacter, D.L. (1999). The seven sins of memory: Insights from psychology and cognitive neuroscience. *American Psychologist*, 54, 182-203.

Loftus, E. (1997). Creating false memories. *Scientific American*, 70-75.

Perfect, T.J. & Askew, C. (1994). Print adverts: Not remembered but memorable. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 8, 693-703.

III. Social Psychology

A. What is Social Psychology?

- Truisms and misconceptions
- Goals of social psychology
- Brief history of social psychology
- Related fields

Reading:

Baron, et.al. (1997). *Understanding Social Behavior: An Introduction*.

B. Conformity and Obedience

- Group size and conformity
- Social impact theory

- Milgram's study
- Diffusion of responsibility

Reading:

Aaronson, E. (2004). Chapter 2. Conformity. From *The Social Animal*.

C. Attitudes and Persuasion

- Structure of attitudes
- Attitude formation and change
- Variables related to persuasion
- Attitudes and behavior
- Applications to advertising

Reading:

Petty, R., Cacioppo, J. & Schumann, D. (1983). Central and peripheral routes to advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10, 135-146.

D. Social Cognition

- Person perception
- Attribution
- Perceiving the self

Reading:

Fiske, S. *Social Cognition: Making Sense of the World*.

Krull, D. & Erickson, D. (1995). Inferential hopscotch: How people draw social inferences from behavior. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. 35-38.

E. Self-Justification

- Theory of cognitive dissonance
- Evidence for dissonance
- Applications

Reading:

Aaronson, E. (2004). Chapter 5: Self-Justification. From *The Social Animal*. Worth Press.

F. Stereotypes and Prejudice

- Definitions
- Individual differences
- Cognitive and social perspectives
- An integrated view

Reading:

Gladwell, M. (2005). Chapter 3 from *Blink: The power of thinking without thinking*.

IV. Personality and Psychopathology

A. Personality

- Psychodynamic Theories – Freud
 - o Psychosexual Stages of Development
 - o Structural Model of the Personality
- Humanistic Approaches
 - o Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
 - o Carl Rogers
- Social Cognitive Perspectives
- Trait Approaches to Personality
 - o The Big Five
- Personality Assessment
- Social Influences
- Biological Influences
 - o Genetics
 - o Birth Order
 - o Temperaments
 - o Gender Differences
- Can Personality Change?

Reading:

Gray, P. Chapter 15: Personality. From *Psychology*. Worth Press.

Roberts, B., Walton, K. & Bogg, T. (2005). Conscientiousness and health across the life course. *Review of General Psychology*, 9, 156-168.

Kagan, J. (1999). Born to be shy. From *States of Mind: New Discoveries about How Our Brains Make Us Who We Are*. Edited by R. Conlan. New York: John Wiley and Associates.

B. Psychopathology

- Definition and Categorization of Mental Illness
 - o DSM-IV
 - o Causes of Mental Disorders
 - o Stigma and Legal Definition of Psychopathology
- Anxiety Disorders
 - o Phobias
 - o Generalized Anxiety Disorder
 - o Panic Disorder
 - o Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- Mood Disorders
 - o Depression
 - o Bipolar Disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Personality Disorders: Focus upon Borderline and Antisocial disorders

Reading:

Kosslyn & Rosenberg. (2001). Psychological Disorders. From *Psychology: The Brain, The Person, The World*. Allyn & Bacon.

Solomon, A. (2001). *The Noonday Demon: Depression*. Touchstone Books.

V. Stress and Health

- What is Stress?
- Sources of Stress
- Physiology of Stress: psychoneuroimmunology
- Stress and Memory
- Personality and Social Factors

Reading:

Sapolsky, R. Chapter One from *Why Don't Zebras Get Ulcers?*

Cohen & Pressman (2006). Positive affect and health. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 15(3), 121-125.