

Psychology 100

Foundations of Psychology

Spring 2020

Professor Rebecca Compton
rcompton@haverford.edu
Sharpless 428, x1309

Course Description and Goals

People have long been fascinated by human (and nonhuman) behavior. What are the causal factors that lead people to think and act the way that they do? How should we best understand, explain and predict thought and behavior? These questions will be addressed through the examination of selected topics in biological, cognitive, social, and personality psychology.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe fundamentals of psychological research design and methodology
- Explain key findings and landmark studies from across major domains of psychology
- Demonstrate critical thinking and healthy skepticism about research findings

Course Requirements

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Exam 1 | 100 pts |
| Exam 2 | 100 pts |
| Exam 3 | 100 pts |
| Paper OR debate participation | 70 pts |
| Experiment participation | 15 pts |
| Attendance and participation | 15 pts |
| TOTAL | 400 pts |

Outline of Topics

- Introduction. Is psychology a science? What central ideas and debates have shaped psychology as a discipline?
- Biological Psychology. What is the relationship between the brain and behavior? How has evolution by natural selection shaped the behavior of our species?
- Cognitive Psychology. What is the best way to understand human thinking? How do we perceive and remember the world around us?
- Social Psychology. How does social influence affect behavior? How can social phenomena such as conformity and stereotyping best be understood?
- Personality & Clinical Psychology. What are some approaches to understanding characteristic individual differences in thought and behavior patterns? How can an integrated approach that includes biological, cognitive, social, and personality levels help us to understand mental disorders and physical disease?

Schedule of Topics and Reading Assignments

Overarching Themes

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|---|
| Jan. 22 (W) | Introduction to course | |
| Jan. 24 (F) | Psychology as a science | Noba: “Why Science?”; “Thinking Like a Psychological Scientist”; “Research Designs” |
| Jan. 27 (M) | Ethics in psychology | von Hippel, “Ethically Questionable Research”; Gluck, “Harry Harlow and Animal Research: Reflection on the Ethical Paradox” |
| Jan. 29 (W) | History and themes | Noba: “History of Psychology” |
| Jan. 31 (F) | History and themes | Noba: “Conditioning and Learning” |

Biological Psychology

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Feb. 3 (M) | Evolutionary approaches | Gray, “Genetic and Evolutionary Foundations of Behavior” |
| Feb. 5 (W) | Evolutionary approaches | |
| Feb. 7 (F) | <i>No class—professor away</i> | |
| Feb. 10 (M) | Mind and brain | Ward, “Introducing Cognitive Neuroscience” |
| Feb. 12 (W) | Mind and brain | Wolman, “A Tale of Two Halves” |
| Feb. 14 (F) | Mind and brain | Noba: “The Brain and Nervous System”, “The Nervous System” |
| Feb. 17 (M) | Mind and brain | Noba: “Neurons” |
| Feb. 19 (W) | <i>Review/catch-up</i> | |
| Feb. 21 (F) | EXAM 1 | |

Cognitive Psychology

| | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| Feb. 24 (M) | <i>Librarian presentation: finding sources for your paper assignment</i> | |
| Feb. 26 (W) | Perception | Noba: “Sensation and Perception” |
| Feb. 28 (F) | Attention | Noba: “Attention”; “Failures of Attention” |
| Mar. 2 (M) | DEBATE: Distracted Driving | Manhart, “The Limits of Multitasking” |
| Mar. 4 (W) | Memory | Noba: “Memory” |
| Mar. 6 (F) | Memory | Noba: “Eyewitness Testimony and Memory Biases” |
| Mar. 16 (M) | <i>No class - professor away</i> | Paper due |
| Mar. 18 (W) | Judgment & decision-making | Noba: “Judgment & Decision-Making” |

Social Psychology

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Mar. 20 (F) | Conformity and obedience | Noba: “Conformity and Obedience” |
| Mar. 23 (M) | Aggression | Noba: “Aggression and Violence” |
| Mar. 25 (W) | DEBATE: Media Violence | |
| Mar. 27 (F) | Stereotyping & prejudice | Noba: “Prejudice, Discrimination, & Stereotyping”; “The Psychology of Groups” |
| Mar. 30 (M) | Social cognition | Noba: “Social Cognition and Attitudes” |
| Apr. 1 (W) | Social cognition | Noba: “Theory of Mind” |
| Apr. 3 (F) | Replication crisis | Noba: “The Replication Crisis in Psychology”; Calarco, “Why Rich Kids are So Good at the Marshmallow Test” |

Apr. 6 (M) *Review/catch-up*

Apr. 8 (W) **EXAM 2**

Personality & Clinical Psychology

Apr. 10 (F) Intro to personality psychology

Apr. 13 (M) Personality traits Noba: “Personality Traits”; “Personality Assessment”

Apr. 15 (W) Personality traits Noba: “Nature and Nurture”

Apr. 17 (F) Intro to psychopathology Noba: “History of Mental Illness”

Apr. 20 (M) Psychopathology Noba: “Mood Disorders”; “Psychopharmacology”

Apr. 22 (W) Psychopathology Noba: “Therapeutic Orientations”

Apr. 24 (F) Health psychology Noba: “The Healthy Life”

Apr. 27 (M) Health psychology

Apr. 29 (W) *Review/catch-up*

May 1 (F) **EXAM 3**

Information about Exams

Exams will be taken outside of class time, at a time and place of your choosing, within the 48-hour windows specified below. Class is canceled on the date corresponding to the exam on the syllabus, to allow time for studying and taking the exam. Exams will be 60 minutes in length and will be administered through Moodle. More details will be shared at appropriate times during the semester.

EXAM 1:

- May be taken anytime between 5pm Wed. Feb. 19 through 5pm Fri. Feb. 21.
- No class on Fri. Feb. 21.

EXAM 2:

- May be taken anytime between 5pm Mon. Apr. 6 through 5pm Wed. Apr. 8. (Note: Passover begins the evening of Apr. 8.)
- No class on Wed. Apr. 8.

EXAM 3:

- May be taken anytime between 5pm Wed. Apr. 29 through 5pm Fri. May 1.
- No class on Fri. May 1.

Policies

Communication with professor

- To meet with the professor, please use the sign-up schedule linked on the course Moodle site. If you email the professor with a question, you can normally expect to receive a response within one business day (not necessarily in the evenings or on weekends).

Due dates and extensions

- Learning to meet deadlines, even under not-ideal circumstances, is an important aspect of preparing for many careers and life experiences. Therefore, extensions for exams and other work will generally only be granted in circumstances of medical or family emergency.

Technology etiquette during class

- Cell phone use is not permitted in class except in emergency. Laptops may be used for note-taking if that is your preferred method. However, laptops should not be used for other purposes during class time, because it is disrespectful to the professor and your fellow students.

Accommodations

- Haverford College is committed to providing equal access to students with a disability. If you have (or think you have) a learning difference or disability – including mental health, medical, or physical impairment, please contact the Office of Access and Disability Services (ADS) at hc-ads@haverford.edu. The Coordinator will confidentially discuss the process to establish reasonable accommodations. Students who have already been approved to receive academic accommodations and want to use their accommodations in this course should share their verification letter with the professor and also make arrangements to meet with the professor as soon as possible to discuss their specific accommodations. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.
- It is a state law in Pennsylvania that individuals must be given advance notice if they are to be recorded. Therefore, any student who has a disability-related need to audio record this class must first be approved for this accommodation from the Coordinator of Access and Disability Services and then must speak with the professor. Other class members will need to be aware that this class may be recorded.