

**GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY: HONORS #11762-007, SPRING 2007**

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:15-10:30, #076 Kent Hall  
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**OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesdays 1:00-3:00, Thursdays 10:30-12:30, or by appointment.  
I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this resource.

**COURSE TEXTBOOK:** Lefton and Brannon (2006), *Psychology*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition.

**COURSE SUMMARY:** At a new restaurant, the first thing you do is read a menu to find out about all the different entrées they serve. Reading over the brief descriptions of each entrée will give you a sense of what it is like, although of course you really don't know about a dish until you order it and try it. By analogy, consider the field of psychology as a restaurant you're going to for the first time. This course, General Psychology, is your menu—it will introduce you to many of the areas within psychology and some of the topics studied within each of those areas. The course will not be teaching about any topic in great depth, but it will describe to you many of the "entrées" you could "order" by taking other courses in psychology, and it will prepare you by providing a broad base of information about the field of psychology.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** A brief editorial: Personally, I don't like grades. I think they distract students from the real purpose of education—namely, education. That is, a student's ultimate goal becomes getting a grade, rather than expanding one's knowledge about the world. Unfortunately, grading is an unavoidable component of our higher education system, and so this course must have means of evaluating what you're learning. To this end:

- **EXAMINATIONS:** Four exams will be administered, three during the semester plus a comprehensive final. Each exam is initially worth 100 points, but whichever of the four exams you get the lowest grade on will be weighted less than the others in your final grade (by 50%). Thus, all together, the four exams are worth 350 points.
- **DAILY REVIEWS:** One of the very best ways to learn new information is to SELF-TEST. To help you do this, I will ask several short review questions at the beginning of each class, which will give you a chance to test yourself on content that we covered in previous classes. You will write down your answers and turn them in. Over the course of the semester, you will earn 2 points for each day you turn in responses, up to 28 points. The review questions will be given promptly at the start of class, so it behooves you to be punctual (you only receive credit for a day if you are there to respond to all of the questions). Note that you earn the points just for turning in responses. The daily reviews really are just to help you practice recalling information you've learned (which will drastically improve your memory for that information), so you're not punished for not knowing an answer.
- **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:** Throughout the semester, we will be discussing many findings of psychological research. But what might not be obvious is the fact that much of this research was conducted at top research universities like Kent State, with participants much like yourself. The descriptions of psychological research that appear in textbooks necessarily omit a great deal of information about what participants actually do in these studies, and what the experience is really like. Serving as a research participant gives you a unique, behind-the-scenes look at how research is conducted.

All students taking General Psychology are required to earn 6 research participation points, which counts for 10% of your final grade. Specifically, this research experience requirement is worth 42 points (7 points for each of 6 research participation credits). These 6 research participation points may be earned either through participation in research studies (conducted by researchers in the Department of Psychology after review by Kent State University's Institutional Review Board) or by writing brief reviews of research articles (see attached handout for details). Regardless of which option you choose, the goal is to supplement the broad coverage of many topics in class with experiences that will deepen your understanding of psychological research.

If you choose to participate in research studies, note that these are REAL studies that are being conducted by REAL researchers (for example, faculty projects and graduate student dissertation research). You should take your participation seriously – you are helping to promote a better understanding of human thought, emotion, and behavior. (Who knows – you may even participate in a study that gets published in a psychology journal and discussed in the next generation of General Psychology textbooks!)

Regardless of which option you choose, do not put it off until the end of the semester! Usually, there are many experiments being conducted early in the semester. Many faculty, however, start to try to wrap things up toward the end of the semester, meaning you will have many fewer opportunities to participate in experiments.

- **EXTRA CREDIT:** You have two opportunities to earn extra credit points in the class:
  - First, you can earn up to 12 additional research participation credits (beyond the 6 that are required), and 1 extra credit class point will be added to your grade for each extra research participation credit.
  - Second, I mentioned above that you won't lose points for not knowing an answer on a daily review. However, you will be rewarded if you do know all the answers on a daily review. You will earn 1 extra credit point each time you are able to answer all questions correctly (up to 10 extra credit points). Here's the logic: Waiting until the night before an exam and then studying in one big long chunk is not a very good way to support long-term learning. It is much better to study repeatedly, in short sessions that are separated in time. Thus, I would recommend that you 'study' for a short time each night before the next day of class (or at least in the morning before class). Those who do this are more likely to get all of the daily review questions right, and I'll give you extra credit to encourage this good study habit.

Thus, your final grade will be computed based on a total of 420 points – 350 from exams, 28 from daily reviews, and 42 from research experience:

A = 90-100% (376-420 points)

B = 80-89% (334-375 points)

C = 70-79% (292-333 points)

D = 60-69% (250-291 points)

F = I don't expect anyone to get a D in this class, much less an F!

**With all that said, I really want you to focus on LEARNING in this class, not on GRADES. I will do what I can to help you focus on learning and not so much on grades. If you are willing to put the work in to learn (because learning does take work), you will get the grade you want.**

**COURSE POLICIES:** I do not take attendance, although I **STRONGLY** encourage you to attend class regularly. Each student has a responsibility to be considerate of the other students in the class by minimizing disruptions: Cell phones, pagers, etc. **MUST** be turned off. Coming in to class late is distracting to others, so please be on time. Engaging in non-class activities (e.g., napping, reading the newspaper) is also distracting, so I expect you to be attending to the class if you come to class. Finally, there are **NO MAKE-UP EXAMS** except when arranged in advance. If you miss an exam, this will then be counted as your lowest exam grade and will only be counted 50%.

I expect that all students know and will adhere to the university's honor code, and your continued enrollment in this class is taken as your agreement with this policy. The minimum penalty for failing to adhere to this honor code is an F in the course. If you are not familiar with the university's policy, you should visit <http://imagine.kent.edu/policyreg> and search on Policy # 3342-3-07.

University policy 3342-3-18 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Disability Services (contact 330-672-3391) or visit [www.kent.edu/sds](http://www.kent.edu/sds) for more information on registration procedures.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:** Note that the schedule of topic coverage is tentative and may be revised depending upon how quickly or slowly we move through these topics. However, exam dates are firm and will not change.

January	Tue	16	Introduction and course overview
	Thu	18	read Chapter 1: What is Psychology?
	Tue	23	read Chapter 2: The Science of Psychology
	Thu	25	continue Chapter 2
	Tue	30	read Chapter 4: Child Development
February	Thu	1	continue Chapter 4
	Tue	6	read Chapter 3: Neuroscience: The Brain and Behavior
	Thu	8	continue Chapter 3
	Tue	13	review for first exam
	Thu	15	FIRST EXAM
	Tue	20	read Chapter 6: Sensation and Perception
	Thu	22	continue Chapter 6
March	Tue	27	read Chapter 8: Learning
	Thu	1	continue Chapter 8
	Tue	6	read Chapter 9: Memory
	Thu	8	continue Chapter 9
	Tue	13	read Chapter 11: Intelligence
	Thu	15	read Chapter 10: Cognitive Psychology
	Tue	20	review for second exam
	Thu	22	SECOND EXAM

	Tue	27	[no class – Spring Break]
	Thu	29	[no class – Spring Break]
April	Tue	3	read Chapter 14: Social Psychology
	Thu	5	continue Chapter 14
	Tue	10	read Chapter 13: Personality and Its Assessment
	Thu	12	continue Chapter 13
	Tue	17	read Chapter 16: Psychological Disorders
	Thu	19	continue Chapter 16
	Tue	24	read Chapter 17: Therapy
	Thu	26	review for third exam
May	Tue	1	THIRD EXAM
	Thu	3	[class cancelled – MPA conference]
	Thu	10	FINAL EXAM, 7:45 – 10:00 a.m.

## Statement on Academic Dishonesty

### Excerpted from the University's Administrative policy and procedures regarding student cheating and plagiarism. Policy #3342-3-07

- (A) **Policy statement.** It is the policy of the university that:
- (1) Students enrolled in the university, at all its campuses, are to perform their academic work according to standards set by faculty members, departments, schools and colleges of the university; and
  - (2) Cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which no credit can be given and for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied.
- (B) Intent and scope of the policy.
- (1) In providing this policy, the university affirms that acts of cheating and plagiarism by students constitute a subversion of the goals of the institution, have no place in the university and are serious offenses to academic goals and objectives, as well as to the rights of fellow students.
  - (2) It is the intent of this policy to provide appropriate sanctions, to provide fair and realistic procedures for imposing those sanctions, to provide safeguards for any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism, and to coordinate the policy with procedures of the code of student conduct, rule 3342-4-15 of the Administrative Code and of this register.
  - (3) This policy applies to all students of the university, graduate and undergraduate, full or part-time, whose conduct is of such a nature prohibited by the policy. Other offenses of a nonacademic nature are covered by the code of student conduct, rule 3342-4-15 of the Administrative Code and of this register.
- (C) Definitions. As used in this rule:
- (1) **"Cheat"** means intentionally to misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Such misrepresentations may, but need not necessarily, involve the work of others. As defined, cheating includes, but is not limited to:
    - (a) Obtaining or retaining partial or whole copies of examination, tests or quizzes before these are distributed for student use;
    - (b) Using notes, textbooks or other information in examinations, tests and quizzes, except as expressly permitted;
    - (c) Obtaining confidential information about examinations, tests or quizzes other than that released by the instructor;
    - (d) Securing, giving or exchanging information during examinations;
    - (e) Presenting data or other material gathered by another person or group as one's own;
    - (f) Falsifying experimental data or information;
    - (g) Having another person take one's place for any academic performance without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor;
    - (h) Cooperating with another to do one or more of the above; and
    - (i) Using a substantial portion of a piece of work previously submitted for another course or program to meet the requirements of the present course or program without notifying the instructor to whom the work is presented.
    - (j) Presenting falsified information in order to postpone or avoid examinations, tests, quizzes, or other academic work.
  - (2) **"Plagiarize"** means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works. As defined, plagiarize includes, but is not limited to:
    - (a) The copying of words, sentences and paragraphs directly from the work of another without proper credit;
    - (b) The copying of illustrations, figures, photographs, drawings, models, or other visual and nonverbal materials, including recordings, of another without proper credit; and
    - (c) The presentation of work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers.

