Psychology 110: Introduction to Psychology
Summer Session B, 2018
Tuesday/Thursday 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Teaching Team:

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The psychologist finds himself in the midst of a rich and vast land full of strange happenings: there are men killing themselves; a child playing; a child forming his lips trying to say his first word; a person who, having fallen in love and being caught in an unhappy situation, is not willing or not able to find a way out; there is the mystical state called hypnosis, where the will of one person seems to govern another person; there is the reaching out for higher and more difficult goals; loyalty to a group; dreaming; planning; exploring the world; and so on without end. It is an immense continent full of fascination and power and full of stretches of land where no one ever has set foot.

Psychology is out to conquer this continent, to find out where its treasures are hidden, to investigate its danger spots, to master its vast forces, and to utilize its energies.

How can one reach this goal?  

Kurt Lewin, 1969

Course Overview
The human mind is one of the most fascinating and complex subjects of modern science. How can we possibly hope to understand it? This course will use the tools of psychological science to offer some answers.
Course Goals:
The first goal of this course is to provide a general review of the scientific discipline of psychology. At the end of this course students should have a basic understanding of the methods that are used in the empirical study of human behavior, mental processes, and their neural and evolutionary underpinnings. Students will become familiar with many of the field’s most important findings.

The second goal is to use psychology as a mirror: illuminating the workings of our minds and helping us to understand ourselves. Humans are smart and humans are dumb. Vast are our accomplishments; deep are our quirks and foibles. Psychology, more than any other discipline, explores this duality. We hope taking part in that exploration will change the way you see yourself and others.

The third goal is to help students become critical consumers of information. The mass media is full of "pop" psychology often based on poor or poorly understood science. Upon completion of this course, students should have the tools necessary to critically evaluate psychological claims, and recognize pseudo-science when they come across it. Indeed, students should be able to recognize flaws in experiments across a variety of domains outside of psychology; the class will emphasize general wisdom for consuming scientific information in the media.

Class Website
Log in to Canvas with your netID, and if you are enrolled you should be able to access the website directly. On the site you can find a current copy of the syllabus, the lecture videos, copies of all handouts and additional readings, and PDFs of slides corresponding to the course lectures.

Course Expectations
In addition to regular class attendance, students will complete several additional assignments including short written assignments, a midterm, and one comprehensive final exam. Watching the videos is essential, as they are largely distinct from the content in the other readings. Further, the lecture slides do not contain enough text to recreate the lecture if you have missed it. It is almost impossible to do well in this course without watching all the videos. Consider yourself warned!

Grading and Assignments
Your course grade will be based on your performance on each of the four course areas described below. Approximate weighting of different course components is as follows:

- Class Participation: 20%
- Midterm-level challenge questions assigned week 2-4: 20%
- Normal-level response questions assigned week 1-5: 30%
- Final Exam: 30%

IMPORTANT: Class participation is an essential part of this course. If you miss more than two classes, you will automatically fail the course, regardless of how well you do otherwise. Please note that this is a Yale Summer Session rule and is outside the discretion of course staff.

The final exam will be held in class during normal class times and will be “closed book,” i.e., you will not be allowed to draw on any materials. It will consist of a written component and a multiple-choice component. Please ensure you will be able to take the exam during this times!
The **midterm questions** will be a total of 6 challenge questions. One of these questions will be assigned each class (i.e., twice a week) for the middle three weeks (Week 2, 3, and 4). These questions will be open book and similar format to the normal questions assigned each week.

The **response questions** will be 2-3 content questions assigned Weeks 1-5. They will be open book. These will be due at 7:30 PM on Monday and Wednesday evenings during Weeks 1, 2, 3, and 4, and on Monday at 7:30 PM evening on Week 5. More detail will be provided during the first class, but in general you should be aware that you will be turning in writing assignments twice per week and that these will represent approximately 50% of the course grade in total. The first of these assignments, due Monday before the first class, will not contribute to your grade but you will be provided with feedback to give you a better sense of our expectations.

It is essential that you use the Canvas ‘Modules’ page to look up the assignments in a timely manner. You will also submit written assignments through the Canvas ‘Assignments’ page.

**Format and requirements**

This course lasts five weeks. For each week, students will watch a series of lectures that were taped in 2017 as part of a standard lecture-based version of this course. There will also be other supplementary on-line lectures and readings. Each week, there are two meetings for online discussion, during the periods of Tuesday and Thursday, 730 – 9 PM EST. One meeting per week is with the professor; the other is with the TF, but attendance is required at both.

Please note that all times are Eastern Standard Time.

Although this is an online summer course, the expected workload is equivalent to a typical semester-long university class. You will watch a semester’s worth of lectures, do a similar amount of readings, do about as much writing, and have roughly the same amount of contact with the instructor and the teaching fellow (actually, this course will have much more one-on-one contact with the instructor than a lecture would!) Thus, given that an entire semester is compressed into five weeks, you should expect to devote significantly more time to this class than you would to a class during the semester.

**Required Books**

You are required to make use of one text and one short supplemental book on statistics and research methodology. These are:


Books are available for purchase at the campus bookstore. However, you can also make do with the previous edition of the textbook, and reading assignments will be provided for both the 2nd and 3rd editions. The previous edition, as well as used copies of *How to Lie*, are often available very cheaply on Amazon.com or at other online retailers. We understand that books are expensive and support sharing, borrowing, buying used, etc.

There will also be other required readings and videos made available through the course website.

**Academic Honesty**

The exams are closed-book. Obviously, use of any written materials, or any form of collaboration is forbidden. For the written assignments, any use of words or ideas from other sources—including online
sources such as Wikipedia—has to be explicitly and clearly acknowledged. For a useful discussion, see: http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism

Any case of suspected cheating will be referred to the Executive Committee of Yale College. The consequences can be severe, including suspension and expulsion. Many episodes of cheating are due to stress and panic. If you find yourself in a difficult situation, there are always better options than cheating. If you are having problems in the course, you should always feel comfortable talking to me or your TF.

The Good News

Psychology is the most exciting topic around. Who isn’t interested in sex, food, dreams, amnesia, multiple personalities, and the nature of evil? Who isn’t interested in a class that can serve as a mirror held up in front of them, illuminating their own hopes, fears, and desires? In this course we will discuss scientific research that will astonish you. Understanding this research will require a lot of reading and a lot of thinking—but the intellectual rewards will be considerable.

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1 Portions of this syllabus were borrowed from Dr. Paul Bloom’s PSYC110 and Moralties of Everyday Life Summer Syllabus.
Schedule

Note: Please see the Canvas page for the specific lecture videos to watch before each class

Week 1.

Class 1 (Tuesday): Introduction to psychology and its evolutionary roots

Text: Chapter 1: Read first section on “Psychology’s routes”
TED Talks: Robert Sapolsky [https://goo.gl/8DkEBC]

Class 2 (Thursday): Mind vs. Brain and Sensations vs. Perceptions

Text: Chapter 3: Read sections on “Neurons,” “Structure of the Brain,” and “Investigating the Brain”
Chapter 4: Read section 1 “Sensation and Perception” (a.k.a. “Our senses” in V.2e) “Vision 1” and “Vision 2.”
TED Talks: Vilayanur Ramachandran [https://goo.gl/9i017W]

Week 2.

Class 3 (Tuesday): Unconscious; Clinical psychology; Methods pt. 1

Text: Chapter 5, Read through first section on “Consciousness and Unconsciousness”
Chapter 2, read section “Observation”

Class 4 (Thursday): Learning; Thinking; Methods pt. 2

Text: Chapter 7: Read sections “Observational Learning” and “Implicit Learning,” but consult “Operant Conditioning” and “Classical Conditioning” as needed.
Chapter 2, read section “Explanation”


Week 3.

Class 5 (Tuesday): How to Remember and How to Forget

Text: Chapter 6: Skim “Encoding,” “Storage,” and “Retrieval.” Read “Multiple Forms of Memory” and “Memory Failures.”
Class 6 (Thursday): Development

Text: Chapter 11: Read section on “Infancy and Childhood.”

Week 4.

Class 7 (Tuesday): Language and Personality


Class 8 (Thursday): Emotion and Sleep


Week 5.

Class 9 (Tuesday): The Mind in Social Context

Text: Chapter 13 Read section on “Social Cognition.”

Class 10 (Thursday): Final exam