

This is a sample syllabus for PSY2012. Students should reference the section syllabus provided at the beginning of the semester for specifics regarding assignments and grade assignments.

## SYLLABUS FOR PSY 2012: GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

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| <u>Classroom &amp; Meeting Days/Times</u>              | <u>Instructor's Phone &amp; Email</u>         |
| <u>Psychology Department Main Office &amp; Phone #</u> | <u>Instructor's Office &amp; Office Hours</u> |

Note: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

### OVERVIEW OF COURSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The *Liberal Studies for the 21st Century Program* at Florida State University builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive both intellectually and materially and to support themselves, their families, and their communities through a broad and critical engagement with the world in which they live and work. Liberal Studies thus offers a transformative experience. This course has been approved as meeting the **Liberal Studies** requirements and thus is designed to help you become a critical appraiser of the theories of the social sciences and the facts that support them.

**Course Description:** Psychology is the scientific study of behavior, the brain, and mental processes. General Psychology is a broad overview course covering important psychological principles and findings and the basic scientific methods employed. A “bio-psycho-social” approach is emphasized throughout so that all behaviors (including how we think, feel, and act) are discussed in terms of biological, psychological, and social determinants and consequences.

Most people find the content of this course of great interest. We all want to know why we think, feel, and act the way we do – and why other people think, feel, and act the way they do (which basically describes the content area of psychology – a more exact definition of *psychology* will be discussed in class). But what do we *really know* about why people think, feel, and act the way they do? How realistic are the “answers” we hear and see (and generate), and on which ones can we rely when we need to make an important decision? How can we, and how do psychologists, attempt to determine the “real” answers to these questions? Attempting to understand *what* we really know about these questions, and *how* we can come to know it, is no trivial pursuit. Rather it should be of great importance to us all because our understanding of these issues and of how to decipher what we hear about them can have significant effects for our lives, the lives of those around us, and society as a whole.

**Course Objectives:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate that they have achieved each of the following five learning outcomes. A student’s mastery of each learning outcome will be assessed by their responses to relevant multiple choice exam and quiz questions. Mastery of learning outcome #2 also will be assessed by performance on the *Scientific and Critical Thinking Project* which is both a hands-on learning experience and an assessment (see later in syllabus).

1. Critically examine, interpret, and explain how personal, political, cultural, economic, and social experiences and/or structures shape the past and/or the present.
2. Employ appropriate social scientific methods and technology in the selection and appraisal of data, and use these data to assess causal arguments, and analyze assertions and evidence.
3. Demonstrate their knowledge of various subfields and perspectives within psychology.
4. Demonstrate their knowledge (at a basic level) of what is currently known, and what remains unknown, about what and why we think, feel, and act the way we do.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of how one might *rationally* apply the findings of psychology to one’s everyday life.

## SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

**Text:** Lilienfeld, S.O., Lynn, S.J., Namy, L.L., & Woolf, N.J. (2014). *Psychology* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Boston: Pearson. [See our course web page for detailed information about options and prices for this textbook.]

**Course Web Page** (<http://campus.fsu.edu>) & **FSU Email Address:** **CHECK THESE DAILY**. IF YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY ACCESSING OUR COURSE WEB SITE OR YOUR FSU EMAIL ACCOUNT, COME SEE ME FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. **Be certain to check your FSU email address daily!** For information on how to forward you email from the FSU email address to another one, go to <http://faq.its.fsu.edu/Email/E-mail-Accounts/FSU-JES-Email/How-do-I-forward-my-FSUID-fsu.edu-email-account> or contact Information Technology Services, Florida State University C6100 University Center Tallahassee, FL 32306-2620 | 850/644-4357.

**Research Participation Requirement:** All students in the class are required to earn seven units of research credit. Details on this requirement are described below under Research Participation Requirement. Note that this requirement refers to participating as a research subject. It is completely separate from the “research project” that students will actually conduct and write up.

**Course Content:** You are responsible for **all information relevant to the general course objectives** (listed above) **and the more specific learning objectives** (described below under *Course Description*) from the assigned readings, the course web page, emails, course project, and class meetings. You are responsible for this information even if you miss a class meeting, and whether or not the information is discussed during class meetings. You also are responsible for preparing for class meetings (described below in *Course Description*) and for contacting me if you need help with the course content.

**Attendance:** Florida State University has a mandatory first class attendance policy, if you are absent on the first day, you will be dropped from the course. If you miss any other non-exam class meeting, you **do not** need to notify me with an excuse. However, you are responsible for anything you miss and for getting back up to speed with the class. Since I cannot give you notes for classes you miss, I strongly recommend that you get the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of at least 3 people in this class from whom you can get notes (see *People In My Class* near the end of this syllabus). You might also want to study for this class with these other students. I suggest that, if you do miss class, you get the notes, go over them and the corresponding material in the text, and then come see me for further clarification. **University Attendance Policy** states: Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

**Exams, Scientific & Critical Thinking Project, Liberal Studies Quiz, & Grades:** Your course grade will be based on 4 multiple-choice exams, a Scientific and Critical Thinking Project, and a Liberal Studies Quiz, supplemented by some extra credit opportunities. The final course grade calculation will be weighted so that 80% of your grade will be based on the average of your scores on 4 exams, 12% will be based on your performance on the Scientific & Critical Thinking Project, and 8% will be based on the Liberal Studies Quiz. Extra credit points will be added at the end to your total points. You also are required to complete the Research Participation Requirement. **DO NOT MISS CLASS ON EXAM DATES** unless absolutely unavoidable.

**Administrative Information:** You are responsible for all information in this syllabus and for information in announcements or messages provided throughout the semester during class meetings (even if you miss that class), on the course web page, or via email. You also are responsible for responding to announcements or messages when requested to do so and for contacting me if you have any questions about your grade or the conduct of this course.

**Academic Honor Policy:** The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy>.) **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!!** Please note

that violations of this Academic Honor Policy will not be tolerated. In particular, incidents of plagiarism of any type and/or cheating on exams, quizzes, or course assignments will be rigorously pursued.

***The Learning Environment:*** Please cooperate with me and your fellow students to create an environment that fosters learning and communication. We all should recognize the diversity that exists in our society and in our university, and thus we all should be respectful in our behavior and comments. We also should avoid disruptions that might be distractions or otherwise interfere with the learning opportunities of others in the class. Disruptions to the learning environment include (but are not limited to): talking while others are speaking, reading newspapers, magazines, or unrelated course material in class, use of personal electronic devices during class (e.g., iPads, iPods, radios, text messaging, web browsing, etc. – however it is OK to take notes on personal computers), eating in class, or otherwise behaving rudely. **Use, or the ringing/buzzing, of cell phones is particularly disruptive. Please turn off these devices (not just put them on vibrate) and store them out-of-sight before class begins.** If you have an emergency situation in which you must be able to be reached and, thus, want to leave your cell phone on, discuss this with me *before class begins*. Also, I understand that on rare occasions it might be necessary to either arrive to class late or to leave early. I do prefer that you come to class (rather than not attend at all) on those occasions when you must be a little late or leave a little early. However, make every effort to avoid this if possible. On those occasions when it is necessary, please do so with as little disruption to the class as possible (e.g., take a seat near the door and enter/depart quietly).

***Americans with Disabilities Act:*** Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the: Student Disability Resource Center, 874 Traditions Way, 108 Student Services Building, Florida State University Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167 (850) 644-9566 (voice) (850) 644-8504 (TDD) [sdrc@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:sdrc@admin.fsu.edu) <http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

***Free Tutoring from FSU:*** On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options at <http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring> or contact [tutor@fsu.edu](mailto:tutor@fsu.edu). High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

***Copyright Statement:*** Some of the materials in this course are possibly copyrighted. They are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and only for instructional activities associated with and for the duration of the course. They may not be retained in another medium or disseminated further. They are provided in compliance with the provisions of the Teach Act.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Even though the class is large, I would like class meetings to involve **discussion and participation** by all members of the class (not just me). This type of active participation is a better way to learn, and a lot more interesting and fun, than simply listening to (or giving) lectures. Of course, for this to facilitate learning, everyone must prepare for each class meeting by conscientiously completing the assignment for that meeting. So, this is how it will work in this class.

1. In advance of each class meeting, I will identify specific learning objectives that might be covered in that meeting. These objectives will be much more specific than the general objectives listed on the first page of this syllabus. They may come from those provided in each chapter of your textbook and/or be provided by me. You will find the assignments under *Assignments* and the learning objectives under *Learning Objectives* on our Blackboard course web site.
2. You do the assigned reading (and/or any other assigned tasks) relevant to those learning objectives and prepare to discuss in class what you have learned, and what you think, about those learning objectives.
3. In class, we will discuss the objectives. Note that we will not have time to discuss all of the assigned learning objectives, or all aspects of those objectives we do discuss. Therefore, we will focus our discussions on what I consider to be most difficult and/or essential, or *on what you tell me is most confusing*, or on new information I might present about the objectives.

By the way, the preparation for and participation during classes are intended to be *learning activities*. That means they are intended to help you learn and achieve the course goals. Your comments in class are not expected to always be “right.” Making mistakes is part of the learning process. Some of this material is difficult and a certain degree of confusion, uncertainty, or misinterpretation is to be expected (in addition, in some cases there may not be “right” or “wrong” answers, just points of view). So, in our discussions, don’t be afraid to be wrong and don’t be afraid to express confusion and ask questions. However, you are expected to have prepared so that your comments (right or wrong) and questions are thoughtful and informed. That is, do not just wing it in class and do not just talk to say something, but participate based on actually having done the assignment in a thoughtful manner.

Remember that you are responsible for learning whatever is relevant for these learning objectives from the assigned readings and other assignments – whether or not it is discussed during class meetings. Therefore, if you feel confused or uncertain about any of the learning objectives, *it is your responsibility* to let me know so that I can clarify that material for you. Sometimes this can be done in class. Other times it can be done via email or in person by coming to see me during office hours. **I strongly encourage** you to come talk with me individually anytime during the semester when you have questions concerning course material that are not being answered in class or on the web page, or if you have questions about how you are doing in the class. **If you are having problems in the course, do not wait too long to talk with me-- come early in the semester while there is still time to improve.** Of course, I also am very happy to meet with you even if you are not having difficulties but are just interested in the material and would like to discuss it beyond what we can do in class. If you want to meet for any of these reasons but cannot make my posted office hours, I will be glad to make an appointment for another time. To make an appointment, just see me in class, call, or email.

### Exams

There will be 4 *section* exams and one *optional cumulative final* exam. Each of the 5 exams is worth 65 points (1 point per question). Your exam grade will be based on the 4 highest scores of these 5 exams. That means, if you are happy with your grade after the first 4 exams, you do not have to take the cumulative final exam. However, you have the option of trying to raise your exam grade by taking the cumulative final and doing better on it than you did on one of the 4 section exams. If your score on the final is your lowest score, then your grade will be based on the other 4 exams. Therefore, the final cannot hurt your grade, only raise it.

The dates for all exams are indicated in the Course Outline and Schedule, below. Each *section* exam will be on the material for the corresponding section of the course and will include objective questions (e.g., multiple-choice, matching, etc.) and some short-answer essay questions. These exams will not be cumulative in that topics included on earlier exams will not be systematically sampled on later exams. However, it is typically the case that knowledge of information and concepts covered in earlier sections of the course is necessary to understand topics covered later. Further, you might be asked to apply something learned in an earlier section to the new material. The *optional cumulative final* exam also will have objective questions and some short-answer essays. However, it will be on material from across the entire semester and might have more short-answer essays and fewer multiple choice questions than did the *section* exams.

*Makeup exams.* Do not miss exams unless it is unavoidable and for legitimate reasons (see University Attendance Policy earlier in syllabus). If you must miss an exam, inform me as far in advance as possible (e.g., for religious holidays or University events) or, if it is not possible to tell me in advance (e.g., for last-minute illness or emergency), contact me as soon as possible after the exam. Contact me by email or by phone; if I am not in you can leave a message any time of the day or night). I may ask for documentation to show that your missing the exam was for a legitimate reason, **but contact me in any case whether the reason for missing was legitimate or not.** There might be a penalty if it was not an acceptable reason, but you don’t want a zero on the exam so contact me immediately. All makeups should occur as soon as possible, which in most cases will be no later than during my next office hour following the day of the exam.

### Scientific & Critical Thinking Project

Students will complete a project worth 12% of their final course grade. The goal of this project is to provide students with “hands-on” experience in applying the scientific and critical thinking approach that is emphasized throughout this course. More details about the project will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard. The scientific and critical thinking skills that you develop in this class also will be assessed on exams and on the Liberal Studies Quiz.

### Extra Credit

There will be a number of extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. These will typically be (but are not limited to) unannounced brief “pop” quizzes on material you were suppose to have prepared for class or that was covered during the current or a previous class meeting (these are meant to encourage you to prepare for, attend, and pay attention in class). There are **no makeups** for missed extra credit opportunities, for example if you miss an extra credit quiz because you arrived to class late or left early, or if you miss the announcement for a take home extra credit assignment because you were not in class or did not check the course web page in time, or if you turn in an extra credit assignment after the due date. However, keep in mind that there are a number of these extra credit opportunities across the semester. So, if you do miss one, there are likely to be others.

**These extra credit opportunities are available to everyone and will be the only ones offered. There will be no “special” individualized extra credit opportunities, so I encourage you to take advantage of these.**

### Research Participation Requirement

At Florida State University, as at other major universities, the accumulation of new knowledge in the field of psychology comes from research conducted by faculty and students. One of the academic objectives of PSY 2012 is to acquaint students with the nature of research activity. This objective is accomplished, in part, by having students who are enrolled in PSY 2012 either participate as subjects in on-going experiments or in alternative research-related assignments. Specifically, all students in the class are required to earn **seven units of research credit**. Details on how to earn these credits are provided on our Blackboard course web page. Click on *Research Requirement* to get the instructions.

This is not a graded assignment and does not affect the letter grade you earn in the course. However, it **IS** a requirement for completing the course. If you fail to meet the research requirement by the end of the semester, an Incomplete (I) for the course will be recorded with the Registrar rather than an actual grade. An “I” means you have not completed the course and cannot get a grade until you do so. Thus, you will need to complete the research requirement before the “I” is removed and your grade is officially recorded in your academic record. **Note that if you do not complete the research requirement before the end of this semester and, thus, receive an “I”, you must complete the research requirement during the next semester in which you are enrolled at Florida State University. If you do not, the “I” will expire and automatically become an “F.”**

### PEOPLE IN MY CLASS

Since I cannot give you notes for classes you miss, I strongly recommend that you get the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of at least 3 people in this class. That way, if you should miss a class, you would have several people to contact from whom you can get notes, etc. I suggest that, if you do miss class, you get the notes, go over them and the corresponding material in the text, and then come see me for further clarification.

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>PHONE NUMBER</u> | <u>EMAIL ADDRESS</u> |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1.          | 1.                  | 1.                   |
| 2.          | 2.                  | 2.                   |
| 3.          | 3.                  | 3.                   |

### Grades in Course

Final grades are calculated by the averaging the percent correct across 4 multiple-choice exams, and multiplying it by .80 so that exam scores contribute to 80% of one's final course grade. A student's percent of total points possible on the Scientific & Critical Thinking Project will be multiplied by .12 so that project scores contribute to 12% of one's final course grade. A student's score on the Liberal Studies Quiz (which assesses Learning Outcomes 1 & 2) will be multiplied by .08 so that a student's score contributes to 8% of the final course grade. Extra credit points are added to the final grade calculation, so they can only help. The following chart presents the percentage scores needed at the end of the semester to earn a particular grade in the course.

| <b>Grade</b> | <b>Points</b>  |
|--------------|----------------|
| A            | >92%           |
| A-           | 90% to < 92.0% |
| B+           | 88% to < 90.0% |
| B            | 82% to < 88.0% |
| B-           | 80% to < 82.0% |
| C+           | 78% to < 80.0% |
| C            | 72% to < 78.0% |
| C-           | 70% to < 72.0% |
| D+           | 68% to < 70.0% |
| D            | 62% to < 68.0% |
| F            | < 60.0%        |

Your point totals and corresponding percentage scores will be available to you under MY GRADES on the course web page and will be updated after each exam.

## INTENDED COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

**IMPORTANT NOTES:** 1) This schedule is subject to change if required by circumstances occurring during the semester. 2) The order in which we will cover certain chapters may differ from the order in which they are presented in the textbook. 3) We will cover only portions of some chapters. **The specific pages and learning objectives assigned for each chapter will be given in class and/or on the course web page.**

| Class Session | Topic and Reading  |
|---------------|--|
| 1             | Introduction to Course / What is Psychology?   |
| 2             | Psychology and Scientific Thinking (Chapter 1)   |
| 3 & 4         | Research Methods in Psychology (Chapter 2)   |
| 5 & 6         | Thinking & Reasoning (Chapter 8)<br>Scientific and Critical Thinking Project: Module 1 due   |
| 7             | <b>Exam 1</b>  |
| 8 & 9         | Biological Psychology (Chapter 3)  |
| 10 & 11       | Sensation & Perception (Chapter 4)   |
| 12 & 13       | Consciousness (Chapter 5)<br>Scientific and Critical Thinking Project: Module 2 due  |
| 14            | <b>Exam 2</b>  |
| 15 & 16       | Learning (Chapters 6)  |
| 17 & 18       | Memory (Chapter 7)   |
| 19, 20, 21    | Scientific and Critical Thinking Project: Module 3 due<br>Human Development (Chapter 10) & Personality (in class)  |
| 22            | <b>Exam 3</b>  |
| 23 & 24       | Emotion & Motivation (Chapter 11) / Stress & Health (in class)   |
| 25 & 26       | Social Psychology (Chapter 13)   |
| 27, 28, 29    | Scientific and Critical Thinking Project: Module 4 due<br>Psychological Disorders and Treatment (Chapter 15 & 16);<br><b>Liberal Studies Quiz</b> (Course Learning Outcomes 1 & 2) |
| 30            | <b>Exam 4</b>  |
| Finals week   | <b>Optional Cumulative Final Exam</b>  |