Instructor: Kelly Niccum
Office: O’Donohoe 132
Email: kelly.niccum@mwsu.edu

Course #: PSYC 1103; 203
Time: MWF 12:00-12:50
Location: PY 102
Office hours: TR 11:00-12:30
or by appointment

Text:


Course Objectives:

1. Provide students with a general overview of the field of psychology.
2. Help students gain knowledge of central principles and concepts of psychology and emphasize the significance of psychology in understanding human behavior and functioning.
3. Encourage students to learn beyond the textbook and to think critically by providing additional materials.

Course Requirements:

In order to achieve the above objectives, students must attend class lectures, take notes, and read assigned chapters. Progress toward the course objectives will be assessed through administration of a series of exams.

Exams

Each of the five exams will be worth 100 points and will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions. Material on each exam will cover information presented in class lectures (50%) and information from the textbook (50%). Thus, it is important that students attend lectures regularly and stay current with assigned readings. Each exam will cover two assigned chapters and each exam will contribute 20% to the course grade. The fifth exam is scheduled for the regularly scheduled day of class, and, like all other exams, the fifth exam is noncumulative. You must bring a scantron to all exams.
Grades:

Course grades are based on the number of points accumulated over the semester. There is a total of 500 possible points, so the grade ranges are as follows:

A = 450-500 points  
B = 400-459  
C = 350-399  
D = 300-349  
F = 299 and lower

Research Requirement:

Given the importance of research and research ethics in the field of psychology, all students are required to participate in one of the following research related exercises. No credit will be given for participation, but students must complete one of the two options. *Failure to do so will result in a letter grade reduction for the course.*

1) Participate in the General Psychology Screening. Participants will provide *anonymous* responses to several psychological questionnaires soliciting general demographic information (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, class rank) as well as information regarding attitudes, behaviors, and emotional experience. It is anticipated that participation will require less than one hour.

   or

2) Complete a research ethics essay. Participating students will read academic writings addressing research ethics. Following their reading, students will complete a three-page typed review of the information contained in the readings. Essays will be submitted electronically to the email address provided above. Completion of this activity should require approximately one hour.

   or

3) Other research options may become available during the semester. Additional instructions about this component of the course will be provided as it becomes available.

Information about all options to fulfill the research & research ethics course requirement will be posted as it becomes available at:  [http://libarts.mwsu.edu/psychology/index.asp](http://libarts.mwsu.edu/psychology/index.asp)
**Extra Credit:**

Extra credit in the amount of 25 points may be obtained by maintaining perfect attendance, defined by having no unexcused absences. Other opportunities for extra credit may arise during the semester. These opportunities will be announced if and when they become available. *Extra credit points will be allowed to contribute no more than 25 points (i.e., one-half letter grade) added to your accumulated point total at the end of the semester.*

**Attendance:**

Attendance is required. No penalty will be assigned for the first four unexcused absences; however, each additional absence will result in a 25-point (i.e., one-half letter grade) deduction from your accumulated point total at the end of the semester. Being tardy three times will count as one absence and leaving class prior to dismissal is considered equivalent to being tardy. You should come to class prepared to stay for the full time allotted. It will be your responsibility to keep track of absences and tardies. The student will not receive a “warning” that he/she has reached or exceeded the maximum amount of allowed unexcused absences.

Absences are excused only under the following circumstances:

- The student provides a written excuse from a medical practitioner stating that he/she was unable to attend class on the day(s) of the absence.
- The student provides a written excuse from a medical practitioner stating that his/her child was ill on the day(s) of the absence.
- The student provides a written excuse from an official of Midwestern State University stating that he/she was in attendance at a mandatory university function on the day(s) of the absence.

Funerals, employment-related absences, illnesses not requiring medical attention, job interviews, family emergencies, automobile malfunctions, court appearances, etc. do not constitute excused absences. Remember, you get four of these without penalty so use them wisely.

**Make-up Policy:**

Make-up exams will be permitted. The exams will be *similar in format to the original text,* however, there will be a 10-point (i.e., one letter grade) penalty for exams that were missed for unexcused reasons. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as possible in the event of missed exams. All make-up exams will be administered
during the exam period, May 9th, 2012. Students who have more than one make-up exam to take will have to make special arrangements with the instructor.

**Cheating Policy:**

Any evidence of cheating (e.g., looking at another individual’s paper, allowing someone else to look at your paper, etc.) on exams will result in dismissal from the class with a grade of “F” and a referral to the Dean of Students. To avoid questions of cheating, mark scantron answer sheets clearly, use a No. 2 pencil, and erase completely. Errors due to poorly marked scantrons will not result in a grade change.

**Cell phones and Electronics:**

Cell phones are to be turned off during class. If you have a situation that requires you to receive calls, you need to contact me ahead of time, have your device on vibration mode, and take the call outside the classroom.

**Disability:**

Students who require special accommodations must be registered with Disability Support Service before these accommodations can be provided. An Accommodation Request Form can be obtained from the Midwestern State University Disability Support Service Center or by going to [http://students.mwsu.edu/disability/](http://students.mwsu.edu/disability/).

**Approximate exam dates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>(Week)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>February 3rd, 2012</td>
<td>(1, 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>February 22nd, 2012</td>
<td>(5, 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>March 26th, 2012</td>
<td>(9, 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 4</td>
<td>April 16th, 2012</td>
<td>(12, 15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>May 4th, 2012</td>
<td>(16, 17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make-ups</td>
<td>May 9th, 2012</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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**Other Important Dates:**

- Jan. 19th: Student Payment Deadline
- Jan. 30th: Official Enrollment Date – Payment deadline to prevent classes from being voided
- Feb. 20th: Last day for May graduates to file application for graduation
- Mar. 19th: Last day for “W,” 4:00 pm – Drops after this date will receive grades of “F.”