

# PSYC 101 – General Psychology Syllabus

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## Instructor and Course Information

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**Professor** Brittany Liu, Ph.D.

**Email:** [bliu@kzoo.edu](mailto:bliu@kzoo.edu)

**Office:** Olds-Upton 403F

**Time:** Tuesdays, Thursdays 2:10 – 4:00 pm

**Place:** Olds-Upton 316

**Course website:** <https://moodle.kzoo.edu/course/view.php?id=2344>

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**Office Hours:** Tues/Thurs 11:30-1:00, and it's easy to arrange a time to meet over email (I'm on campus Mon-Fri).

\*\*Each student needs to come to an office hour within the first 3 weeks of the quarter.

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## Course Description & Expectations

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*Have you ever noticed patterns in the ways people think or behave? Have you questioned your own memories? Does it ever seem like people see the world completely differently than you do?*

Psychology is a diverse field that, at the most basic level, seeks to understand human behavior and mental processes. Your efforts in this class will help you understand humans' thoughts, feelings, and actions, and will prepare you to study them scientifically.

**You can expect me** to come to class prepared, interested in your experiences, and concerned with what you are gaining from this course. I will help you practice thinking like a psychologist utilizing readings, demonstrations, and active learning. I am available to answer any questions or offer advice about being a psychology major.

**You are expected** to take ownership of your learning. I realize you have multiple classes, a job or extra commitments but you must come prepared by completing readings and assignments purposefully. Research shows that participating in class activities and discussion helps individuals deeply learn & retain material (rather than just memorizing it).

**Create a folder on your computer** for this course. Save the NOBA text pdf, handouts, and lecture pds.

**How best to succeed in this course?** Actively read (e.g., take notes on readings, make outlines, quiz yourself, and go back to re-read sections you're unsure about). In class, take notes on what I say and the examples I provide. Class time is used to amplify, explain, and demonstrate the material from the readings or present new material.

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## Readings

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1. Hock, R. R. (2013). *Forty studies that changed psychology (7<sup>th</sup> ed)*. Pearson.
  2. *Discover psychology 2.0: A brief introductory text (Ed. B. LIU)*. NOBA Textbook Series. \*\*Create an account at <https://nobaproject.com>, then go to <http://noba.to/he4yxrwz> to download textbook or buy paper copy for \$21
  3. Additional assigned readings will be posted on the course website.
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## Course Outcomes

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By the end of this course, you should be able to...

- Examine with a critical (or skeptical) eye your own intuitive understanding of psychology, challenge that understanding, and articulate scientific understanding of psychology.
- Identify the key components of a psychological study and write up the results of a psychological study. *Prepares your for psychology research methods courses and SIPs.*
- Connect course concepts to your life.
- Identify the major breakthroughs and influential theories that shaped various disciplines of psychology. If you were seated next to a psychologist at a dinner party, you should be able to have a conversation about phenomena related to human behavior and mental processes. E.g., the link between brain and behavior, the fallibility of memories, how social surroundings impact our thoughts and behavior, or what it means to be diagnosed with a mental disorder.

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## Participation

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**I welcome your perspectives and questions, and hearing your reactions provides feedback on how well I am communicating with you (plus, it makes the lectures more enjoyable for everyone!).**

In-class participation (20pts): If you are regularly present and attentive, frequently contribute to discussions or ask questions, and are respectful of others you can expect full points. If you surf the internet, text, doze, or do other course-work you can expect zero points. Ask any time you would like to know where you stand with your participation grade.

Participation assignments (50pts): There will be out-of-class assignments worth 5pts each, preferably typed. Late submissions after these are collected are not allowed for any reason. Only your best 10 assignments will count toward your grade, and there will be at least 11 over the course of the quarter (for example, those listed in the syllabus).

Research participation (20pts): Research is the foundation of psychological science. To see the kinds of research currently being conducted and experience this process, you will participate in **2 studies** supervised by K faculty. The K institutional review board ensures all research participants are respected, treated fairly, and their information confidential ([reason.kzoo.edu/irb](http://reason.kzoo.edu/irb)). If you are not comfortable doing research there is an alternative assignment.

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## Psychology Research Report Papers

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One of the main course goals is for you is to understand how psychological science is conducted. Twice during the quarter, you'll read an original research article and as a class, we will re-create the study and collect our own data. Results will be aggregated and discussed in class. Each student will turn in a TYPED research report paper on our study.

Details on how to write a research report are on a separate handout for you to print or save to your computer.

**Format.** APA style, no direct quotes, typed, double spaced, 1-inch margins, size 12 standard font (e.g. Times New Roman). Late papers accepted with a deduction. **\*\*Tip:** The TA is here to help you do well on your research reports. I highly recommend you take your paper to her office hour.

**If you get <80% on your first paper**, you must make an appointment to show me or the TA a draft of your second paper.

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## Exams

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There will be three non-cumulative exams covering material from readings and class. Items are multiple choice and short answer. Illnesses, death in the family, or other traumatic events unfortunately are part of life. A make-up exam will be given if you contact me within 24 hours and provide documentation. No early exams will be given.

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## Grading

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Your final course grade will be calculated according to the formula below. Grading is not curved.

$$\left( \left( \frac{\text{Participation}}{\text{Total pts}} * .25 \right) + \left( \frac{\text{Research Papers}}{\text{Total pts}} * .45 \right) + \left( \frac{\text{Exams}}{\text{Total pts}} * .30 \right) \right) * 100\% + \text{Extra Credit}$$

90-100% A range

80-90% B range

70-80% C range

60-70% D range

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## Extra Credit

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You may earn up to 2% points of extra credit in several ways:

Option 1. The Psychology Department is hosting a colloquium speaker on Jan 17 4-5pm in Dewing 103. A write-up of the talk is worth 1%.

Option 2. Writers, artists, and activists are often the best observers of human nature. You may attend K Theater **on-campus play** (Feb 21-24, [Theater Department](#)) OR an [Arcus Center event](#) and write a 2-4 page paper describing and commenting on psychology concepts you observed. For the play, you **must attach your ticket stub** to paper. Worth up to 2% points.

Option 3. Write a 3-page research analysis, each worth up to 1% points. Choose an article described in our textbooks and **read the original, peer-reviewed research article** (using PsycInfo or Google Scholar). In your analysis discuss: 1) the study's purpose; 2) the study design (variables, methodology, measures used); 3) the results and conclusions of the study; and **most importantly** 4) an analysis comparing and contrasting the original article to its textbook description (E.g., Did the book leave out information you think is important? How well does the textbook summarize the article?). Attach the article you reviewed to your paper (double sided or print 2 pages in 1 to save paper).

You may combine options 1-3 for up to 2% points. All extra credit due by last day of class.

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## Inquiries about Graded Assignments

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If you do not agree with the grade you've received on an assignment or exam, you can state your case in writing and turn in a hard copy of your argument within one week of receiving the score (emailed arguments aren't accepted). Please be thorough in your case, referring to page numbers in our texts or outside references where appropriate.

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## Accessibility and Religious Accommodations

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Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this class and I am invested in the success of each of my students. Please speak with me in person at the start of the quarter if your attendance, participation, or ability to complete an assignment on time will be affected by your observance of religious practices, learning accessibility consideration, or disability. Also consult with the Dean of Students Office (<https://reason.kzoo.edu/studev/>, 269-337-7210).

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## Academic Dishonesty

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The most common form of plagiarism that I have come across is when students use the *exact words* of someone else, do not put quotes around those words, and then end the phrase with the author and year in the parentheses. While I appreciate the attempt at citing the source, you have committed plagiarism.

When summarizing others' work without using quotes, you should read their work (e.g., journal article), study it a bit, and then **put the article away**. When it is not in front of you, write what the article was about IN YOUR OWN WORDS. Only then is it okay to cite the author and year *without* quotation marks around the words.

Also, it is not okay to use sections of a paper that you have already turned in for another class; this falls under "academic dishonesty," and it is not allowed; please see Item #2 in the Kalamazoo College Academic Honesty Policy: <http://reason.kzoo.edu/studev/policies/dishonest/>.

**Academic Honor Code:** Members of the Kalamazoo College community are bound by the Honor System. Please familiarize yourself with the Honor Code and ask if you have any questions about behaviors that may violate the code.

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## Schedule

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### Week 1:

#### Tuesday 1/8: Introduction to Psychology

Reading: None. \*\*Assignments and readings should be **completed by class on the assigned day.**

#### Thursday 1/10: Studying & Research Methods

Reading: Syllabus  
[First](#) and [second video](#) from *How to Study* series  
Pomerantz & Gernsbacher chapter

Participation assignment: Read the prompts below, then watch the first 2 videos of Dr. Chew's *How to Study* series and answer the questions below.

- What is the difference between shallow and deep processing of learning?
- What factors are important for successful learning?
- Which of the "common misconceptions about learning" have you been guilty of? How or why does that particular belief undermine your learning?

What's due: Come to office hour by end of week 2 (or schedule another time if OH conflicts).

### Week 2:

#### Tuesday 1/15: Research reports

Reading: [Third](#) and [fourth video](#) from *How to Study* series  
NOBA Chpt 2 "Research Designs" (pgs 25-27 optional)

#### Thursday 1/17: Memory

Reading: NOBA Chpt 13 "Memory"  
Marks (1973) study for Research Paper 1 (pg 17-20, 23)

Participation assignment: In Experiment 1 of Marks (1973), he gave participants a questionnaire to measure their visualization ability. Based on those scores, they were labeled good and poor visualizers. Then he measured participants' memory. He found that "good visualizers" performed better on the memory test than "bad visualizers". Was Marks' study a correlation or experiment? Explain your answer using terms from NOBA Chpt 2.

**\*\*Extra credit opportunity 1.17 @ 4pm:** Psychology Colloquium @ Dewing 103

#### Friday 1/18:

**\*\*What's due:** Article Summary for Marks (1973) in my mailbox OU403-F by 4:30pm

## Week 3:

### Monday 1/21:

**\*\*What's due:** Data for research paper 1 by midnight

### Tuesday 1/22: Memory continued

Reading: Hock reading #16 (Loftus)  
Recommended: NOBA Chpt 14 "Eyewitness Testimony"

### Thursday 1/24: Biopsychology: Brain and genes

Reading: NOBA Chpt 3 "The Brain"  
Hock reading #1 (Gazzaniga)

Participation assignment: Using a mnemonic device discussed in Memory, design a useful mnemonic for remembering material from today's reading. For instance, a mnemonic for different parts of the brain, how neurons communicate, etc. Most importantly, explain/show how this is a good mnemonic using course content, show me you understand why this is effective.

*\*Print out Rubric as a checklist for research paper due next week.*

## Week 4:

### Tuesday 1/29: Biopsychology: Brain and genes

Reading: Hock reading #2 (Rosenzweig et al.)  
Hock reading #3 (Bouchard et al.)

Participation assignment: In *How to Study Video 3*, Dr. Chew describes ways of achieving deep processing when studying. Using 2 of the principles below, type up notes for one of the NOBA chapters. Re-watch the video if you need to.

1. **Elaboration:** How does this concept relate to other concepts? It means making meaningful associations between concept you're studying and related concepts.
2. **Distinctiveness:** How is this concept different from other concepts? Distinctiveness means that you have to make clear contrasts between the concept you are studying and other concepts.
3. **Personal:** How can I relate this concept to own personal experience? This helps increase meaningfulness, elaboration and distinctiveness.
4. **Retrieval and Application:** How am I expected to use or apply this concept? Practice recalling the information and using the information in the way that your teacher expects you to be able to do.

What's due: Research paper 1 in class, or submitted on Moodle

### Thursday 1/31: EXAM 1

## Week 5:

### Tuesday 2/5: Learning

Reading: Hock #9 (Pavlov)  
Hock #11 (Skinner)  
Recommended for studying: NOBA Chpt 12 "Conditioning & Learning" if struggling with concepts

Participation assignment: Write about a superstitious behavior you have, or you've observed in another person. Before this class, what were your beliefs & assumptions about how you/they formed this superstition? How would Skinner or Pavlov explain how you formed this superstition (use course concepts in answer, e.g., 'punisher' and/or 'reinforcer').

### Thursday 2/7: Personality psychology

Reading: Hock reading #30 (Freud)  
Recommended for studying: NOBA Chpt 20 "Psychodynamic Perspective" (p. 337-44)

### Friday 2/8: Fall Break

## Week 6:

### Tuesday 2/12: Personality psychology

Reading: NOBA Chpt 18 & 19 "Personality Traits" and "Personality Assessment"

Participation assignment: Choose a tv character you're familiar with, analyze their personality w/ Big-5 traits.

- 1) In your analysis, think about examples of the character's thoughts/actions/how she relates to others. Are these examples somewhat unique to the character (1 part of personality definition)? Do these examples demonstrate continuity of behavior/reactions (other part of personality definition)?
- 2) In your analysis, be sure to reference all 5 Big-5 traits (e.g., is the character high, low on trait, or why aren't you able to make determination for that trait).
- 3) Include a link to a video clip demonstrating part of your character's personality.

### Thursday 2/14: Social psychology

Reading: Hock #39 (Darley & Latane)  
NOBA Chpt 27 "Conformity and Obedience"

Participation assignment: Try to think back to your first week at K. What are some examples of norms/social influence you recall?  
If you grew up in a culture outside of the U.S., what norms have you picked up on in the U.S.? How have you learned what to do in a different country?  
**Importantly, to what degree was it normative vs. informational influence?**

## Week 7:

### Tuesday 2/19: Social Psychology

Reading: Schuldt and Schwarz (2010) – for 2<sup>nd</sup> Research Paper

Participation assignment: Play the game then respond to questions  
<http://www.thefirefly.org/Firefly/html/News%20Flash/2010/February%202010.htm#activities>

1. What was your score after the 12 observation rounds?
2. What is the basis of some of the worst assumptions you made in this game?
3. What are the factors that make us vulnerable to making wrong conclusions?
4. To what extent did your explanations become more creative and less stereotyped as you played?
5. What are the implications of what you have learned for scientists, law enforcement officers, news reporters, managers, or school teachers who rely upon observable data for making conclusions?

### Thursday 2/21: Social Psychology of Prejudice

Reading: Viskontas & Mooney (2014)

Participation assignment:

- 1) From the reading, what role does the amygdala play in how people tend to react when interacting with someone from a different race? How does this connect to what we learned earlier about the amygdala?
- 2) What role does the pre-frontal cortex play? How does this connect to what we learned earlier about the pre-frontal cortex?
- 3) What was the take-home message of this reading for you?

\*\*Extra credit opportunity Feb 21-24: K College's Theater's production

## Week 8:

**Monday 2/25: \*\*What's due: Data for research paper 2 by 9am**

**Tuesday 2/26: EXAM 2**

**Thursday 2/28: Developmental psychology**

Reading: Hock reading #17 (Harlow)  
NOBA Chpt 10 "Social & Personality Development" (pg 92-99)

\*\*If your Paper 1 was <80%, make an appointment to show me or the TA a draft of your second paper.

## Week 9:

**Tuesday 3/5: Developmental psychology**

Reading: Hock reading #18 (Piaget) (light reading because Thursday's reading longer)

Participation assignment: After reading about Piaget's theories, think about toys you see in stores or commercials for babies and kids. Bring to class responses to the following:

- 1) Can you think of any toys that are aimed at assisting babies/children in advancing to the next cognitive developmental stage? How so, and what toy were you thinking of?
- 2) Do you think toys like these could actually succeed in assisting a baby/child advance to the next stage sooner than they would have without such toys? Why?

## Week 9:

### Thursday 3/7: Psychopathology

Reading: Hock reading #29 (Rosenhan)  
[Understanding Depression](#) read main page & symptoms page  
[Understanding Bipolar Disorder](#) read main page  
NOBA Chpt 21 “Anxiety & related disorders”  
Recommended for studying: NOBA Chpt 22 “Mood Disorders”

What’s due: **Research paper 2 due** in class, or submitted on Moodle

## Week 10:

### Tuesday 3/12: Treatment

Reading: NOBA Chpt 23 (“Schizophrenia”)  
Recommended for studying: NOBA Chpt 25 “Psychopharmacology”

Participation assignment: Watch Eleanor’s talk  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/eleanor\\_longden\\_the\\_voices\\_in\\_my\\_head](https://www.ted.com/talks/eleanor_longden_the_voices_in_my_head)  
1) It’s easy to think of mental illness as mixture of symptoms and checklists, often neglecting an individual’s perspective and experience.  
Practicing perspective-taking, after hearing Eleanor share her story, what was her experience like?  
2) What symptoms of schizophrenia did Eleanor describe ?

### Thursday 3/14: Treatment

Reading: NOBA Chpt 24 “Therapeutic orientations”  
Corrigan et al. (2014)

Participation assignment: Imagine you are a student worker at the Counseling Center on K College campus. The Center has said that they worry that some students don’t talk to them because of the stigma associated with seeking help for sadness, depression, anxiety, etc. Based on what you read in the Corrigan et al. (2014) article, bring to class (preferably typed):  
1) An idea for a strategy to break the stigma → avoiding care link.  
2) Are there other reasons why people don’t seek help from a counseling facility that Corrigan et al. don’t address?

## Exam 3 Review Session, time and location TBD

### Exam 3: Sunday, 3/17, 11:30am – 2:00pm

In OU 316 (our classroom)

\*\*Taking the exam earlier is not possible.