



Introduction to Psychology

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 Course: SB 120-01, Fall 2005
 Class: T & Th 2:20-3:45, CL-B
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Text/Web

Text: Gazzaniga, M. S. & Heatherton, T. F. (2003). *Psychological Science: The Mind, Brain, and Behavior*.
 Web: <http://wnorton.com/psychsci/home.htm>

Introduction

Thinking about how and why we perceive, feel, think, and behave the way we do is the *sine qua non* of this course. As one of my favorite teachers likes to say, "To think is to question" (Peter Gray). Thus, in order to do well in this course, you must adopt the role of a scholar (i.e., in this case, one who is actively questioning assertions about behavior and mental processes) rather than passively memorizing and accepting ideas in the text or my words in class. If you do this, you will develop an understanding of psychological ideas that will forever change the way in which you view yourself and the world around you. My hope is that you will choose the scholarly path and that you will find the study of psychology to be as fascinating and useful as I do.

Advice from former students:

"DO THE READING!!" Fall, 2004

"Taking notes in class is key; many questions on exams were not in the book." Fall, 2004

"Your teacher will take the time needed out of class to help with further understanding of topics. Use this time to further pursue interests. He enjoys working to help students." Fall, 2004

"Read & take your own notes from the text because the tests have info on them not covered in class." Spring 2005

"Take your time on the question essays. If you rush, then they will suck and you will learn nothing." Spring 2005

"Take thorough notes, do the work assigned, and pay attention in class, because the content of the course can be more appealing if you just apply yourself!" Spring 2005

Students expecting As and Bs in the Spring 2005 semester reported:

Average study time per week	6.5 hours
Average pages of notes per class	5.0 pages

Objectives

Knowledge of Psychology. I will evaluate your progress toward this goal based on the quality of your performance on the Question Essays, Web Activities, Exams, and OICS Project. The components of this objective include your knowledge of the:

1. Historical and cultural roots of psychology
2. Theoretical frameworks in psychology
3. Methods used to explore psychological questions
4. Current evidence and beliefs in the major areas of psychology

Scientific Attitudes and Skills. I will evaluate your progress toward this goal based on the quality of your performance on the Question Essays, Exams, and OICS Project. The components of this objective will include your increased tendency to:

1. Refuse to accept assertions based solely on authority
2. Be open to changing your own beliefs based on new information
3. Critically evaluate generalizations
4. Appreciate the limitations and tentative nature of scientific knowledge
5. Question the evidence and logic behind assertions
6. Think about the implications and applications of scientific findings
7. Express your thoughts clearly when speaking and writing

Personal Development. You are best suited to evaluate progress toward this goal. Components of this objective include:

1. Increased appreciation of the wondrous complexity underlying even our simplest behaviors, which may, in turn, lead to:
 - a. A decreased tendency to take your abilities for granted
 - b. An increased tendency to use your abilities/time wisely
 - c. An increased tendency to take better care of yourself
2. Increased understanding of the factors influencing human behavior, which may, in turn, lead to:
 - a. An increased understanding of your own behavior and that of others
 - b. An increased ability to effect positive changes in your own life as well as in the lives of others

Question Essays

*'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.*

Lewis Carroll (1946)

Reading this passage passively, with the intention to learn what is written, would allow you to answer some types of questions about it. For example, if I asked you what the slithy toves did when it was brillig, you would be able to tell me that they gyred and gimbled. Where did they gyre and gimble? In the wabe. Note that it is possible to memorize this whole passage without understanding it; i.e., without gaining the ability to answer questions such as, "Why did the slithy toves gyre and gimble?" "What is the difference between gyring and a gimbaling?" What does mimsy mean?

Unfortunately, the same is true of reading your textbook and I will not ask questions of the first type in class or on exams. This is because I want you to think about the ideas in the text and read with the intention of understanding, evaluating, and using the ideas presented. As I've said before, to think is to question. Thus, you should generate many questions about the text while reading it thoughtfully. For example, you might ask questions like: What _____ is more convincing to me? Do I agree/disagree with _____? How is _____ related to my experiences/beliefs? How could _____ be applied or useful in the "real world"? What is the relationship between _____ and _____? Does _____ predict how I would behave/feel/think? Jot down your questions in the margins of the text as you read. After completing each chapter, read over your questions and select **one** that seems most interesting to you. Elaborate on this question in the form of an essay (at least 1 double-spaced page, typed in Times New Roman with a 12 point font). At the top of the page, please indicate the Question Essay # (see QE #s in schedule below) and the relevant chapter. Each essay may concern one of three general categories:

1. *Questioning the material—disagreement or generalizability.* Ask a question concerning whether you agree or disagree with a point the author has made or a question concerning how a specific finding discussed in the text might generalize to other people/situations/cultures etc...

- Ask your question,
- Succinctly describe the idea/evidence you are questioning, and then
- Indicate **why** you disagree with it or
- Whether or not you think the idea/evidence would generalize to different situations, people, cultures etc...

If you are challenging a point, be sure to indicate why you disagree. What kinds of evidence, experiences, or thoughts lead you to disagree? If you are questioning the generalizability of the idea/evidence, be sure to indicate **why** you think it would or would not generalize.

2. *Questioning the relationship between the material and your life.* Ask a question concerning how an idea discussed in the text is related to your own experiences, feelings, thoughts, and/or behaviors.

- Ask your question,
- Succinctly describe the idea/evidence relevant to your question, and then
- Discuss how you think the idea/evidence would be related to you.

Be sure to be as **specific** as possible when relating the text to your life, i.e., specify how the text idea is related to particular instances in your life; the more concrete the better.

3. *Questioning how the material could be applied to your life.* Ask a question concerning how you could **use** an idea discussed in the text.

- Ask your question,
- Succinctly describe the idea/evidence relevant to your question, and then
- Discuss how you could use the idea/evidence in your own life,

For example, you might ask, "How could I use this idea in order to study more efficiently? How could I use this idea in order to feel more optimistic about my future?" Be sure to be as **specific** as possible when discussing how you could apply an idea to your life.

Question essays will be worth 25% of your total grade. Essays turned in late (i.e., after the beginning of class on the due date) will receive a letter grade deduction. I will grade each question as follows.

- A Excellent writing, very well developed/organized thoughts that reflect the highest level of originality/creativity and a deep understanding of the relevant concepts/findings and their relationships.
- B Very good writing, well developed/organized thoughts that reflect some originality/creativity and good understanding of the relevant concepts/findings and their relationships.
- C Average writing, satisfactorily developed thoughts that reflect a basic understanding of the relevant concepts/findings and their relationships.
- D Deficient writing, poorly developed thoughts that reflect a lack of understanding of the relevant concepts/findings and their relationships.
- F Poor writing, failure to develop thoughts and to demonstrate an understanding of the relevant concepts/findings.

If you are not satisfied with the grade you receive on any of the Question Essays that you turn in on time, you may revise your essay and turn it in for re-grading (Note: this option is not available if the original essay is turned in late). If you choose to revise a Question Essay, you should underline all of the altered and new text in the revision and turn in the revision along with the original. The revision should reflect further thought about the question and should respond to any comments/questions that I've written on the original. Revisions must be turned in by the last class meeting of the regular semester in order to be graded.

Web Activities

There are several interesting activities located on the companion web site for the text. These activities are designed to help you to enhance, elaborate on, or personalize your understanding of the text material. You will be responsible for viewing/participating in the activities listed on the course schedule and for e-mailing your responses to the "thought questions" to me by the due date (which is also indicated on the course schedule).

As far as I can tell, the easiest way to access the activities is to first click on "Overview" on the homepage of the companion web site. Then click on the "activity" title for the relevant chapter, which is listed along with other options (e.g., multiple choice self-tests, chapter overviews, crossword puzzles, and a glossary of key terms). After reading about and participating in/viewing each activity, you should then click on "Discussion Questions" and answer the questions in the fields provided. After thoughtfully answering all questions, fill in your full name, your e-mail address, my e-mail address, and then click "Send Email".

Your e-mail must be sent to me by the due date listed on the course schedule in order to receive credit for each activity. Each activity will be graded as either full credit (100%) or no credit (0%). If all questions are answered and each answer consists of a thoughtful response that reflects a good understanding of the material, you will receive full credit. If you have not answered each question, if the e-mail is sent after the due date, or if one or more answers do not consist of a thoughtful response that reflects a good understanding of the material, you will receive no credit. Web Activities will be worth 10% of your overall grade.

Examinations

There will be seven exams that will assess your understanding of ideas discussed in the text, lecture, and web activities. The lowest exam score will be dropped when calculating your final course grade. Exams will be worth 30% of the course grade. Each exam will consist of multiple-choice and essay questions and will be worth 5% of your total grade.

There will also be a comprehensive final exam that will consist of multiple-choice questions (not the same questions as on previous exams). The final exam will be worth 10% of your overall course grade. Importantly, you must take the final exam in order to pass the course unless you qualify for the Jamesian Exemption. If I inform you that you qualify for the Jamesian

Exemption, this means that you have done outstanding work on all components of the course throughout the semester and are not required to take the final exam.

Please make every effort to take each exam at the scheduled time. However, I understand that you may have occasional unavoidable conflicts or unpredictable emergencies that will result in missing a scheduled exam. If you know in advance that you will be missing an exam (e.g., conflict with an activity in another class or participation in an athletic activity), please meet with me (in my office) at least 72 hours before the exam time so we can discuss whether or not the absence is acceptable and, if so, to schedule an alternative exam time. Similarly, in the case of an unpredictable emergency (e.g., illness, accident), please meet with me (in my office) no later than 72 hours after the missed exam to discuss whether or not the absence was acceptable and, if so, to schedule an alternative exam time. If you miss an exam for an unacceptable reason, then that exam will automatically be the one dropped when calculating the final grade. While time and space prevent me from providing a comprehensive list of acceptable and unacceptable reasons for missing an exam, the following thought experiment may work as a general rule of thumb. Take a minute to imagine the best concert or party that you've ever been to. Now, if the emergency would have prevented you from going to that event, then it is likely to be an acceptable reason for missing an exam.

OICS Project

Ask a novel question? Explore an intriguing idea. Find a person, theory, area of study, idea, or finding that interests you. Then develop (with my help) an activity that will allow you to further explore the topic. You might: Imagine how a conversation/argument between two famous psychologists might proceed. Create and explain illusions. Paint depression. Apply psychological findings in order to improve your memory, happiness, or attitudes toward others. Write stories, poems, or songs. Construct study aides. Conduct a psychological study. Etc... Design an activity that fits with your interests and strengths and then discuss it with me. You should meet with me (in my office) by October 18th at the latest. If you don't discuss the activity with me by then, the activity will be graded as late. After we come to an agreement concerning the goals and requirements of the activity, you may begin working on it.

In general, the final product of each activity will be a **Poster Presentation** at *Cazenovia College's 3rd Biannual Undergraduate Psychology Conference*. The format of the poster will vary depending on the type of activity you choose and we will discuss this when we meet individually and as a class. The poster **should not** be a standard, run-of-the-mill presentation of other people's ideas. The poster **should** be an original, independent, creative, and scholarly work that reflects your careful thoughts, analyses, and a semester's worth of hard work. Your OICS Project grade will be worth 20% of your total course grade and will be graded based on the following components (each worth 25%):

- **Originality:** novel/unique questions, comparisons, arguments, etc...
- **Independence:** reading/study/research that goes beyond the text/lectures
- **Creativity:** non-standard, non-term paperish, fun way of communicating your ideas
- **Scholarship:** reflects a great deal of work and thought and the achievement of a deep understanding of your chosen topic

Class Participation

The class participation grade is designed to encourage everyone to attend class meetings and to promote persistent thought about course material outside the classroom and the timely completion of assignments. For several class meetings, a Question Essay will be due at the beginning of class. If you turn in your Question Essay to me before I close the door to the classroom to start class, you will receive full credit for your Class Participation grade for that day. If you arrive late (i.e., after I close the door) and turn in your Question Essay, you will

receive half credit. If you do not turn in a Question Essay, you will receive no credit towards your Class Participation grade. On exam days, I will record full Class Participation credit for everyone who turns in an exam. On days when there is no exam and there is no Question Essay due, you should turn in one sheet of paper that contains anything you've found that is relevant to the chapter being covered that day. For example, you might print the web page of an author/researcher discussed in the chapter, the abstract of a journal article that is relevant to the chapter, a relevant joke, poem, song lyric, picture, graph, or book review/description (Note: make sure your name is on the paper). These will count toward your Class Participation grade as described above for the Question Essays (i.e., full credit when turned in before I close the door). The Class Participation grade will be worth 5% of your overall course grade.

Extra Credit

I will announce opportunities to write summaries of movies, chapters, and articles. Each summary should include a detailed and thoughtful description of how the material read/viewed is related to the relevant topics covered in class or in the text. Each summary will be worth a maximum 0.5% of the overall grade and will be graded like the Question Essays. You may earn a maximum of 5% extra credit for the course. Note, however, that each summary must be completed and turned in by the class meeting on which the relevant exam is scheduled. The reason for this is that the extra credit assignments are designed to help you understand the relevant material better, so you not only earn a little extra credit, but by doing so, you may improve your exam scores as well. For example, if you decide to write a summary of a movie relevant to the first exam, then you must turn in the completed summary at least by the class meeting time for which the first exam is scheduled. No extra credit will be available following the seventh exam.

Cazenovia Academic Honesty Policy (see Student Handbook for more details)

At once dishonest and dishonorable, lying, cheating, and stealing are particularly insidious in academic contexts. They offend free inquiry, insult scholarship, and impede learning. Historically grounded in a tradition of academic honesty, Cazenovia College expects students to eschew both dishonesty and dishonor, some examples of which include:

- Copying from an unauthorized reference [e.g. textbook, notes, another student's paper] during a closed-book examination.
- Representing all or portions of the work of another person [e.g. student, scholar, television commentator, etc.] as your own.
- Representing the printed words or ideas of another [e.g. student, scholar, television commentator, etc.] as your own.
- Stealing or defacing the College's books, magazines, art work, material related to computers, etc.
- Stealing or making unauthorized [i.e. beyond the bounds of 'fair use'] copies of texts, recordings, software, etc. protected by copyright.
- Buying examinations, papers, lab reports, projects, art works, etc. [whatever the supply source] that you represent or submit as your own.
- Selling or providing examinations, papers, lab reports, projects, art works, etc. [whatever the supply source] for others to represent or submit as their own.
- Submitting, without previous knowledge and specific permission of the receiving instructor, material for which you have already received a grade or credit in another course.
- Representing fabricated data or evidence as the consequence of your own legitimate observation or study.
- Misrepresenting, orally or in writing, the nature and scope of an internship.

- Misrepresenting, orally or in writing, the extent of your personal involvement or participation in an internship.
- Aiding another student in an act of academic dishonesty.

Penalties for acts of academic dishonesty

First Offense -- A student who has a first offense of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” on the essay, quiz, paper, or project in question. The student will also be required to attend a session on academic dishonesty in the Academic Learning Center. Additional sanctions, such as tutoring sessions or community service, may also be assigned to the student.

Second Offense -- The sanction for a second offense is failure of the course involved as well as additional sanctions such as tutoring sessions at the Learning Center, community service, or other measures that the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designate deem appropriate. A student who commits a second offense will fail the course involved.

Third offense -- Ordinarily, the sanction for a third offense of academic dishonesty is permanent expulsion from the College.

Late/Early Policy:

Assignments must be turned in by the beginning of class on the day they are due in order to be considered “on time” and to be eligible for full credit. Any assignment received after this time will automatically receive a letter grade reduction (e.g., an A paper would receive a B) except for the web activities, which will not receive credit if turned in late. However, you may accumulate up to 5 “late credits” by turning Question Essays and/or Web Activities in early (i.e., at least by the beginning of the class preceding the class when the assignment is due). For each assignment turned in early, you will receive 1 late credit that will allow you to turn an assignment in late (i.e., during the next class after the class when the assignment was due) without any grade reduction. Note that this policy does not apply to exams or the OICS Project. Also note that despite any late credits, all assignments must be turned in by the last class meeting during the regular semester (i.e., the last class before the final exam). Assignments turned in after this date will not be graded.

Study Recommendations

1. *Take Personal Responsibility.* Take responsibility for your performance. While blaming poor performance on someone or something other than your own efforts may help you feel a little better in the short run, it won’t help you to improve your performance and feel better in the long run. Instead, take a look at your previous study habits and try something different when studying for the next exam. In many cases, this will involve spending more time studying (i.e., 2-3 hours for each hour of class) and/or studying more efficiently. Please also come see me for additional recommendations/help. Remember, “It’s better to light a candle than to curse the darkness”.

2. *Distribute Study.* One of the most consistent findings in the memory literature is that spaced or distributed thought about material results in better memory than massed or continuous thought about the material. In other words, make time for brief study sessions every day (i.e., 45 minutes or less at a time); don’t wait until the day before an exam and stay up all night cramming. Think of it this way; No respectable cyclist would prepare for a big race by sitting around doing nothing for weeks and then staying up late training on a stationary bike the night before the race. Ridiculous right? Well, the same principle applies to studying.

3. *Find the Right Place & Time.* Find quiet places to study (and only study) during the time of day when you feel alert. Thinking about course material will require intense concentration. Thus, the usefulness of your study time will depend partly on your ability to avoid distractions (e.g., TV, music, phone) and partly on your ability to study when you are wide

awake and able to focus on the material. A basketball player isn't going to improve his/her game much by lobbing a couple shots at the hoop now and then while sitting in an easy chair on the foul line and watching TV. Similarly, you won't improve your understanding of psychology much by scanning through the text while watching TV or while drifting off to sleep at night.

4. *Tell Stories.* One of the best ways to find out if you really understand something is to try to explain or describe it to someone else. Further, just talking about course material, OUT LOUD, allows you to practice retrieving the information and encourages you to organize the information; both will help on the exams. Thus, talk about the course ideas with anyone who will listen and if no one is available, talk anyway. If possible, try to get together with a couple other people from this course to discuss the relevant material. Take turns talking and critically listening. You will quickly discover which areas you understand and which need further attention. While doing this, keep in mind that the more you challenge yourself and the others, the better off you'll all be on the exams; i.e., providing honest and critical feedback is actually nicer than trying to be "nice".

5. *Organize Ideas.* Rather than reviewing alphabetized terms, trying to memorize definitions in isolation from one another, or reading highlighted text over and over, a more efficient way to study would be to organize the terms/ideas in a way that allows you to see the relationships between them. One good way to do this is to create a Hierarchical Chart for each major section in a Chapter.

6. *Ask Questions.* As you no doubt know by now, sometimes you remember things without even trying (e.g., novels, movies) and sometimes it seems to take tremendous effort/study to remember things (e.g., definitions of bold-faced words in the text). Part of the reason for this is that it is relatively easy and automatic for us to be actively engaged by characters in movies/novels. We, at some level, try to figure them out, based, in part, on what we might do or how we might feel if we were in their shoes (sometimes leading us to feel scared, happy, or angry right along with the characters). This leads us to form expectations about what a character will do or say next. For example, much of comedy works because you form an expectation that a character will do one thing, based on his/her previous actions and your own experiences, but the character violates this expectation and zigs instead of zagging. Thus, when we go to a movie, we somewhat automatically attempt to figure out the characters and the plot and we form many connections between the characters/situations and ourselves and our own experiences. That is, we don't often go to a movie to try and memorize it, but we often form long lasting memories of the movie anyway. This is due, in part, to the questioning/guessing and the personal connections we automatically make while watching. However, people often read textbooks with the explicit goal of trying to memorize information (e.g., memorize definitions of the bold-faced terms). The funny thing is that people would understand and remember the terms much better if they asked questions about them and formed connections between the ideas in the text and their own experiences and thoughts. The Question Essays are designed to encourage you to do this because I think that many of the ideas discussed in the text are important/useful and I want you to remember them long after the course is over. Also, forming this kind of personal understanding of the material should be much more enjoyable than simply trying to memorize facts/terms unrelated to your life. Even going to a great movie would turn into a dull frustrating time if you went with the goal of trying to memorize the dialogue. Try it sometime.

Grades

Question Essays	25%
Web Activities	10%
Exams (best 6 of 7)	30%
OICS Project	20%
Final Exam	10%
Class Participation	5%
Total	100%

Course Grade	%
A	95
A-	92
B+	88
B	85
B-	82
C+	78
C	75
C-	72
D+	68
D	65
F	<65

Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Date	Reading Assignments	Due
1	T 8/30	Introductions	
1	TH 9/1	Chapter 1: Introduction/History	QE1 Web1: IAT Test Activity
2	T 9/6	Chapter 2: Research Methods (pp 31-50)	
2	TH 9/8	Chapter 2: Data Analysis (pp 50-56)	QE2
3	T 9/13	Exam 1 (Note: A few questions will concern information in the syllabus)	
3	TH 9/15	Chapter 3: Genes & Behavior (pp59-69)	
4	T 9/20	Chapter 3: Neurons (pp69-93)	QE3
4	TH 9/22	Chapter 4: Brain (pp 95-112)	
5	T 9/27	Chapter 4: Brain (pp 113-120)	QE4 Web4: TMS Activity & Video
5	TH 9/29	Exam 2	
6	T 10/4	Chapter 5: Sensation (pp 123-142)	
6	TH 10/6	Chapter 5: Perception (pp 143-160)	QE5 Web5: Activity & Video
7	T 10/11	<i>Autumn Break!!</i>	
7	TH 10/13	Chapter 6: Learning (pp 163-193)	QE6 Web6: Ratbots Activity & Video
8	T 10/18	Exam 3	Last day for OICS meeting
8	TH 10/20	Chapter 7: Memory Systems (pp 201-224)	QE7
9	T 10/25	Chapter 7: Forgetting/Distorting (pp 224-236)	
9	TH 10/27	Chapter 8: Cognition (pp 249-270)	QE8 Web8: Tower of Hanoi Activity
10	T 11/1	Exam 4	
10	TH 11/3	Chapter 9: Motivation (pp 273-299)	QE9 Web9: nACH Survey Activity
11	T 11/8	Chapter 10: Emotion (pp 311-333)	QE10 Web10: Facial Expressions Test
11	TH 11/10	Exam 5	
12	T 11/15	Chapter 12: Social Development	QE12
12	TH 11/17	Chapter 13: Social Cognition (pp 430-447) Chapter 14: Social Influences (pp 449-469)	QE13 or 14
13	T 11/22	Exam 6	
13	TH 11/24	<i>Thanksgiving Break!!</i>	
14	T 11/29	Chapter 15: Personality	QE15 Web15: Big 5 Personality Test
14	TH 12/1	Chapter 16: Mental Disorders (pp 519-537)	QE16 Web16: Activity & Video
15	T 12/6	Chapter 17: Treating Mental Disorders (pp 557-576)	QE17 Web17: Activity & Video
15	TH 12/8	Exam 7	
16	M 12/12	Undergraduate Psychology Conference	OICS Poster Presentation
16	TBA	Final Exam	

Note: This syllabus is subject to change at my discretion.

QE = Question Essay; Web = <http://wwnorton.com/psychsci/home.htm>