

**THIS IS YOUR COURSE SYLLABUS –  
please, KEEP IT HANDY and REFER TO IT OFTEN.**

**Welcome to PSY 301H!  
Introduction to Psychology - Honors  
Fall 2012 Unique # 43120  
MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m., SEA 2.120**

Instructor: Kirsten Bradbury, Ph.D.  
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TA:  
Office (Hours):  
Email:

***We are here to help you – please take advantage of our office hours. Come see us!!***

**Required Texts**

The Science of Psychology: An Appreciative View, 2nd edition. By Laura King (2011).  
With Connect Plus Psychology Access Card. Published by McGraw-Hill.  
ISBN: 978-0-0774-7091-3

Psychology and the Real World. Edited by Gernsbacher, Pew, Hough and Pomerantz (2011).  
Worth Publishers. ISBN: 978-1-4292-3043-8

Additional readings may be assigned; these will be posted to Blackboard and/or distributed in class.

**Graded Work**

Your course grade will be based on the following graded assignments:

30% – 3 exams worth 10% each  
25% – Big Project  
20% – 4 papers worth 5% each  
10% – Brain Games Day  
10% – Science Power Shot (Presentation)  
5% – Psychology in the News (Weekly Discussions)

A closer look at these grades assignments:

1. PSYCHOLOGY IN THE NEWS – (5%) Weekly discussion throughout the semester of media coverage past & present involving psychological concepts and methods:: participate by bringing items of interest for discussion, and by contributing to the discussions.

2. SCIENCE POWER SHOT – (10%) Knowledge is power, so give us a shot of it! For this brief (10 minutes, firm) individual presentation at an assigned time during the semester, you will find examples of low-quality vs. high-quality information and contrast these; present a topic in terms of scientific evidence that allows us to debunk a myth or correct a misinformed belief – question an assumption or stereotype, combat ignorance. Give us the straight scoop on some psychology-related topic. Appropriate topics will be discussed with you as a group (in class) and individually. Bear in mind that this assignment is worth as much as an exam grade – the presentation itself is brief, but requires a lot of preparation!

3. THE BRAIN GAMES – (10%) You must be in class to participate in this one-time event! Come to class with organized notes on the parts of the nervous system and brain and the behaviors/functions each part is related to. Include the neurotransmitters mentioned in the class and their links to behavior as well, and any additional brain areas in lecture. Make yourself a sketch or 2 to remind you where the various brain areas are located. You will use these notes (and the knowledge you built by creating them) to play the Brain Games, a series of games about the brain. Winning will earn you points—but

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handing in good notes and being a good sport are just as important. Details TBA in class.

4. **ESSAYS – (20%)** You will complete four papers, each worth 5% of your course grade. These assignments will vary in format, but generally will require generating 500-word (about one double-spaced page) responses to specific writing prompts. Some written assignments may entail responding to assigned readings, while others may require students to engage in an activity and then describe their experience. Written assignments may require students to contemplate, introspect, critically examine, empathize, or persuasively opine. Specific instructions for each assignment will be provided in class and posted to Blackboard. See Course Calendar for due dates.

5. **BIG PROJECT— (25%)** Semester-long personal project. Must be personally meaningful to you. Must be approved as appropriate to the assignment by me. Final presentations will be held at the end of the semester. *Your project should be an original, independent, creative, and scholarly work that reflects your careful thought, analysis, and a semester's worth of hard work.* Ask a novel question or 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, OCD, and schizophrenia. Make a puppet show to depict a psych concept or famous moment in psych history. Apply psychological findings in order to improve your memory, happiness, or attitudes toward others. Write a story, poem, or song—and perform it. Construct study aides. Make some internet phenomenon happen. 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 12th 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. Group project requests will be considered on a case by case basis, but if you will be proposing a group project I strongly recommend having individual ideas ready as back-ups so you do not have to scramble if the group idea doesn't get approved. Project grade will be based on the following components:

- Originality: novel/unique questions, comparisons, arguments, etc...
  - Independence: reading/study/research that goes beyond the text/lectures
  - Creativity: nonstandard, 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
- (with special thanks to John Schwoebel and Katy)

6. **EXAMS— (30%)** There will be three exams, each worth 10% of your course grade. Exams will be comprised of both multiple-choice items and open-ended items that require written responses. Exams will be given during regular class times (see Course Calendar). The emphasis of each exam will be on the readings and class material covered since the previous exam. However, all exams are cumulative, in that you are expected to learn the course material meaningfully, not just memorize facts for retrieval soon afterward. Some exam items will require you to integrate and/or apply material from previous sections of the course. You are responsible for readings whether or not they are covered in class and for lecture material whether or not it is covered in the readings. **Make-up exams are given only in cases of documented need (see below for more on make-ups).** Information about any curve, dropped items, etc., will be provided following each exam. We do not drop your lowest exam grade.

7. **Extra Credit – up to 3%** Extra Credit may be earned for participating in the Good Little Readers Club. Details TBA (in class).

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**Make-Up Exams and Late Work:**

If you hope to reschedule an exam ahead of time, or you hope to take a make-up exam, or you hope to be given credit for assignments you turn in late, you **MUST** convince the TA that you have a legitimate/important/compelling/unavoidable reason for your request. The best way to be convincing is to *provide documentation supporting your request*. In most cases of legitimate need to reschedule an exam or turn in late work, documentation is very simple to obtain.

**Grades:**

Your course grade is based on your performance on graded work as described above under "Graded Work." We assign weights to your scores according to the % values given above to yield an overall percentage score. This percentage score is represented as a letter grade for the course, according to the following grade distribution:

<b>A = 92 and up</b>	<b>B+ = 88-89</b>	<b>C+ = 78-79</b>	<b>D = 60-69</b>
<b>A- = 90-91</b>	<b>B = 82-87</b>	<b>C = 72-77</b>	<b>F = 59 and down</b>
	<b>B- = 80-81</b>	<b>C- = 70-71</b>	

Percentage course grades are calculated to two decimal places and rounded to the nearest whole number, such that, for example, the lowest A- is 89.50 (rounds to 90).

**Borderline Grades Stay Borderline:** Every semester, some students score just below the borderline of the next highest grade. I have great sympathy for people who find themselves in that position, but I have also found that raising those grades simply uncovers a new group of people whose grades are near the new borderline. This situation makes everybody edgy. Therefore, my policy must be that borderline grades stay as they are. Thus, for example, an 89.49 is a B+. **ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS.**

**Research Requirement:**

All students enrolled in PSY 301 must fulfill a departmental research requirement consisting of either participation in psychological research (as a subject) or writing a paper on psychological research, in addition to class work. If you fail to complete the research requirement, you will receive an (X) Incomplete in the course (and will need to complete the requirement later). We will be distributing a PSY301 Research Requirement Information Sheet in class; please read it carefully. Here is the web link for information on this requirement:

<http://www.psy.utexas.edu/psy/undergrad/courses/info/301experiment.html>

If you have questions, contact Abby Black, via email to [301research@psy.utexas.edu](mailto:301research@psy.utexas.edu) or by phone at 512-232-4269; or, stop in and see her in Seay 4.208.

**IMPORTANT NOTICES:**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.

**The UT Honor Code applies to all aspects of your work in this course.** We report suspected plagiarism and all other forms of academic dishonesty to the Honor Board. Don't risk your academic career!!

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