

SYLLABUS  
INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY  
PSYC-1050

2009

WESTERN NEBRASKA COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
DIVISION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

**PSYC-1050**

**Introduction to Psychology**

**Prerequisite: ACFS-0060R or Reading Placement Exam**

This course is designed to familiarize the student with the major areas of psychology. The course is directed toward the understanding of human behavior by dealing with such topics as development of behavior, perception, maturation and emotion, learning, intelligence, personality and mental health. An application of course content to the everyday behavior situations is emphasized.

**(3/45/0/0/0/3)**

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES:

- A. Analyze the various perspectives in psychology as they relate to learning, intelligence, human development, motivation, personality theory & assessment, psychological disorders and their treatment.
- B. Evaluate the impact of the various perspectives in psychology in relation to topics such as learning, intelligence, human development, motivation, personality theory & assessment, psychological disorders and their treatment.
- C. Analyze developmental issues throughout the lifespan.
- D. Evaluate developmental issues throughout the lifespan in terms of learning, memory, intelligence, personality and the presence or absence of psychological disorders.
- E. Analyze the relationship between biology and behavior.
- F. Use the process of psychological research.
- G. Analyze social influences on behavior.
- H. Differentiate between information regarding psychology as presented in popular media with that presented in scholarly journals.
- I. Use psychological terminology.
- J. Use appropriate English skills.
- K. Practice computer skills.

- L. As an introductory course in psychology, our intent is to give the student a brief overview in the study of psychology. The student should be introduced to some of the major schools of psychology, their theorists and their theories. As they are being introduced to some of the main psychological concepts, the students should develop a working vocabulary and understanding of these concepts. It is hoped that upon completion of the course the student has acquired a better understanding of his own behavior. In light of the great interest most students have in understanding themselves and the human relationships that affect their daily lives, they should be cautioned that they are not trained in solving their own problems and the problems of others.

### III. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

- A. Required text: This text must be used unless approval is received to use an Alternative text(s) as discussed below.

- 1. Wood, Wood & Boyd. *Mastering the World of Psychology*. Current edition.

- B. Alternative text: These can be used only with prior written approval from the Social Science Division Chair, in consultation with the primary instructor.

### C. HANDOUTS AND STUDY GUIDES:

- 1. Used to illustrate or clarify a specific concept or theory that is being studied in class. At times articles are handed out as general interest.

### D. AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS:

- 1. Audio-Visual Aids are used as supplementary aids to the course. Films, video cassette presentations and tapes if available are used.

### IV. COURSE OUTLINE:

- A. Chapter 1 Introduction to Psychology
- B. Chapter 2 Biology and Behavior
- C. Chapter 3 Sensation and Perception
- D. Chapter 4 States of Consciousness
- E. Chapter 5 Learning
- F. Chapter 6 Memory
- G. Chapter 7 Cognition, Language and Creativity

- H. Chapter 8 Human Development
- I. Chapter 9 Motivation and Emotion
- J. Chapter 10 Health and Stress
- K. Chapter 11 Personality Theory and Assessment
- L. Chapter 12 Psychological Disorders
- M. Chapter 13 Therapies
- N. Chapter 14 Social Psychology

\*The 14 chapters allow the instructor to cover approximately one chapter per week. Depending on the nature and the importance of the material, more time may be spent on some chapters.

#### V. METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- A. The lecture is primarily used to present subject material to the class. It is especially effective to present new themes, concepts, movements, or interpretations not found in the textbook. This is the basis for class presentation. It is not always a rigid lecture situation since in many instances it is merely the instrument for informal discussion.

NOTE TO ALL INSTRUCTORS: You are reminded that this is a college level class and not a high school class. Thus the level of instruction and the level of understanding of the course work should be at the college level. A proper classroom decorum and atmosphere is to be maintained.

- B. Class discussion, on an informal level and class participation, may be used and is encouraged. It may be used to discuss lectures, outside readings (assigned or otherwise), or films. Class discussions should not be used as a substitute for lectures.
- C. Small group discussions are used occasionally to discuss readings or new concepts.
- D. Oral reports and guest speakers as time allows.

#### VI. METHOD OF EVALUATION: (Course Requirement)

- A. Tests
  - 1. There will be a minimum of 4 or 5 tests over chapters in the text and material covered in lecture. Material covered on the exams will be approximately 50% book and 50% lecture. Test questions can also

come from audio visual programs, readings, handouts, or presentation made by a guest speaker. **Tests must adequately reflect a proportionate distribution of test items to material covered in the book or in class.**

B. Written Assignments:

1. Writing assignments are required of each student that will allow them to use the library resources in psychology and/or explore psychological research. The intent is to require both written expressions and familiarity with library resources for research as well as research itself.
2. These are mandatory assignments which may be accomplished through no less than two of the following options:

Option #1. Research - Students must conduct some type of research (survey, observation, etc) related to the field of psychology. The project must be summarized in written form and presented to the instructor. The written summary must include:

1. A discussion of your experimental design, your method of analysis and your findings and whether the results denied or confirmed the original hypothesis and why/how.
2. A discussion of how it relates to psychology.
3. What questions were raised and/or answered by the experiment.
4. Personal observations regarding scientific experimentation in the field of psychology.

Option #2 - Book Critique - The book selected by the student may be on any topic related to the study of psychology. Lists of acceptable books are available on the website. Critique components should include:

1. Summarize the book
2. Analyze the author's conclusions
3. Include your critique of the book
4. Relate this book to a specific topic discussed in class and provide some relationship between your personal experiences and/or your observations and the book.  
Direct quotes and paraphrasing should be cited accordingly (either APA or MLA format).

Option #3 Journal Reviews: - Review three journal articles from professional journals on any topic or issue relating to the field of psychology. Each article must be at least four pages in length and at least two different professional journals must be used.

Review components should include:

1. Discuss the articles including the method the author used to get the information (case histories, reviewing literature, conducting experiment, etc.)
2. Summarize any findings and /or conclusions
3. Discuss your personal reactions to the findings, conclusions and thesis of the articles
4. Discuss questions that remain unanswered or where future research is needed. A bibliography including author, title of journal, title of article, journal year, volume and

page number must be included and any direct quote or paraphrase should be cited by appropriate APA or MLA format.

C. Attendance:

1. Students are expected to attend every meeting of the classes in which they are enrolled. Class attendance is essential to academic success. It is understood that some classroom absences will be caused by participating in College-sponsored activities, student illness, or by certain emergencies.
2. Instructors are encouraged to formulate their own attendance policy being mindful of college policies. It is the responsibility of the instructor to inform the student of any attendance policy which will be implemented. It is the student's responsibility to understand and follow the instructor's attendance policy.

D. Plagiarism can certainly have an adverse effect on student evaluation. It is a serious problem ordinarily dealt with by instructors (as it should be). The College also views plagiarism as a grave academic offense. Students who plagiarize can be subject to formal disciplinary action with penalties ranging from reprimand to suspension to expulsion. Thus, the instructor has an ethical responsibility to deal appropriately with cases of plagiarism; adjunct instructors share that same responsibility. The college does have an academic integrity pledge which students can sign which demonstrates their understanding of academic integrity and their willingness to follow the college policy regarding academic integrity. Regardless of any other academic affiliation, adjunct instructors are directly responsible to the Division Chairman in matters dealing with this syllabus.

VII. SPECIFIC UNIT OBJECTIVES:

- A. These are covered by the course competencies and course outline in II and IV. The primary objective of each unit is to achieve a level of understanding of written material sufficient to allow competent application to the work experience in the practicum setting.

VIII. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic integrity forms a fundamental bond of trust between colleagues, peers, teachers, and students, and it underlies all genuine learning. At WNCC, there is no tolerance for plagiarism or academic dishonesty in any form, including unacknowledged "borrowing" of proprietary material, copying answers or papers, or passing off someone else's work as one's own.

A breach of ethics or act of dishonesty can result in:

- failure of a paper or exam within a course
- failure of an entire course (blatant plagiarism, cheating on a test or quiz)

- academic suspension or expulsion from the college

IX. EQUAL ACCESS:

Western Nebraska Community College is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities through reasonable accommodation when necessary. If you qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please notify the Director of Counseling (308 635-6090) as soon as possible to begin a process of documentation review and determination of appropriate accommodation or adaptive strategies.