

**PSYCHOLOGY 2010: GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY  
SYLLABUS FOR SPRING SEMESTER, 2008**

**Instructor:**

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**Class Meeting Times:**

1:00 MW in 112 Thach

**Final Examination Times:**

TBA

**Psychology Department Undergraduate Web site:** Point your Web browser at <http://www.cla.auburn.edu/psychology/>

Next, click on "Undergraduate" from the menu that will appear on the left side of your screen. This site contains useful information about the psychology major and a special section on student services that are offered by Auburn University.

**Office Hours:** MW from 2:00 to 3:00 and by appointment

**GTAs:** Several GTAs will be assisting me in the teaching of this course. You will meet with them in Friday sections of the course.

Here's the teaching schedule and contact information for each GTA:

Whitney Kimble            [kimblwl@auburn.edu](mailto:kimblwl@auburn.edu)

Friday, 11:00    2312 Haley Center  
Friday, 12:00    2312 Haley Center

John Magnotti            [jzm0007@auburn.edu](mailto:jzm0007@auburn.edu)

Friday, 9:00      2474 Haley Center  
Friday, 12:00    3218 Haley Center

Tim Thornberry            [tst0003@auburn.edu](mailto:tst0003@auburn.edu)

Friday, 1:00      3353 Haley Center  
Friday, 2:00      3218 Haley Center

**E-mail Use:** The GTAs and I will use e-mail frequently to communicate class information to you. You must check your AU e-mail account regularly, lest you miss important reminders and other class information. We do not send e-mail regarding class information to non-AU accounts. You should also feel free to e-mail any of us with questions, concerns, or comments throughout the semester. *However, please note that questions that can be answered by consulting the syllabus will be answered with the reply of "Please see the class syllabus."*

We will do our best to reply to your e-mail within 24 hours; please do not send us an e-mail at, say, 2:00 am and expect an immediate reply! Also, please respond to our e-mail, if indeed a response is required, within 24 hours.

**Structure of the Course:** On Mondays and Wednesdays, you will meet with me in a large lecture section. On Fridays, you will meet with one of the GTAs in smaller "discussion" sections of 25-35 students.

**Purpose of the Course:** Psychology is the scientific study of behavior, thought, and emotion. If you can think of an action in which humans or other animals engage, then you can bet there are psychologists who study it. General Psychology is course about what psychologists do and what they know about the natural world. In this course, you will be provided a general overview of modern psychology and some of its subfields. We will discuss current research and theory in psychology as well as applications of psychology to solving both individual and social problems. Because of the limitations of the academic term, we will cover only several of these subfields plus research methodology in psychology.

**Emphasis on Both the Content of Psychology and Developing Critical Thinking Skills:** Although this course is about psychology, an important underlying theme in the course will be the development of your critical thinking abilities. Specifically, in many of our discussions we will ask you to approach your work with the following four questions in mind:

- What is it that someone wishes me to believe?
- What evidence supports or refutes the truth or falsity of this belief?
- Am I being given *all* the evidence for or against the belief?
- Is there more than one way to interpret the evidence for this belief?

These questions apply not only to your study of psychology, but in every facet of your life that requires effective decision-making skills.

**Teaching Philosophy:** I believe that a teacher's role is primarily to provide guidance to students in their study of any subject matter. Teachers are not all-knowing, all-powerful sages who sit on their thrones and dispense knowledge to others. Rather, the learning process is collaborative—student and teacher joining together in working toward a better understanding of the subject matter. I will provide you specific goals for you to accomplish on your way to achieving this understanding. Likewise, you will challenge me to find new and interesting ways to help you learn about psychology in the process. I will urge you to take an active role in what you are learning and how you will learn it. I will answer your questions to the best of my ability and throw a few questions your way every now and then. *Finally, I believe that teaching and learning should be fun. I want all of us to enjoy the class, the experience of learning about psychology, and learning about ourselves and our humanity.*

I also believe that students should be expected to read the text and understand a sizeable portion of its content. Thus, I do not feel compelled to lecture word-for-word from the text. Instead, I will supplement what the text covers with additional material. I will review those concepts discussed in the book that are particularly difficult to understand, but beyond that, I will be covering fresh ground. I encourage you to ask questions at any time to clarify text material or the content of my presentations.

#### **Text:**

Weiten, W. (2006). *Psychology: Themes and variations* (7<sup>th</sup> ed., briefer version). Belmont, CA: Thomson.

This book is the brief version of Weiten's popular full-size book. My belief is that regular introductory psychology texts are too large to use in a regular 16-week semester.

#### **COURSE/LECTURE ACTIVITIES**

**Syllabus Quiz:** To help familiarize you with the course and its requirements, you will take a 50-point syllabus quiz on **Friday, 11 January**. The quiz will contain 25 multiple-choice or true/false questions worth 2 points each.

**Vocabulary Tests:** A key aspect of any discipline is its terminology. Indeed, it is impossible to master a discipline without being able to "speak the language." So it is with psychology. To help you master psychology's terminology, we have scheduled **four** vocabulary tests. **Each vocabulary test will be cumulative over the course of the semester. We will provide the definitions on the test for which you must provide the corresponding correct term.** The list of terms and their definitions over which you will be tested is given at the end of the syllabus (see course calendar). **Each test is worth 50 points (but because each vocabulary test is cumulative, each will contain a different number of definitions, so the point value of each definition will vary from test to test).** No word bank will be given for any of the four vocabulary tests.

**Reading Quizzes:** There will be **eight** quizzes covering the reading material for the course (1 quiz per chapter). Each quiz will contain 15 multiple-choice questions worth 2 points each (30 points total). The purpose of these quizzes is simply to get you reading the chapters well in advance of examinations.

**Examinations:** There will be three types of examinations in this course:

**Regular Examinations** (100 points each)—there will be **three** exams that cover two chapters at a time. Each of these exams will consist of a combination of 40 multiple-choice (20 questions per chapter; each question is worth 1.5 points) and four essay questions (worth 10 points each). At least **two** days immediately prior to each exam, the GTAs and I will send you an e-mail containing a list of 8-10 potential essay questions for the exam. Two questions will be from the large lecture sections and two will be from the Friday Discussion Sections.

**Cumulative Examinations** (100 points each)—there will be **two** cumulative examinations that cover all the chapters up to specific points in the semester (see course calendar below). These examinations will contain a roughly equal number of questions over the chapters they cover and contain questions from your reading and from the lectures: 50 multiple-choice questions (2 points each).

**The Final Examination** (210 points)—will cover all the chapters (that is, the final is cumulative). The final exam will include the following items:

130 multiple-choice reading questions (at least 10 per chapter) and lecture questions	130 points
50 vocabulary words	050 points
03 essay questions	030 points

**Student Identification Policy:** Because we have so much graded work in this course, it is very important that we keep perfect track of each student's materials in the course. To facilitate this process, we require that on every graded activity you provide the following information: **YOUR NAME, YOUR GTA'S NAME, YOUR FRIDAY SECTION TIME, THE VERSION NUMBER** of ALL QUIZZES AND TESTS ([labeled 1 or 2]; we use multiple versions of quizzes and tests to reduce the likelihood of cheating). **We will automatically deduct 5 points from any graded materials your turn in that does not contain this information, including the extra credit quiz (see below).**

**Attendance Policy:** Class attendance is not required, but is strongly encouraged. Research in higher education has established that there is a very high correlation between class attendance and student grades—students who attend class more often get higher grades than students who attend class infrequently or not at all.

**Extra Credit Participation in Psychological Research:** You may earn 7 points for each hour that you participate as a volunteer subject in psychological research up to 10 hours (70 points total; roughly equivalent to 5.8 % of your final grade). Opportunities for research participation will be announced during Monday and Wednesday lectures and posted on the extra credit bulletin board on the second floor of Thach Hall. The last day to participate in extra credit activities for this course is **Monday, 28 April**. After this time, vouchers will not be accepted under any circumstances.

**Extra-Credit Quiz:** Twice during the semester we will have a 15-question extra credit quiz (one over the sensation and perception chapter and one over the cognition and intelligence chapter). Each question will be worth one point each. The extra credit earned by taking this quiz will be applied to any extra credit you may earn through participation in psychological research.

**In-Class Extra-Credit:** Sometimes we will offer extra credit during the large lecture sections and the Friday discussion sections. This sort of extra credit will be given for attendance, completing in-class surveys, or turning in outside assignments.

#### **COURSE GRADING:**

Syllabus Quiz	01 @ 050 points	050
Vocabulary Tests	04 @ 050 points	200
Reading Quizzes	08 @ 030 points	240
Regular Examinations	03 @ 100 points	300
Cumulative Examinations	02 @ 100 points	200
Final Exam	01 @ 210 points	210 (Total = 1200)

Extra Credit for Research/Quiz 01 @ 070 points up to 070

GRADE	POINTS NEEDED
A (90%)	1080
B (80%)	0960
C (70%)	0840
D (65%)	0780
F (below 65%)	below 0780

**NOTE: Grades will NOT be rounded. Thus, a final course point accumulation of 1079.99 points is a “B,” not an “A.” To calculate your percentage grade at any point in the semester, simply divide the number of course points you have earned by the total number possible up to that point in the semester.**

**ALSO NOTE: All grades will be posted throughout the semester on the bulletin board on the first floor of Thach Hall—across from room 119.**

### **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:**

I believe that a classroom is a “sacred” place in which ideas are exchanged freely in a mutually respectful and supportive environment. Toward that end, I encourage each of us to adhere to the following guidelines for our behavior in an attempt to reduce disruptions and bad “karma”:

Be on time to class; if you must be late, sit in a seat close to the door so that you do not have to interrupt anyone.

Unless you have made other arrangements with me, stay until we are finished with class for the day. I generally try to let classes out 5 minutes early, just to help everyone get to their other classes. Please do not put away your materials and prepare to leave until we are finished with the lecture or discussion.

Turn off your cell phone before entering the classroom and keep it off until class is over. During quizzes and examinations, all cell phones must be put away. **Any students using their cell phones during an exam or a quiz for any purpose will be considered to be cheating and will be dismissed from class and receive a “zero” for that exam or quiz.**

Resist the temptation to read the newspaper or study for your other classes while in this class. The class period is for discussing psychology and related topics—not for catching up on local or world events or for cramming for your other classes.

Resist the temptation to nap or visit with friends or classmates during class.

Do your best NOT to monopolize class discussion. To contribute insightful commentary to class discussion is one thing; to talk too much, even if the commentary is insightful, is another thing.

Do not use language that may be offensive to others—avoid racist and sexist comments, or any other type of language that may be considered offensive.

If you need to leave the classroom during a quiz or an examination, including make-up quizzes and exams, you first need to ask permission to do so. Failure to ask permission under these circumstances will result in receipt of a zero for that quiz or exam.

### **IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES:**

**Disability:** Please notify me immediately if you are a student with a disability recognized by AU. I will see to it that any special arrangements that you may need are made as soon as possible.

**MAKE-UP POLICY:** Make-ups are given for regular class credit activities only. No make-ups are given for missing extra credit activities. Make-ups for the **FULL VALUE** of the activity are given only in the case of sudden illness, accidents, family emergencies and other events recognized by Auburn University. Regardless of the nature of a legitimate excuse, you must, if at all possible, **NOTIFY DR. BUSKIST OR YOUR GTA IN ADVANCE.**

**MAKES-UPS GIVEN WHEN STUDENTS MISS A GRADED ACTIVITY DUE TO NON-UNIVERSITY VALID EXCUSES WILL AUTOMATICALLY LOSE 20% OF THE ORIGINAL VALUE OF THAT ACTIVITY.**

**FAILURE TO MAKE-UP AN ACTIVITY WITHIN 7 DAYS OF THE ORIGINAL DATE WILL RESULT IN A ZERO ON IT. LIKEWISE, FAILURE TO HONOR AN APPOINTMENT THAT YOU HAVE MADE WITH YOUR GTA TO MAKE-UP A TEST OR QUIZ WILL RESULT IN A ZERO ON THAT COURSE ACTIVITY.**

**ALL MAKE-UPS WILL BE GIVEN DURING GTA OFFICE HOURS. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

**Academic Honesty:** Students who do not comply with AU's academic honor code will be dealt with in the manner specified in the *Tiger Cub*.

**Entitlement:** In recent years, college professors have noted that many undergraduates appear to have developed a position toward their education in which these students act and believe as though they are entitled to good grades, or sometimes merely a passing grade, without investing any effort in their college courses. In other words, they deserve the grade simply because their tuition has been paid and they are college students. Please do not adopt this posture in this course, or for that matter, any other course at Auburn University. Your tuition dollar provides you the opportunity to **earn** a good grade or a passing grade in our courses. Don't squander your opportunity to become an outstanding student.

**Special Note to Graduating Seniors:** A special case of entitlement sometimes occurs among graduating seniors who feel they deserve to pass an introductory level course because, they are, after all, graduating seniors. If you are a graduating senior taking this class, you have my assurance that the GTAs and I will treat you like we would any other student in this course. I will be happy to give you the grade you have **earned** through your thoughtful and hard work, or in some cases, lack of hard work. Class status has no impact on your grade in this class, but thoughtful and hard work does—you will get the grade you have earned.

The "Easy A" Misperception: For some unexplainable reason, some students enroll in this course under the false impression that the course will give them a way to get an "easy A." Please be assured that this class is **NO EASY A, AND THAT YOU WILL TRULY EARN WHATEVER GRADE YOU RECEIVE.** In the past years, the grade breakdown has been roughly as follows:

As and Bs—30-35%  
Cs—40-45%  
Ds—10-15%  
Fs—10-15%

Please do not take it for granted that you will get an A in this course—you are liable to be disappointed come the semester's end.

### Class Calendar

<u>Day</u>	<u>Class Activity</u>
01/09	Introduction to the Course and Your Instructors
<b>01/11</b>	Research Methods and <b>Syllabus Quiz</b>
01/14	Research Methods
01/16	Research Methods

<b>01/18</b>	<b>Reading Quiz—Research Methods Chapter</b>
01/21	NO CLASS—MLK Holiday
01/23	Learning
01/25	Learning (no quiz this Friday)
01/28	Learning
01/30	Learning
<b>02/01</b>	<b>Reading Quiz—Learning Chapter</b>
02/04	Learning
<b>02/06</b>	<b>Vocabulary Test for Research Methods and Learning/Review</b>
<b>02/08</b>	<b>First Examination—Research Methods and Learning</b>
02/11	Memory
02/13	Memory
<b>02/15</b>	<b>Reading Quiz—Memory</b>
02/18	Biological Basis of Behavior
02/20	Biological Basis of Behavior
<b>02/22</b>	<b>Reading Quiz—Biological Basis of Behavior</b>
02/25	Biological Basis of Behavior
<b>02/27</b>	<b>Vocabulary Test for Memory and Biological Basis of Behavior/Review</b>
<b>02/29</b>	<b>Second Examination—Memory and Biological Basis of Behavior</b>
<b>03/03</b>	<b>Extra Credit Quiz—Sensation and Perception</b>
03/05	Review
<b>03/07</b>	<b>First Cumulative Test (Research Methods, Learning, Memory, and Biological Basis)</b>
03/10	Social Behavior
03/12	Social Behavior
<b>03/14</b>	<b>Reading Quiz—Social Behavior</b>
03/17	No Class—Spring Break
03/19	No Class—Spring Break
03/21	No Class—Spring Break
03/24	Personality
03/26	Personality
<b>03/28</b>	<b>Reading Quiz—Personality</b>
03/31	Personality
<b>04/02</b>	<b>Vocabulary Test for Social Behavior and Personality/Review</b>
<b>04/04</b>	<b>Third Examination—Social Behavior and Personality</b>
<b>04/07</b>	<b>Extra Credit Quiz—Cognition and Intelligence</b>
04/09	Review
<b>04/11</b>	<b>Second Cumulative Examination—Res Meth, Lrning, Mem, Bio, Social, and Pers)</b>
04/14	Stress, Coping, and Health
04/16	Stress, Coping, and Health

<b>04/18</b>	<b>Quiz over Stress, Health, and Coping</b>
04/21	Psychological Disorders
04/23	Psychological Disorders
<b>04/25</b>	<b>Reading Quiz—Psychological Disorders</b>
<b>04/28</b>	<b>Vocabulary Test for Stress, Health, and Coping/Review</b>
	<b>Cumulative Final Exam Date—TBA</b>