



## **Introduction to Psychology**

Fall 2023, PSY 210-107

Tues 6:00PM – 8:50PM

Kupfrian Hall, Room 107

DELIVERY MODE: Face-to-Face

**Instructor:** Jessyka Venchkoski, LCSW

**E-mail:** [jessyka.venchkoski@njit.edu](mailto:jessyka.venchkoski@njit.edu) (Please contact from your NJIT email address and allow for least 24-48 hours for a response.)

**Office Hours:** Tues, 12:30PM – 1:30PM or by appointment. We will meet via WebEx:

<https://njit.webex.com/meet/jv522>

(Please email me in advance if you plan to attend the office hours or need to request another date/time to meet.)

### **Course Prerequisites/Co-requisites**

This course does not have any prerequisites or co-requisites.

### **Course Description**

Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. The content focuses on the exploration of major psychological theories and concepts, methods, and research findings in psychology. Topics include the biological bases of behavior, perception, cognition and consciousness, learning, memory, lifespan development, personality, social psychology, psychological disorders and therapeutic approaches, and applied psychology.

### **Course Goals**

The purpose of this course is to:

- Provide major theories, concepts, methods, and research findings in psychology.
- Introduce research methods, including the scientific approach, research design, the use of statistics, and ethics.
- Explain major sub-disciplines in psychology including but not limited to: the biological bases of brain-behavior relationships, perception, cognition, learning, memory, lifespan development, personality, social psychology, psychological disorders, and therapeutic approaches, and applied psychology.

### **Course Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, research methods, core empirical findings, and historic trends in psychology.
- Explain and compare major theoretical perspectives of psychology.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the major domains in psychology.
- Describe and demonstrate an understanding of applied areas of psychology.
- Draw the distinction between scientific and non-scientific methods of understanding and analysis.
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills and information competence as applied to psychological topics.

## **Course Materials**

Textbook: Your textbook for this class is available for free online!  
Psychology 2e from OpenStax, ISBN 978-1-975076-45-0

The Modules tab will include links to relevant chapters each week.

Access to a PC: You will need Internet access to view course content on Canvas. Please make sure that you can log in and access the site (<https://njit.instructure.com/>).

## **Course Requirements**

This course consists of lectures, in-class small group discussions, weekly discussion board postings, three exams, and an independent reading project. Lectures will integrate assigned textbook chapters with other relevant content. Attendance is required.

\*\* Due to the interactive and iterative nature of the assignments, in general late submissions will not be accepted. \*\*

### ***Discussion Posts:***

Reading discussion boards and small group work: small group activities, designed to support learning and provide a space for critical discussion and collaboration, are an important part of this course. At the beginning of the semester, students will be assigned to groups of 4-5 and the same groups will meet during class and interact via online discussion boards throughout the course. Canvas discussion boards and in-class activities will be interwoven as follows (see the course SCHEDULE, below):

Before the start of each new module (aka topic/ textbook chapter), you are responsible for responding to the question or article presented by the professor.

- Questions/ responses are due by 8:30AM on the day of the first class covering a given module.

### ***Exams:***

There is no cumulative final for this course. There will be three in-class exams each covering the same amount of material and weighted equally. Exams will reflect the content focused on in class and will be closed-book/closed-notes. All exams will be proctored.

Note: Make-up exams are allowed only if provided with appropriate documentation (e.g., a doctor's note, a police report, etc.) at least one-week prior to the scheduled exam date, except in case of an unforeseeable emergency. Make-up exam will not be given if these criteria are not satisfied.

### ***Independent Research Project (IRP):***

In the final third of the course, students will select one of the course topics for a more in-depth, independent exploration. There will be three separate sections associated with this project:

1. A written statement of interest in the chosen topic, including personal/professional/intellectual motivation for wanting to delve deeper and specific questions sparking curiosity (1 paragraph).
2. A journal abstract dissection of a classic psychological study within the topic of choice (1-3 paragraphs).

3. A critical synopsis of the assigned journal article and summary of implications in your life, society, field of study, etc. (2-4 paragraphs).

A list of possible readings for each topic as well as additional details about project components and expectations will be provided later in the semester.

Your statement of interest will be due as a discussion post during the semester.

All papers must be completed by the individual student who must show original work. Please see Academic Integrity Policy below. Papers will be checked using Turnitin, a software that checks originality of your work by comparing it to content on the Web, articles, books, and assignments of previous students of this class.

***Attendance and Participation:***

The delivery mode of this course is face-to-face, which means we will meet in person, during the designated class days/times. You are expected to attend all classes. To receive credit, you must be in class on time, stay for the entire time, and contribute in-class activities and discussions. You must be in class that day to complete these activities. There will be no make-up for in-class activity. Absences are excused only if provided with appropriate documentation (e.g., a doctor's note, a police report, etc.).

**Course Grading**

Course grades will be based on the following:

Assessment type	Percentage
Exam I	20%
Exam II	20%
Exam III	20%
Project	20%
Discussion Posts	10%
Attendance & Participation	10%
TOTAL:	100%

Letter grades will be determined using the following scale:

Percentage	Letter grade
90% and above	A
85 – 89%	B+
80 – 84%	B
75 – 79%	C+
70 – 74%	C
60 – 69%	D

Below 59%

F

### Course Policies

**Academic Integrity:** *Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>.*

*Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at [dos@njit.edu](mailto:dos@njit.edu).*

**Academic Accommodations:** If you require academic accommodations, you must file a request with the Office of Disability Services for Students (<https://www.njit.edu/studentsuccess/accessibility>). You should file your request as soon as possible. Retroactive accommodations are not allowed.

**Procedures and policies defined in this syllabus are subject to change upon mutual agreement. If you decide to stay enrolled in this course after receiving this syllabus, I will assume that you have read the entire syllabus and have agreed to all the policies outlined.**

### SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due (by class)
1	9/5	Introduction to course; Introduction to Psychology	Syllabus, Ch. 1	
2	9/12	Psychological Research	Ch. 2	Introduction discussion post Ch. 2 question/ response
3	9/19	Biopsychology	Ch. 3	Ch. 3 question/ response
4	9/26	State of Consciousness	Ch. 4	Ch. 4 question/ response
5	10/3	Sensation and Perception; Exam I prep	Ch. 5	Ch. 5 question/ response
6	10/10	<b>Exam I</b> ; Learning	Ch. 6	Ch. 6 question/ response
7	10/17	Thinking and Intelligence; Memory	Ch. 7, 8	Ch. 7/8 question/ response
8	10/24	Lifespan Development; <b>IRP</b>	Ch. 9	Ch. 9 question/ response
9	10/31	Emotion and Memory; Exam II prep	Ch. 10	Ch. 10 question/ response
10	11/7	<b>Exam II</b> ; Personality	Ch. 11	Ch. 11 question/ response
11	11/14	Social Psychology; <b>IRP</b>	Ch. 12	Ch. 12 question/ response
12	11/21*	Stress, Lifestyle, and Health	Ch. 14	IRP: Statement of interest due by 11/24
13	11/28	Psychological Disorders	Ch. 15	Ch. 15 question/ response
14	12/5	Therapy and Treatment; Exam 3 prep	Ch. 16	<b>IRP: Critical Synopsis</b>

15	12/12*	<b>Exam III/ Final</b>		
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Note: The content of this schedule might be adjusted/changed by the instructor depending on students' needs.