



Introduction to Psychology
Fall 2025, PSY 210-013
WF, 10:00 AM – 11:20 AM

Instructor: Nurys De La Cruz, LPC

Pronouns: she/her/hers

E-mail: ND523@njit.edu; please email through your NJIT e-mail address

Class Location & Hours: Central King Building (CKB) 120; WF: 10:00am-11:20pm

Office Hours: WF: 9am-10am; please email for appointment

B. Course Prerequisites or Co-requisites (N/A)

C. 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.

D. 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.

D. Required Texts, Readings, and/or other Resources

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

Use following link to access book online:

<https://openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e>

E. Course Outline (See the Tentative Course Schedule)

F. Course Requirements

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

Note: Due to the iterative nature of the assignments, in general late submissions will not be accepted.

G. Grading/Evaluation

Student evaluation will be based upon:

Quality of class presentations and creative and critical elaboration
Knowledge and understanding of course materials.
Quality of comprehensive review of literature
Quality of group discussion questions
Extent of active participation in class.

The final grade will be weighted on the following criteria:

Group Presentation	10%
Analysis and critique paper	20%
Exams: Exam 1 (15%) Exam 2 (15%) Exam 3 (15%)	45%
Discussion Questions (DQ) (10 x 1%)	10%
Class Participation	15%
Total	100%

GRADE SCALE

A	90-100%
B+	87-89.5%
B	80-86.5%
C+	77-79.5%
C	70-76.5%
D	60-69.5%
F	<60%

H. Descriptions of Graded Assignments:

Group Presentation (10%)

Throughout the semester, students will get into group of 3- 4 people and present for 10-12 minutes on one article that is related to the topic of that class. **See Appendix 1 for more details.**

*All presentations should incorporate the use of PowerPoint computer software.

*All presentations must be completed on the day in which the group is assigned. If a group member is absent, they will receive a 0 for the presentation portion of the assignment unless cleared with the instructor on an individual basis. Each member of the group will receive a grade based on their presentation and participation in group work. Group members will be graded by their peers on the day of presentation.

*The article chosen for presentation purposes must be e-mailed to the instructor at least **ONE WEEK BY THE END OF CLASS TIME** prior to class presentation! This will ensure timely feedback from the instructor. Example: If a group presentation is assigned for a Wednesday, the article will be shared with the instructor on the previous Wednesday by one group member.

*PowerPoint presentation must be e-mailed to the instructor at least **ONE CLASS PERIOD** prior to class presentation! This will ensure timely feedback from the instructor. Example: If a group presentation is assigned for a Friday, the presentation will be shared with the instructor on the previous Wednesday by one group member.

Your final presentation score will be
(Group evaluation + Individual evaluation) / 30.

Analysis and Critique Paper (20%)

The purpose of this assignment is to teach students how to review scientific articles and think critically about them. The paper should be a maximum of three pages long (double spaced) and include a brief description of the study, a description of the psychology topic discussed, and a critique of 1-2 areas of the study. See Appendix 2 for rubric and guidelines.

Exams (45% total)

There will be three in-class exams, including a final exam, 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. Students are expected to complete the exam on the dates listed in the Tentative Course Schedule. *Make-up quizzes are considered only for extreme circumstances and will be given to students on a case-by-case basis.*

Note. Exceptions may be considered and include documentation of a valid medical excuse from a physician, conflict with religious observances, and/or travel for intercollegiate athletic competition. Students participating in University (academic or intercollegiate) sponsored events must provide documentation for travel at least one-week prior to the scheduled exam date, except in case of an unforeseeable emergency. Make-up exams will not be given if these criteria are not satisfied.

Discussion Questions (DQ; 10%)

Ten times throughout the semester, each student will submit on Canvas a group discussion question related to the topic(s) to be covered in class. Questions should demonstrate a solid understanding of the material and critical thinking; occasionally, if the chapter is very difficult, a question can be about what was not understood. **Never** should a question be one that can be answered yes/no but should be one that incentivizes discussion and critical thinking.

Questions must be submitted the **day before the class by 11:59pm EST**. Each student should also have a copy of their own discussion question during the class call.

Class Participation (15%)

Students are expected to attend and participate in all classes. Participation involves engagement in all class activities and discussions. Students are also expected to arrive to class on time and remain until

class is dismissed. When absent or late, it is the student's responsibility to obtain lecture notes, materials, and assignments from a classmate or the course Canvas page.

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 to 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.), or DOS excuses the absence.

University Policy on 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:

[hMps://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/NJIT-University-Policy-on-Academic-Integrity.pdf](https://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/NJIT-University-Policy-on-Academic-Integrity.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

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

ChatGPT and Other Language-Based Models

You may use AI programs (e.g. ChatGPT, DeepSeek, etc.) to help generate ideas and brainstorm, however, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. AI programs must not be relied upon to complete assignments, as they are not a substitute for your own work. Beware that use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity. You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material.

SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Day	Readings	Topic	Assignments Due (by class)
1	9/3	Wednesday	Course Introduction; Chapter 1	Introduction to Psychology	Review syllabus and read Chapter 1
	9/5	Friday	Chapter 1	Chapter 1 (continued)	<p>a. Discussion Question due @ 11:59PM on 9/4: Respond on Canvas to the following question: Which discipline (i.e., functionalism, humanism, behaviorism) would you be involved in? Explain your reasoning.</p> <p>b. Check Canva for group assignments.</p>
2	9/10	Wednesday	Chapter 2	Psychological Research	Read Chapter 2 Group Discussion (Question due @ 11:59PM on 9/9)
	9/12	Friday	Chapter 3; Group Presentation Overview	Biopsychology	Read Chapter 3 Group Discussion (Question due @ 11:59PM on 9/11)
3	9/17	Wednesday	Chapter 3	Chapter 3 (continued)	
	9/19	Friday	Chapter 4	States of Consciousness	Read Chapter 4
4	9/24	Wednesday	Chapter 5	Sensation and Perception	Read Chapter 5
	9/26	Friday	Chapter 6	Learning	Read Chapter 6 (Group Discussion Question due @ 11:59PM on 10/2) Group Presentation
5	10/1	Wednesday	Exam Review		Exam 1 Review (Ch 1-6)
	10/3	Friday	Exam 1 (Ch 1-6)		
6	10/8	Wednesday	Chapter 7	Thinking and Intelligence	Read Chapter 7 Group Presentation
	10/10	Friday	Chapter 8	Memory	Read Chapter 8 (Group Discussion Question due @ 11:59PM on

					10/9 Group Presentation
7	10/15	Wednesday	Chapter 8	Chapter 8 (continued)	Group Presentation
	10/17	Friday	Chapter 9	Lifespan Development	Group Discussion (Question due @ 11:59PM on 10/16) Read chapter 9
8	10/22	Wednesday	Chapter 9	Chapter 9 (continued)	Article due for approval on Canvas as a PDF Group Presentation
	10/24	Friday	Chapter 10	Emotion and Motivation	Group Discussion (Question due @ 11:59PM on 10/23) Read chapter 10
9	10/29	Wednesday	Chapter 10	Chapter 10 (continued)	Group Presentation
	10/31	Friday	Chapter 11	Personality	Read chapter 11 Group Presentation
10	11/5	Wednesday	Chapter 11	Chapter 11 (continued)	Group Presentation
	11/7	Friday	Chapter 12	Social Psychology	Read chapter 12 Group Discussion (Question due @ 11:59PM on 11/6)
11	11/12	Wednesday	Chapter 12; Article Analysis & Critique Overview	Chapter 12 (continued)	Group Presentation
	11/14	Friday	Exam Review		Exam 2 Prep (7-12)
12	11/19	Wednesday	Exam 2 (Ch 7-12)		
	11/21	Friday	Chapter 13	Industrial- Organizational Psychology	Read chapter 13 Group Presentation
13	11/26	Wednesday	Chapter 14	Stress, Lifestyle, and Health	Read chapter 14 Article Analysis & Critique due
	11/28	Friday	NO CLASS		

14	12/3	Wednesday	Chapter 15	Psychological Disorders	Read chapter 15 Group Presentation Group Discussion (Question due @ 11:59PM on 12/2)
	12/5	Friday	Chapter 16	Therapy and Treatment	Read chapter 16 Group Discussion (Question due @ 11:59PM on 12/4)
15	12/10	Wednesday	Exam Review		Exam 3 Prep (13-16)
	12/12	Friday	Exam 3 (Ch 13-16)		*Exact Date TBD

Note: The content of this schedule might be adjusted/changed by the instructor depending on students' needs.

Appendix 1
Group
Presentation

DIRECTIONS:

Each group will choose one peer-reviewed research article that is related to the chosen topic of the class to present on. Once the instructor has approved the chosen article, group members will create their presentation. **You will only present for 15 minutes max.** PowerPoint presentations are the best; however, other sources (ex. Prezio) are acceptable. See presentation outline below for presentation requirements.

DEADLINES:

- The article chosen for presentation purposes must be e-mailed to the instructor at least **ONE WEEK prior** to class presentation by 11:59pm EST for approval. This will ensure timely feedback from the instructor.
- The PowerPoint presentation (including video and other materials) must be e-mailed to the instructor **ONE CLASS PERIOD prior** to class presentation by 8:30 AM EST (i.e. If you present Wednesday, your presentation must be in my inbox by 8:30am EST on the previous Monday). This will ensure timely feedback from the instructor. Feedback is expected to be implemented.

Note: Points will be deducted from your grade for presentation components not turned in on time

SELECTING ARTICLE:

- Article selection stipulations:
 - Needs to be a published, peer review article
 - Needs to be from **2020** to present
 - Needs to be from a psychology Journal (in some cases articles from other journals may be approved)
 - ~~Cannot~~ be a literature review/meta-analysis, research note, or book chapter
- To figure out a specific study in such a broad topic (ex. Motivation)
 - Look in the book to find specific areas of interest (ex. Intrinsic Motivation vs. Extrinsic Motivation)
 - The book may discuss an article that you are interested in
 - Start broad in your search and narrow it down (motivation → motivation in practice settings)
 - Choose a specific population of interest (ex. college students)
 - *Remember the broader your search, the more articles will pop up. Try to get it specific so it is easier to find an article.
- Where to look

- Google Scholar
- NJIT library
- *Sometimes articles are tough to find because you have to pay for them, but here are some approved journals that NJIT may have access to:
 - *Society for Personality Research*
 - *American Psychological Association*
 - *Frontiers in Psychology*
 - *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*
 - *Psychological Bulletin*
 - *Psychological Review and Psychological Methods*
- **When looking for an article make sure you click “Peer Review” and have the time range from 2020-present (This will help narrow your search to match the criteria needed for this presentation).

Presentation Requirements:

- In creating slides, keep in mind that font sizes should be no smaller than 24pt font. The class needs to be able to visibly read your slides. Keep wording on slides brief. The group presenters will be responsible for using their personal device to present slides to the class. Please make sure you have practiced your transitions from one section to the next. I would suggest multiple run-throughs with your group members (even better if in front of others) before your presentation day, so you are entirely prepared.
- Introduction
 - Brief review of the previous literature (the idea here is to tie in what has already done in the research and why this study is important)
 - Purpose(s) and Hypothesis (if any)
- Methods
 - Participants
 - What was the method? (e.g. Intervention, experimental design, interviews)
 - Measurements/Tools
 - Procedure
 - Data Analysis
- Results
 - What was found in the study
 - What are the conclusions
 - **Don't just report the statistics...what do the stats mean?**

**Note: sometimes, results could be a little confusing to understand. Reading the discussion can help fully understand what they found.
- Discussion
 - Limitations of the study
 - Implications (how does this study help the real world; how to apply it)
 - Future research
- Discussion Question(s)
 - Come up with a question (or more) on the article that can promote class discussion.

- This can be your own critique of the study (maybe a limitation you noticed and want to talk about or how you think this can be applied to sport-setting that wasn't discussed in the article) be creative with your discussion.
- You will see plenty of examples of how to facilitate a discussion through lectures, so I expect you to pull from those experiences and try them out for yourselves.
- **You, and the class, will only get out what you put in! You will be graded on how well you can engage in and facilitate discussion.**

Presentation skills:

- Are you just reading off the slides or do you know the information?
- Are you further explaining the information on the slides, including any and all tables and visuals included?
- How much are you providing non-verbal cues (e.g., eye contact with peers) during your presentation?
- Presentation is no more than 15 minutes
- Information is presented in an organized way (overall presentation quality)

Grading:

- Grade (out of 30 points total):
 - Individual grade (out of 15 points)
 - Group grade (out of 15 points)
 - Absenteeism on the day of your presentaCon will result in an individual grade of zero.

Your goal: Show the rest of the class, and me, that you have done your research and are adequately prepared to present. Be confident OR embrace it until you make it 😊

Appendix 1 (continued)

Chapter:

Group:

Individual:

Psy 210 Group Presentations

Group Presentation	Your points	Possible Points	Comments
All group members participated equally - Fits the time limit		5	
Able to Generate Class Discussion - Ability to handle questions as well (speaking to the audience)		5	
Information is presented in an organized way. - Overall presentation quality		5	

Total: _____/15

Individual Grade- This score is calculated individually.

My expectation from each presenter:

Individual Presentation	Your points	Possible Points	Comments
Individual ability as a presenter -Not just reading off the PowerPoint - speaking clear		5	
Able to Generate Class Discussion --ability to handle questions as well (speaking to the audience)		5	
Presents the appropriate amount of time.		5	

Total: ____/15

Appendix 2: Analysis and Critique Paper

If you have any questions about your paper or finding an article, please see me! 😊

PART 1 ARTICLE SUBMISSION: Choose a research article based on a psychology topic that interests you. You will submit your chosen article (in a PDF format) for approval on canvas no later than 11:59pm on 10/22 to receive timely feedback/approval from the instructor. Failure to submit your article and get it approved will result in an automatic 3-point deduction from your overall grade for this assignment. If your article is not approved on the first submission, then you will be required to resubmit an article by 11/5. The same 3-point deduction will apply to the resubmission deadline.

- Article selection stipulations:
 - Needs to be a published, peer reviewed article (e.g., no opinion papers)
 - Needs to be from **2020** to present
 - Needs to be from a psychology *peer-reviewed* journal
 - Cannot be a literature review/meta-analysis, research note, or book chapter

- Finding an article:
 - Look in the book to find specific areas of interest (ex. personality, state of consciousness, etc.)
 - The book may discuss an article that you are interested in (those articles are up for grabs)
 - *(can be from chapters not covered in lectures/reading)*
 - Start broad in your search and narrow it down (sleep → meditative techniques for enhanced sleep)
 - Choose a specific population of interest (ex. student-athletes and personality types)
 - *Remember the broader your search, the more articles will pop up. Try to get it specific so it is easier to find an article

- Where to look
 - Google Scholar
 - NJIT library
 - **When looking for an article make sure you click “Peer Review” and have the time range from 2020-present (this will help narrow your search to match the criteria needed for this paper.)
 - *Sometimes articles are tough to find because you have to pay for them, but here are some approved journals that NJIT may have access to:
 - *Society for Personality Research*
 - *American Psychological Association*
 - *Frontiers in Psychology*
 - *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*
 - *Psychological Bulletin*
 - *Psychological Review and Psychological Methods*

PART 2 WRITING YOUR PAPER: On Canvas submit a three-page (not including title page and reference page) summary and critique of the chosen article. Follow APA **7th edition student format** (NEWEST EDITION!) guidelines and include a **brief** description of the study (no more than 1 page), a **brief** description of the psychology topic referenced (no more than ½ a page), study limitations (no more than ½ a page), and critique of 1-2 areas of the study. The purpose of the paper is to have both an analysis and a critique component. While the expectation is for the analysis to encompass most of the components of the paper, the critique should only target one (or maximum two) components. See next page for some guiding questions that can help you differentiate between analysis and critique.

- Your essay should be typed, double-spaced on standard-sized paper (8.5" x 11") with **1" margins on all sides, and 12 pt. Times New Roman font.**
- Include a title page and reference list (see APA 7th edition for formatting)
 - Should include the article your paper is centered around, the textbook (if referenced), and any other supporting materials used.
 - *You do not need to put a reference for lecture slides
- **Formatting**

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html

NOTE:

- **Late work – No late work will be accepted. Articles and papers must be submitted by the specified deadlines.**

GRADING RUBRIC: (15 points)

- A brief description of the study (3 points)
- A description of the psychology topic (3 points)
- Study limitations (4 points)
- Critique of 1-2 parts of the study. (4 points)
- Grammar & APA Style (1 point)

Appendix 2 (cont'd):

	Analysis	Critique
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic concepts • Theories • Conceptual framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any different theories, concepts, frameworks you would use in the study?
Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What method was used in the study? • e.g. Intervention, experimental design, interviews, Meta-analysis • Participants • Tools • Procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think a different method, combination of methods would have been more effective? • Would you make any change in the participants, tools or procedure?
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate on what was found in the study • What are the conclusions? • Do not report statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you read the results differently and draw different conclusions than the authors?
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report study limitations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you think of creative ways to overcome the limitations presented by the authors? • Are there any limitations the authors failed to report?