

General Psychology

Last Updated: Fri, 01/09/2026

Course prefix: PSYC

Course number: 1101

Section: E

CRN (you may add up to five):
25134

Instructor First Name: Daniel

Instructor Last Name: Spieler

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

This semester will be a whirlwind of an introduction to the science of psychology. We will touch on everything from the structure of individual neurons to the nature of social interactions and social influence. Throughout the semester we will see how social scientists collect and analyze data, and use these data to draw inferences about psychological processes.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the semester, you will be able to how explain how data might be used to test psychological theories and provide examples of how psychological theories account for individuals behavior, thoughts, and emotions.

Required course materials:

Electronic Textbook: Psychology, 6th edition, Schacter, Gilbert, & Nock.
Macmillian Publishing.

You need to purchase a text with access to the Macmillian Achieve site. To do so, go to our Canvas page and follow the Macmillian link.

NOTE: You need access to this text for the **entire semester**. Many introductory offers or rentals will give continuous access through May 2026. Make sure you have continuous access.

Other materials will be made available on Canvas.

Grading policy:

Exams

There will be two midterms and one final exam. These exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer/short essay questions. Prior to the exams, I will distribute a study guide to limit any uncertainty about the material covered by the exam. Exams are conducted during class time, in the designated classroom, and are closed book and closed notes.

Quizzes

Throughout the semester, there will be a quasi-randomly distributed in-class quizzes consisting of 1 or 2 questions distributed at the start of class. There are no make-up quizzes will be provided. You will be able to drop one of your quiz scores, hence missing one quiz will have not impact on this component of your final grade. We will have a minimum of 8 of these quizzes.

End of Chapter Quizzes

At the end of each chapter of the text, you will answer a series of multiple choice questions covering that chapter. You may take these quizzes up to four times and we will take your final score.

Research Experience

Everything discussed in this class is based on research findings of scientists in some area of psychological science. While research in psychology is similar to research in many other disciplines, the nature of the topic (e.g., thought processes, social behavior, attitudes) also poses special challenges to carrying out rigorous scientific study. To gain exposure to research in psychology, you will be asked to complete 4 'credits' of research experience. These credits can be completed using any combination of the following:

Research Participation. During the semester you will participate in research conducted by Faculty in the School of Psychology.

Research Alternative. During the semester we will host research review sessions during which you select individual journal articles to summarize and discuss the theory, methods, and results.

The goal of both options is to provide you with exposure to original and current research in areas of psychology.

Full details about fulfilling either options can be found [here](#).

Grade weighting and grading scale

There are 6 components of your final grade, below are the component and the associated weight.

Component	Weight
Midterm 1	.20
Midterm 2	.20
Final Exam	.20
End of Chapter Quizzes	.20
In Class Quizzes	.10
Research Exp.	.10

To calculate, each component is converted to a percentage of the possible points and multiplied by the associated weight and summed across components. You should assume a straight grading scale (e.g., 91-100, 81-90, etc...) but I reserve the right to lower the grade cutoffs. Any adjustments that I make will be announced after the first and/or second midterm and will apply to the final grade calculations.

Please note that grades displayed by Canvas are often inaccurate due to special arrangements or calculations that only occur at the end of the semester (e.g., dropping a quiz).

Attendance policy:

No attendance is taken beyond the occasional in class quiz.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections, particularly in how we think, evaluate, decide, and understand?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human cognition, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Critical thinking
- Information Literacy
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion
- Problem Solving