

Introduction to General Psychology

Last Updated: Tue, 12/30/2025

Course prefix: PSYC

Course number: 1101

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):

31474

Instructor First Name: Na

Instructor Last Name: Liu

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

In this course we will survey the methods, findings, and theories of psychological science. Psychology is a broad topic and as the name implies (General Psychology) we'll be covering the general themes and information of broad research areas. We begin the course covering fundamentals of psychological science and progress through fundamental aspects of human thinking and behavior. Along the way we'll discuss neuroscience, perception, learning, memory, language, and thought.

Pre-&/or Co-Requisites: None.

Course Structure: This class will be taught in person.

Lecture Structure: Class times will consist of both lecture and in-class activities. During class I will pose questions to the class and encourage participation. At times you will work with those around you to complete activities and share with the class. These activities are intended to facilitate learning and are not meant to be high-stakes grades; however, engagement and critical thinking are expected.

Homework: Assignments will be posted through Canvas and an online utility called Achieve. Homework is due prior to the start of class on the day it is due.

Exam Administration: Exams will be administered in person during scheduled class or the final exam time in the same room as lecture. Exams will be completed using paper and pencil without any other resources.

Course learning outcomes:

Orienting Question

How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Core IMPACTS Learning Outcome

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

Career-Ready Competencies

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with major psychological concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends
- Describe the basic processes underlying a variety of psychological phenomena, including development, emotion, motivation, learning, memory, and consciousness
- Discuss the ways that environmental and biological processes contribute to psychological phenomena
- Identify and differentiate among the basic methods of scientific psychology
- Explain the fundamental changes in behavior and mental processes that occur during the lifespan
- Discuss how groups and individuals influence behavior and attitudes
- Identify factors that contribute to an individual's personality and attitudes
- Recognize psychological disorders and describe treatment options
- Apply psychological concepts to general descriptions of human behavior as well as one's own experiences and attitudes; effectively communicate in writing
- Describe key psychological concepts; relate psychological science to a variety of behaviors
- Identify how data can be used to understand human thinking and behavior, and appraise human behaviors and actions from a simple psychological perspective

Required course materials:

Course Text

Nolan, S., & Hockenbury, S. (**10th ed.**). *Discovering Psychology* (**10th ed.**). Worth Publishers.

Available through the bookstore either in loose leaf or as an ebook when packaged with Achieve.

Required Online Access

Textbook-specific Achieve access through Macmillan Learning is required.

Select ONE of the two packages available through the Library / Bookstore

- 6-month Achieve access card (includes a digital version of the text), OR
- Physical textbook + 6-month Achieve access card

For either package, you will need the Achieve access card to complete homework and in-class activities

Grading policy:**Graded Components and Weights**

- In Class Activities: 10%
- Research Participation: 4% (1% per SONA credit; total 4 credits)
- Homework: 36%
- Exams: 50% total
 - Exam 1: 15%
 - Exam 2: 15%
 - Exam 3 (Final): 20%

Description of Graded Components

In Class Activities: Graded based on participation and proper effort. To receive full credit, you must be in class and submit the activity during class time. Late submissions are not accepted. Activities may use Canvas, Achieve, or free online utilities.

Research Participation: You must complete a total of four credit hours of research participation. You may earn credits by:

1. Participating in studies through the Georgia Tech School of Psychology SONA system,
OR
2. Participating in research projects conducted by PSYC 2015 students (ask for participation IDs).

Note: Completing more than 4 credit hours will not result in extra credit.

Homework: Weekly assignments will be provided with instructions, due dates, and submission details. In most cases deadlines are prior to the start of class on the day due.

Exams: Exams may include multiple-choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay questions. All exams are in-person, closed-book, and closed-note. Bring a #2 pencil and your GTID. During exams, only permitted items may be on your desk (e.g., pencil, GTID, blank water bottle, eraser). Late students may not start once the exam is underway.

Late Work / Extensions

- Late homework: **20% penalty** for the first 24 hours late, **additional 20%** after the next 24 hours. After 48 hours, submissions are not accepted.

- Exam conflicts: Contact the instructor **at least 1 week in advance** to arrange a reschedule.
- Extensions may be granted depending on circumstances; contact us as soon as you are aware of a problem.

Extra Credit

Currently, there are no planned extra credit opportunities. If any extra credit becomes available, details will be provided to the whole class.

Grading Scale

A: 90-100%

B: 80-89% (89.50-89.99% rounds up to 90%)

C: 70-79% (79.50-79.99% rounds up to 80%)

D: 60-69% (69.50-69.99% rounds up to 70%)

F: 0-59% (59.50-59.99% rounds up to 60%)

Pass/Fail Students

70% or higher = Satisfactory; below 70% = Unsatisfactory.

Disputing Grades

If you wish to dispute a grade, you must contact us **within two days after the grade is posted**, and provide your explanation in writing (with references to course materials when appropriate). After this window, grades are final.

Attendance policy:

Based on evidence from learning-centered teaching, active participation during lectures is an important aspect of learning. This course includes a participation component as part of the grade (see “In Class Activities” under graded components).

If you have an institute-approved activity, a religious observance, or an emergency and are unable to attend class, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. For institute-approved absences, you must submit the Institute Approved Absence form at least 5 days prior to the absence and provide documentation as soon as possible. Documentation from the Registrar or the Dean’s Office will be accepted.

Make-up Work

Missed work must be made up within **5 business days** of the date on the approved documentation.

Note on illness

Illness is generally **not** considered an institute-approved absence. If you are sick, please take care of yourself and follow proper protocols. I prefer that you do not come to class when sick; if you do attend, please take precautions (e.g., wearing a mask, avoiding close contact).

Personal emergencies

Students may need to miss classes due to documented emergencies (e.g., hospitalization, car accident). The Office of the Vice President and Dean of Students can assist students with documented emergencies by contacting professors on behalf of the student.

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):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

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.

Orienting Question: How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Learning Outcome: Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Career-Ready Competencies: Intercultural Competence; Perspective-Taking; Persuasion.