

Fundamentals of Psychology
Mills College
Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30 to 10:45am
in Moore Natural Science Building (NSB) 213

Instructor: Pi-Ju (Marian) Liu

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Office location: NSB 143

Office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:00 to 9:30am, or by appointment

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How to reach me: I am most easily reached via email at maliu@mills.edu; nonetheless, please allow a minimum of 48 hours for a response.

Teaching assistants: Rhea Varley (rvarley@mills.edu)
and Lily Radanovich (lradanovich@mills.edu)

TA office hours: TBA

Peer Tutors: Chelsea Dees (cedes@mills.edu), Kyle Carter (jucarter@mills.edu),
Lee Rost (lrost@mills.edu), and Jordan Wanderer (jwanderer@mills.edu)

This course meets the Human Institutions & Behavior Gen Ed requirement.

Description of the course:

Fundamentals of Psychology is a survey course of modern psychology, including brain mechanisms, human development, sensation and perception, learning, memory, thinking, intelligence, motivation, emotion, personality, health, abnormal behavior, therapy, and social behavior. It concentrates on human behavior using a scientific and experimental approach. Applied topics such as cross-cultural, gender, and age differences in human behaviors will also be discussed. This course (or its equivalent taken elsewhere) is a pre-requisite for nearly all other courses in the Psychology Department.

Learning goals, assessment criteria, announcements, and assignments will be posted on the Blackboard website for this course. Lecture slides will also be posted after each lecture.

Required readings:

1. Rathus, S. (2012). *Psychology: Concepts and Connections (10th ed.)*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning. ISBN-13 978-1-111-34485-6.
2. Readings, including websites, book chapters, or empirical articles, will be posted weekly on Blackboard (access from your Mills portal). Please check that you can access the course site and contact ITS helpdesk (helpdesk@mills.edu or 510-430-2005) if you have problems. It is the students' responsibility to check course site frequently for updates and announcements.

Recommended readings:

1. For research help, read "Subject Guides: Psychology:
<http://subjectguides.mills.edu/sp2/subjects/guide.php?subject=PSYC>".
2. *Publication Manual of the American Psychology Association (6th ed.)*.

Course requirements and grading: This course meets for 150 minutes per week for 14 weeks (not counting the first and the final week), and requires a minimum of 9 hours of outside work per week. Your final grade for the course will be computed out of a total of 360 points derived from quizzes, class activities, written assignments, and 3 exams. Attendance and completion of assignments are required, whether taking the course for credit or auditing. The course grade will be based on the following:

85 pts	17 Chapter Quizzes
25 pts	5 Class Activities
25 pts	Introductory Paper
25 pts	Experiment Paper
50 pts	Research Paper
50 pts	Exam I
50 pts	Exam II
50 pts	Exam III

17 Chapter Quizzes:

It is important to keep up with the reading assignments for each class. Please read the assigned chapter(s) for each class before lecture and complete the chapter quiz on Blackboard before we begin discussing the topic. Each chapter quiz will earn you up to 5 points and will be available online until the end of the semester. However, it will be the most beneficial to have taken the relevant chapter quiz before attending lectures. These quizzes will also come in handy when you have to review for exams because the questions on your exams will resemble those on the quizzes.

5 Class Activities:

Regular attendance is important and absences can adversely affect grade outcomes. After all, you will not be able to complete required class activities without being present (5 points each). Class activities will include group discussion sessions and experiments throughout the semester, in which any of you could be the spokesperson/leader of a group!

Introductory Paper: Is Psychology a Science?

The scheduled tentative due date for the introductory paper is **September 11 (Thursday)**. You are allowed to work in groups of up to 3 students on this paper. Read the article by Lilienfeld (2010) on Blackboard as a basis for this assignment. Interview 3-5 people and ask them a few questions about psychology. What do they think the discipline is about? Where do they think psychology came from? How is it similar or different from other fields of study such as biology, sociology, and philosophy? Include your first thoughts of psychology, why you decided to take this class, and how your view of the discipline may have evolved after the first few weeks in this class and after reading Lilienfeld (2010). You can also describe the public image of psychology portrayed in the media and how accurate you think it is. Your paper should be typed, double-spaced in APA format if possible, and about 2-3 pages long

excluding the cover page. You need to turn in a hardcopy of your assignment at the beginning of class on the date when this paper is due. Also, a soft copy should be turned in via Blackboard. Please note, late papers will not be accepted. If you will miss class on the due date, please place your paper in my inbox in the psychology department before the due date, and remember to upload your paper via Blackboard before the due date.

Experiment Paper: Replicate an Experiment!

The scheduled tentative due date for the experiment paper is **October 21 (Tuesday)**. Work in groups of 4 students. Replicate a simple psychological experiment from Chapters 1-11. You can follow the methodology reported in a peer-reviewed journal article. Carefully describe the rationale, method, results, and conclusions. Let me know why this study was interesting to you and what the results mean. Are your findings similar to the results that have been published? If not, why not? Your report should be 2-3 pages long, APA format preferred. Same for all papers due in the class, you need to turn in a hardcopy of your assignment at the beginning of class on the date when this paper is due. Also, a soft copy should be turned in via Blackboard. Late papers will not be accepted.

Research Paper:

The scheduled tentative due date for the research paper is **November 20 (Thursday)**. This is an individual assignment, meaning students need to complete the paper by themselves. This assignment will help solidify your skills in using the American Psychological Association (APA) style of paper writing. You will be expected to write a 3-4 page main-text research report based on 3 peer-reviewed articles in psychology. Detailed guidelines for this assignment will be discussed late in class and will be posted on Blackboard. Be sure to submit a hard copy, but also upload a softcopy via Blackboard. Again, late papers will not be accepted.

Exams:

There will be 3 in-class exams. Make-up exams will only be given in extraneous circumstances (e.g., death of a family member, serious illness). Please see the tentative schedule for exam days and time.

- Each exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions.
- Exams will not be cumulative.
- Exam questions will consist of materials covered in lectures and the textbook.

Extra credits (up to 10 maximum):

You will be given numerous opportunities to earn up to 10 extra credit points. For example, you will be given 2 extra points for coming to my office hours (for the first time only), or for attending a psychology-related event that I announce in class and writing a 1-page summary for me. I will announce these approved opportunities as they become available (you are welcome to forward these events news with me, so I can announce it as an extra-credit opportunity).

- *Visit me! (2 extra credit points):* Come visit me during my office hours! Write a little something about yourself that may help me get to know you ☺. Be sure to put your name and course number on it so that I can give you extra credit points. You can either come individually or in groups.

- *Bonus assignment (5 extra credit points):* Create a song, a rap, a recorded video presentation, a documentary film of a few psychological patients (with actors), a poem, or a story with at least 10 terms you have learned in this class. Please upload your video, audio recording, or written response to Blackboard before the last class meeting.

Grading:

A+ = 97-100%	A = 93-96%	A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 63-66%	D- = 60-62%
F = Below 60%		

Please note, satisfactory performance for any assignment or paper deserves a B. Only work with exceptional performance gets an A.

Accommodating students with disabilities: For students requiring extra time or other accommodations related to disabilities, I am happy to help optimize the learning experience in this course. Please provide me with written documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) prior to the due date of our first assignment (the introductory paper) so that we can arrange for a mutually agreeable alternative for accommodations as needed.

Class policies: I expect students to behave professionally and value other students' right to learn. To limit distractions, please avoid coming late to class, have no food during class sessions, turn off cell phones and smart phones, and leave your laptop in your bag. All written products should be the student's own work. Students should not submit papers that have been written for prior or concurrent courses. In addition, all students should review university policies on plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense, even if unintentional, and is subject to serious sanctions. It is also assumed that you will:

- Attend all classes and arrange to get what you need from others if absent.
- Raise relevant questions and appropriate observations on the topic.
- Participate through reflection on both your relevant professional experiences, as well as your completion of the reading assignments.
- Depend on each other as well as me, for learning.
- Learn and have fun!

Class attendance: All students are expected to attend all class sessions. Please be on-time to class. Late students should enter the classroom quietly and take an available empty seat closest to the entrance. If students need to leave the class prematurely, be sure to inform the instructor before class starts, take the seats closest to the exit, and leave quietly during class. Students are responsible for everything that is covered in the lecture, including announcements of assignments, due dates, and changes in the syllabus. You will need to take notes, but you are expected to use something other than a laptop or other electronic device to do so. If you prefer to take notes on any electronic devices, please come see me for permission prior to taking notes on your laptop (or other electronic devices). If you

are unable to come to class, please arrange to get lecture notes from fellow students. If you are a student athlete or have to participate in department or university events (Psi-Chi, march band) and will miss class sessions, please provide written documentations from appropriate authority for each of the class session before that session takes place. Absence of family emergency or sick leave will also need proper documentation submitted right after you are back on campus. Missing classes with no written documentation will affect your grade.

Cell phone and other electronic device use: Cell-phones and smart-phones use are prohibited in the class. Please turn off any ringing or beeping electronic device before class starts. Students are expected to take notes without a laptop. If students need to take notes with a laptop due to special needs, please advise the instructor. If students are found checking emails or browsing websites unrelated to the class, class-activity grade will be affected, and the privilege of laptop use will be reprimanded.

Disruptive behaviors: Please do not carry on a personal conversation during class. Chatting with other students is distracting, and highly disrespectful to fellow students' right to learn. A student responsible for continual disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem. As an instructor, I reserve the right to drop students for inappropriate behaviors.

Appeal to re-grade: If you believe that your paper or exam has been misgraded, please write a paragraph and submit the paragraph as well as your original paper or exam to the instructor in a week. The paragraph should include explanation and arguments on the part that had been misgraded. The instructor will review your assignment again, and assign an appropriate grade. Please note, the new grade can stay the same, go up, or even be lower than the original grade.

Academic honesty: The following pledge shall be written and signed by each student upon completion of every assignment and examination: "I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment and I have completed it as specified." Written work you submit must reflect your own work and completely indicate with citations material that came from another source. Any paper that fails to do so will receive a failing grade. "Plagiarism is a most serious offense in academia, subject to severe sanctions, including expulsion from school. Ignorance is no excuse, so it is important that you know what plagiarism is & how to avoid it. Plagiarism is presenting words or ideas of another without giving appropriate credit. Even if plagiarism is unintentional, it is still a serious breach of ethical standards in academia, and the plagiarist is subject to sanctions. The most obvious form of plagiarism is when exact words are taken from someone else's work and presented without a proper citation. Less obvious, but still plagiarism, is when ideas are taken and used without proper citation. Even if the work of another is paraphrased into your own words, you must cite the original source. Exact words must be enclosed in quotation marks and a citation given. If you draw material from a secondary source, you must cite both the original writer and the author of the secondary source. See the *APA Publication Manual* for detailed examples of proper citation format." (abstract from <http://www.cgu.edu/pages/903.asp>)

Tentative Schedule of Topics and Readings

1. August 28 – Course Introduction

Review syllabus by September 2.

Turn in personal information sheet on September 2.

2. September 2 & 4 – Overview & Research Methods (Chapter 1 & 2)

3. September 9 & 11 – Biology and Psychology (Chapter 3)

Introductory paper due on September 11.

4. September 16 & 18– Human Development (Chapter 10 & 11)

5. September 23 & 25 – Sensation and Perception (Chapter 4) & Exam I

Exam I is on September 25 from 9:30 to 10:45am, including chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11.

6. September 30 & October 2 – Consciousness (Chapter 5)

7. October 7 & 9 – Learning & Memory (Chapter 6 & 7)

8. October 14 & 16 – Thinking and Language (Chapter 8)

9. October 21 & 23 – Intelligence & Motivation (Chapter 8 & 9)

Experiment paper due on October 21.

10. October 28 & 30 – Emotion (Chapter 9) & Exam II

Exam II is on October 30 from 9:30 to 10:45am, including chapter 5-9.

11. November 4 & 6 – Personality (Chapter 12)

Class does not meet on November 6.

Instructor attends Gerontological Society of America conference from November 5-9.

12. November 11 & 13 – Gender and Diversity & Health (Chapter 13 & 14)

13. November 18 & 20 – Psychological Disorder (Chapter 15)

Research paper due on November 20.

14. November 25 & 27 –Therapy (Chapter 16) & Thanksgiving

Class does not meet on November 27.

15. December 2 & 4 – Social Psychology (Chapter 17)

16. December 16 – Exam III

Exam III is on December 16 from 9:00 to 12:00pm, including chapter 12-17.

Important Dates

Labor day – 9/1

Last day to add – 9/10

Last day to drop – 10/22

Last day to withdraw – 11/5

Thanksgiving holidays – 11/26-11/28

Reading Days – 12/9-12/10

The above schedule is subject to change in case of unforeseen events (e.g., natural disasters), topic shifts (e.g., we decided to spend additional time on certain topics), or students' level of comprehension and mastery of information presented. Readings and due date for papers may also vary given progress in the course. The instructor and the department reserve the right to revise this syllabus, verbally or in writing. Students are responsible for materials indicated above, whether explicitly discussed in class or not. The instructor does not own the copyright of any readings or films shown in class. Readings and films are used for educational purpose only.