

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

PSYC110.N18/.P08

FALL 2008 SEMESTER

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Hours: M&W: 9:00 – 10:00
T & Th: 11:00 – 12:30

Text: Wade, C. & Tavis, C. (2008). *Invitation to psychology, 4th Edition*.
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

I. ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR

A. Professional Data:

I received my Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from The Catholic University of America in 1972. My graduate studies were completed at Lehigh University, where I received a Master of Science (1974) and a Doctor of Arts in Psychology in 1976.

The focus of my graduate training was the teaching of Psychology. Although I consider myself a generalist, I have particular interests in research methods, social psychology, cognition, and philosophy. I have been a member of the psychology faculty at Bucks County Community College since 1976, and I constantly marvel that there are people in this world that would actually pay me for doing something that is so much fun: teaching. In addition to PSYC110, I also teach "Experimental Psychology", and two Integration of Knowledge courses: "Intelligence" and "Creativity."

I have worn a number of "hats" while at the College. I served as Chairperson of the Department of Behavioral and Professional Sciences from 1982 to 1989. In the 1989-1990 academic year I served as Interim Director of Development (a fund raising position) and Grants Coordinator for the College. In 1990 I returned to full-time teaching. More recently, I led the College's institutional Self-Study for reaccreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. In 2002 I was honored to receive the Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award. I have worked with just about every office in the College and know just about everyone. If you ever find yourself wondering where to go or who to talk to at the College to get something done, don't hesitate to ask me for assistance.

B. Personal Data:

I am one of the few people you are likely to meet who claims Washington, D.C. as a hometown (as opposed to temporary residence.) I live in Doylestown with my wife ,Barbara, who is the Director of Transfer here at the College. I have three daughters – Beth, Jennifer and Eileen - who are currently living “away from home” and pursuing their own interests (service learning director at St. Joseph’s University, high school biology and chemistry teacher, and internal medicine, respectively.) I enjoy warm weather pursuits, such as swimming and long walks on the beach. I love to read, and enjoy listening to my growing collection of jazz recordings.

At heart I am a perpetual student, and I think that teaching is the best way to learn. I find human behavior to be an endlessly fascinating subject for learning; I am looking forward to sharing that fascination with you this semester.

C. Philosophy of Teaching and Learning:

I think of myself as a "**Provocateur**" of Psychology (as opposed to "professor".) The most common meaning of provocateur is "one who incites others to riot or revolution". However, I am not interested in starting riots in the classroom. The Latin root of the word, *provocare*, which means, "to call forth", is closer to what I see as my role in the classroom. My job is to call forth the knowledge within you and encourage you to add to that knowledge by asking **provocative** questions. You will be asked many questions in this course, some factual and some reflective. All of the questions have one purpose, to prompt you to make the knowledge of Psychology **personal** by giving your **voice** to it.

A lot of the things that I do in this course will make much more sense to you if you understand the assumptions that I operate from. In no particular order they are:

1. The teacher is not responsible for the student's learning, the student is.
2. The teacher is responsible for **facilitating** the student's learning by:
 - providing the appropriate resources.
 - managing the learning experience.
 - providing the student with frequent feedback.
 - encouraging the student to reflect on and assess his or her own learning.
3. **THERE IS NO FREE LUNCH.** Learning requires a sufficient investment of time and effort.
4. Learning proceeds most efficiently when the students know what they should know and how they are doing. Learning is difficult enough without having to play "guess what the teacher wants me to know".

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. **Core Curriculum Objectives:**

1. Social Perspectives
 - You will be able to identify and explain the methods of analysis used by psychologists to examine and evaluate group and individual attitudes and behavior.
2. Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
 - You will be able to use methods, concepts and theories in new situations.
3. International, Gender, and/or Minority Perspectives
 - You will be able to identify prejudice, stereotypes, and misuses of power that affect the lives of women and/or other minorities in areas such as education, business, politics, religion or industry.

B. **Specific Course Objectives**

1. **Psychology is a science.**

You will be able to:

- a. Identify the types of methods used in psychological research
- b. Identify and explain the strengths and weaknesses of methods used in psychological research.
- c. Apply the principles of critical thinking to explain why the conclusions of a research study should or should not be believed.

2. **Psychology is a vehicle for understanding self and others.**

- a. You will be able to apply one or more theories, concepts and/or research findings from the list of mandated topic areas to explain given examples of human and animal behavior.

More generally, **and most importantly**, it is my intention that by taking this course you will have gained an additional way to think about the questions that most concern you. More than likely these questions have to do with understanding yourself and your place in the world around you. Psychology does not have all the answers. But, psychology can give you a useful set of concepts and ideas for searching out the answers. In this way, psychology takes its place along with history, literature, philosophy, the natural sciences, and the other disciplines as one tool in the tool kit of the life-long learner. Welcome to the journey!

III. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

DATE	TOPIC/EVENT	READING
UNIT I: The Science of Behavior		
August 28	-Psycho-myths: What do you know about psychology?	Chapter 1
September 2	-Review of course format and introduction to Blackboard CE6	Chapter 1
September 4	-Approaches in Psychology (five ways to think like a psychologist)	
September 8 (Monday)	-Post roster information and picture on Blackboard -Everyone should take Chapter 1 Online Test this week	
September 9	-Doing experiments in psychology	Chapter 1
September 11	-Exercise: What's Wrong With the Experiment?	Chapter 1
September 12 (Friday)	Last Day to Take Chapter 1 Online Test	
September 16	Exercise: Thinking critically about research	Chapter 1
September 18	-Unit 1 Assessment	
UNIT II: Mind and Body		
September 22 (Monday)	-Everyone should take Chapter 4 Online Test this week.	
September 23	-Brain and Behavior: Provocative stories about mind and body.	Chapter 4
September 25	-In-class exercise: Lesion Lesson	Chapter 4
September 26 (Friday)	-Last Day to Take Chapter 4 Online Test	
September 29 (Monday)	Everyone should take Chapter 6 online test this week.	
September 30	-Perception: a personal construction of reality	Chapter 6
October 2	-Thinking critically about subliminal perception	Chapter 6
October 3 (Friday)	-Last Day to Take Chapter 6 Online Test	

DATE	TOPIC/EVENT	READING
October 7	-Unit 2 Assessment	
UNIT III: Learning		
October 9	-Introduction to learning -Classical Conditioning	Chapter 9
October 13 (Monday)	-Everyone should take Chapter 9 Online Test this week.	
October 14	-Classical conditioning (cont.) -Operant conditioning	Chapter 9
October 16	-Operant Conditioning	Chapter 9
October 17 (Friday)	-Last Day to Take Chapter 9 Online Test -Midterm Grades Submitted	
October 21	-In-class Project: The Lighter Side of Classical and Operant Conditioning	
October 23	-Unit 3 Assessment	
UNIT IV: Thinking		
October 27 (Monday)	-Everyone should take Chapter 8 Online Test this week.	Chapter 8
October 28	-Memory: A personal reconstruction of reality	Chapter 8
October 30	-Memory: A user's guide	Chapter 8
October 31 (Friday)	-Last Day to Take Chapter 8 Online Test	
November 3 (Monday)	-Everyone should take Chapter 7 Online Test this week.	
November 4	-Intelligence: what is it and where does it come from? -Deadline for Course Withdrawal	Chapter 7 (pp. 240 – 252)
November 6	-Nurturing intelligence -Stereotype Threat	
November 7 (Friday)	-Last day to take Chapter 7 Online Test.	

DATE	TOPIC/EVENT	READING
November 11	-Unit 4 Assessment	
UNIT V: Motivation and Emotion		
November 13	-Searching Online Databases -Discussion of Unit 5 Assessment -Everyone should take the Chapter 14 online test	Chapter 14
November 18	-Motivation :The “Why” of behavior -Discussion of Application Essay assignment -Last Day to take Chapter 14 Online Test. -Everyone should take Chapter 13 online test this week.	
November 20	-Emotions: Behavior’s engine	Chapter 13
UNIT VI: Abnormal Behavior		
November 25	-What’s “normal”, what’s not? Last Day take Chapter 13 test	Chapter 11
December 1	Everyone should take Chapter 11 test this week	
December 2	-Orientation to the Behavior Disorders Presentation Assignment; Project Teams Assigned! -Unit 5 Assessment (take-home) due.	Chapter 11
December 4	-Project Teams conduct research; all teams gather in classroom	
December 5 (Friday)	-Last day to take Chapter 11 Online Test	
December 9	-Project teams conduct research; prepare for presentations. All Teams gather in the classroom	
December 11	-Team presentations -Last class meeting	
December 15 (Monday)	-Application Essay Due	
December 18	-Grades Posted to WebAdvisor	

IV. ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade in the course will be based upon your performance in the following:

1. Chapter Tests: For each of the assigned chapters in the course, you will be required to take an online chapter test. There will be nine of these exams. These exams are open-book, and they are timed. You will have **75 minutes** to complete 30 questions. The purpose of these exams is to assess how well you have understood your reading assignments.

To insure that you are ready to be successful on these chapter tests, you must have read carefully and practiced your understanding **BEFORE** you start the test. Therefore, you must take a **chapter practice quiz** and score 80% or above before you will gain access to the Chapter Test. The practice quiz will be open book, untimed, and you may take it as many times as necessary to score 80% or above.

PLEASE NOTE: These practice quizzes DO NOT COUNT TOWARD YOUR FINAL GRADE. Also, they are considerably easier than the chapter tests. They are designed to test your understanding of what you have read and to point you toward those parts of the chapter that you may need to re-read and review in greater depth. Take particular note of those questions that you get wrong the first time you take the practice quiz.

2. Unit Assessments: The purpose of these exercises is to assess your ability to go beyond the factual understanding measured by the Chapter tests. The Unit Assessments will require you to apply the concepts you have learned to new situations, analyze examples of course concepts and synthesize the information from different parts of the course. There will be five of these unit assessments. Each one will be composed of several essay-type questions. You will be given information that will help you prepare for each one, and the assessments will be open-book and given in class (except for the last one which will be a take-home assignment.)

3. Behavior Disorders Presentation: Students will be assigned to small groups. The task of the group will be to prepare a presentation on a behavior disorder that will be assigned to the group. These reports will take the form of a *PowerPoint* presentation that will be presented in class. Complete instructions for preparing and presenting this report will be provided. All students will share equally in the grade given to the report.

4. Application Essays: This assignment will consist of one or two essay questions that will test your understanding of the concepts, theories, and research that you will be learning this semester. Complete instructions will be given with the assignment.

5. Attendance/Participation: The classroom experience is an important part of what I am trying to accomplish in PSYC110. Research (and my experience in over 30 years of teaching this course) shows that students are successful when they are actively engaged in the course and when effort is consistently applied throughout the term. Students most often fail to successfully complete the course when they procrastinate and when they underestimate the amount of time required to master the course material (**approximately 6 to 8 hours a week outside of class time.**) This course is designed to help you avoid these two pitfalls and to encourage you to collaborate with each other toward everyone's success. Credit for course participation will be earned by

attendance and active participation in class meetings. Class sessions are designed to give you an opportunity to ask questions, to discuss the course material with instructor and with each other and to practice your understanding of key concepts in psychology. Some sort of written exercise will be a part of almost every class meeting. Additionally, from time to time, your instructor may assign online questions to discuss in Blackboard CE6. You will receive **up to 60 credit points** for class attendance by completing these in-class writings and turning them in at the end of class and responding to online questions by the announced deadline.

V. GRADING

ASSIGNMENTS	APPX. WEIGHT	MAXIMUM CREDIT
Online Chapter Tests	45%	270 points. (9 @ 30 pts each)
Unit Assessments	33 %	200 points (5 @ 40 pts. Each)
Behavior Disorders Presentation	7%	40 points.
Applications Essay	5%	30 points.
Attendance/Participation	10%	60 points

Total points: 600 points

Your final grade will be determined by the total number of credit points that you have accumulated at the end of the semester. Letter grades will be awarded according to the following schedule:

A = 540 and above

B+ = 522 - 539

B = 480 - 521

C+ = 462 - 479

C = 420 - 461

D+ = 402 - 419

D = 360 - 401

F = 359 and below

VI. Miscellaneous

- A. On Withdrawal. If you decide not to complete the course, it is **your responsibility** to notify the college of your intention to withdraw before the deadline. (The last day for student withdrawal is indicated in the "Schedule of Events.") You may withdraw by filling out the appropriate form in the Office of Admissions and Records or by mailing a written notice of your intention to

withdraw. **DO NOT ASSUME THAT THE INSTRUCTOR WILL INITIATE THE WITHDRAWAL FOR YOU!!!**

I will, however, at my discretion withdraw from the course at midterm those students who have indicated by **excessive absences** that they do not intend to fulfill the obligations set forth in this syllabus.

- B. On Preparing Your Papers. The Application Essay and Unit 5 Assessment **must be word processed**. No handwritten copies will be accepted.
- C. On Writing. I believe that the ability to think clearly and to write clearly are highly related. Thus, in this course I will be asking you to think about psychology by writing about it. I will assume that every student has a basic command of the mechanics of good writing (grammar, spelling and punctuation.) Those students with a **WRITING ASSESSMENT SCORE** of **4** or lower are strongly advised to have completed or be currently enrolled in the appropriate writing course if they wish to be successful in this course.
- D. On Work Handed In Late. The dates that assignments are due are given in the "Schedule of Events." Work that is submitted after the deadline will be considered late.
- Online Tests: Tests are due by the evening of the date given in the course schedule. Do not depend on your computer to operate flawlessly at the deadline. Give yourself plenty of time to complete the exams. If you fail to take an exam before it closes on Blackboard CE6 **YOU MUST CONTACT THE INSTRUCTOR** in person or via email to request an extension. **In no event will an online test be available more than 5 days beyond the scheduled due date.**
 - Unit Assessments: If you miss an in-class Unit Assessment, you must complete it online (Blackboard CE6) within 48 hours. If you miss the online make-up opportunity **YOU MUST CONTACT THE INSTRUCTOR** to request an extension. **In no event will a Unit Assessment be available more than 5 days beyond the scheduled due date.**
 - Written Assignments: All written assignments are due on the date listed in the course schedule.
- E. On Retaining Your Work. All work submitted for credit will be returned. In the event that there is a question about your grade, please save all work returned to you. This especially pertains to in-class writing questions that are used to log class attendance.
- F. On Cheating and Plagiarism. "The expectation at Bucks County Community

College is that the principles of truth and honesty will be rigorously followed in all academic endeavors. This assumes that all work will be done by the person who purports to do the work without unauthorized aids. In addition, when making use of language and some idea not his or her own, whether quoting them directly or paraphrasing them into his or her own words, the student must attribute the source of the material in some standard form, such as naming the source in text or offering a footnote." (BCCC Catalog.) Please consult the college Catalog for a full explanation of the policy on cheating and plagiarism.

<http://www.bucks.edu/catalog/ppolicy.html>

- G. On Extra Credit. From time to time extra-credit opportunities will be announced in class and on Blackboard CE6. Look for them. Total accumulation of extra credit points **will not exceed 25 points.**
- H. On Blackboard CE6: Student access to a Bucks County Community College Blackboard CE6 course space is available only during the official stated semester/session as indicated by the College's academic calendar. It is the student's responsibility to retain copies of his/her own work and/or correspondence posted to Blackboard CE6 for any future reference. All Blackboard CE6 course sites, including content, are routinely removed from the Blackboard CE6 server at the conclusion of each semester/session

The online course management tool, Blackboard CE6 is an important part of the design of this course. It is the primary way that we will communicate with each other when we are not meeting in the classroom. In addition, Blackboard CE6 allows you to test yourself when you are ready and under the conditions that are best for you. However, as you prepare to complete your assignments and tests online keep the following in mind:

- Do not wait until the hour before an assignment is due to sit down at the computer; be prepared for the inevitable power failure, computer crash, virus, etc.
- Make sure that you are working with reliable equipment. The computers at the College are serviced regularly and are generally reliable. If your machine at home is "old" and "tired", consider using the machines on campus.
- Take the time to learn your way around Blackboard CE6. There are "help" screens a click away; use them. **Make sure to configure your Browser to meet Blackboard CE6 specifications. Microsoft Explorer works best; if you encounter problems with other browsers, switch to Explorer.**

- I. On How I Expect You to Conduct Yourself in the Classroom.

It is my goal to create an atmosphere in the classroom where people can feel safe

to ask questions and to express their views. The classroom is a place for dialogue, a place where we can learn from each other. To that end I would ask all of you to **make the choice to come to class and to come prepared to listen, share and learn.** If you make the choice to come to class I would ask that you observe the following guidelines:

1. **Come to class on time.** Announcements are made at the beginning of class and questions are solicited. Coming into class late is a distraction to the class and especially to me, the instructor.
2. **Come to class prepared.** Do the reading and come to class prepared to ask questions and contribute your views.
3. **Stay for the entire class.** Except for extraordinary circumstances, do not make doctor or other appointments that conflict with class time. Leaving class early also creates a distraction.
4. **Turn off all pagers and cell phones.**
5. **Don't carry on parallel conversations in the classroom.** It distracts others and it especially distracts me.
6. **Please do not sleep in my class.** I promise to not be boring (at least not on purpose.) You cannot learn if you are sleep deprived. Get your rest and then come to class.
7. **Do ask questions.** The most interesting classes are those that go in directions that I had not anticipated.
8. **Do listen to and respond** to what others have to say. Make the class a safe place to speak and respond, as you would want others to respond to you.
9. **Most of all relax.** I strive to create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. Humor is a big part of my instructional strategy. I look forward to sharing my perspective on people and their behavior with you, and I look forward to what you have to teach me.

VII Words of Wisdom From Those That Have Come Before You

At the end of last semester, I asked my students to write some words of advice for those who would be taking this course in future semesters. Here, in their own words, is what they have to say to you:

- *It is important to **read** the chapter before you take the online quiz and test. [Frequent advice]*
- *The practice quizzes are nothing like the actual test, so don't think they are the same level of difficulty.*
- *Use the WebCT resources such as "Live Psych" and the extra practice tests. It helps a lot.*
- *Pay attention in class. Dr. Ford will not tell you something if you don't need to know it. Everything is relevant to the in-class Unit Assessments.*
- *Use the Unit Assessment study guides that are posted on WebCT.*
- *For the Unit Assessments prepare notes and ideas for each topic before you come to class.*
- *Check WebCT frequently. It is easy to forget to take a quiz if you do not have to go to class to take it.*
- *Don't wait until the last day to begin reading chapters and doing the online test. You will feel very rushed and your grade will show it.*
- *Have fun. Psychology has a lot to offer and it really changes your views on life.*
- *Hey, if the tests are open book do you think they will be easy?*
- *You have to be able to have a good amount of outside-the-class time to be successful in this course.*
- *If you have questions at any time always email Dr. Ford through WecCT. He is very prompt at getting back to his students.*
- *Attend the classes! Information is explained in an easy to understand way and the group activities are extremely helpful. Attending class made the assessments much easier.*
- *Don't slack off at the beginning. I would come unprepared to take a test or hand in something late. But, when I realized that failing sucked I started to study a little bit more. It felt great coming to class prepared knowing you are ready to take an exam. I don't have the grade I want now because of how I was in the beginning of the course.*

VIII. A Final Word

I have found people and the things that they do to be an endless source of fascination. I am looking forward to sharing my enthusiasm with you this semester. Enjoy!

