

PSYCHOLOGY 101 – INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

Fall 2006 – Section 4

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PAS 3208

Course Website on UW-ACE: <https://uwangel.uwaterloo.ca/uwangel/home.asp>

Lectures: Tuesdays, 6:30 – 9:20 p.m., DC1350

Textbook: Myers (2004). Psychology, 7th Edition in Modules. New York: Worth Publishers

Study Guide: <http://worthpublishers.com/Myers>

Course Requirements and Evaluations:

Participation in Experiments	5%
Participatory assignments (3 @ 3%, 3%, and 4%)	10%
Midterms (2 @ 25% each)	50%
<u>Final</u>	<u>35%</u>
	100%

Participatory assignments: The participatory assignments are designed to help you think about issues in psychology and apply them to everyday life. They are also designed to help you gain some writing experience. The first participatory assignment will be due on September 26, the second one on October 24, and the last one on December 5.

Midterms: There will be two midterms, the first one on October 10 and the second one on November 7. Each will include multiple-choice questions as well as open-ended questions and will be worth 25% of your final grade.

Final: The final exam will be scheduled during the final exam period and will include multiple-choice questions as well as open-ended questions. It will not be cumulative, and will be worth 35% of your grade.

Participation in Psychology Experiments:

Descriptions of psychological experiments/studies you participate in/article reviews. During the term, you will have opportunities to participate in studies that are being conducted by University of Waterloo researchers. See the description below. Your

participation is voluntary. In order to receive credit for participating in an experiment, you must write a 1-2 page summary of the experiment. During the second week of our course, there will be a mass testing questionnaire distributed in class (the mass testing questionnaire is described below in the section, "Participation in Psychology Experiments").

Please note that you do not have to participate in experiments/studies if you don't want to. Alternatively (or in addition), you may write up short reviews of newspaper or magazine articles that are relevant to psychology. Articles that you review must be serious (e.g., a news report of a study that has genuine relevance to psychology) rather than frivolous. Your 1-2 page summary must follow the format that is provided later on in this course outline. You must check with me or with a TA about the appropriateness of any article that you are thinking about summarizing.

You can't turn in a total of 5 summaries in any combination of mass testing questionnaire, experimental and article summaries (e.g., 2 experimental summaries + completing the mass testing questionnaire + 2 article summary; or 4 experimental summaries + mass testing questionnaire). Each summary/mass testing questionnaire will be worth 1% of your grade for a total of 5%. In addition, I will allow you to participate in three additional experiments (or article summaries) for an additional 1% extra credit for each. So theoretically, you could earn a mark of 103%. There will be no opportunities to earn extra credit—I cannot grant any special requests for extra credit.

Participation in Psychology Experiments

There are a number of research studies being conducted by psychologists at the University of Waterloo. As an introductory psychology student, you have an opportunity to participate in these studies as a participant. As mentioned above, the great majority of students find participating in psychology experiments to be educational and interesting because they get a chance to experience what psychological experiments are all about. In fact, introductory psychology students often rate their participation in psychological experiments as being as educational and interesting as the lectures themselves!

Every study that you might participate in has been reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waterloo, whose responsibility it is to ensure that proper ethical standards have been followed. All experimenters are required to give you thorough feedback on their experiments, which you will need to write your descriptions.

Here are some specific details about the psychology experiments that you should read and understand:

1. The Mass Testing Questionnaire

During the second week of the course, you will be asked to complete the online "Mass Testing Questionnaire." The Mass Testing Questionnaire consists of a number of measures for you to complete. The reason is that some researchers need to select certain students for participation in their studies. As one example, if a cognitive researcher is interested in how left-handed people process perceptual information, that researcher really needs to know beforehand which students are left-handed and contact only those students. It would be an enormous waste of time for both the researcher and the students

in our class to call up students randomly from our class to invite them to participate, only to find out that the student that they are talking to is right-handed!

The Mass Testing Questionnaire may include questionnaires about beliefs, attitudes, and feelings that you have, or about certain behaviors that you may or may not have engaged in. The Mass Testing Questionnaire will be confidential. This means that no one, other than the researchers, will have access to your answers, and only then for the purpose of pre-selecting certain individuals to be invited to participate in studies. We have taken a number of steps to ensure this confidentiality, including the use of code numbers for all questionnaires, and locked boxes for the completed questionnaires.

I urge you to complete the Mass Testing Questionnaire quickly. Because a number of studies rely on it to pre-select participants, you will increase your chances of being contacted for participation in an experiment by completing it. In addition, if you complete the Mass Testing Questionnaire and return it, you will receive one credit toward your five-credit experiment/article summary requirement for the course.

Not all studies involve the Mass Testing Questionnaire, but completing it is highly recommended.

2. Procedure for recruitment and participation in experiments

- a. You will be asked to sign up for REG and complete a set of online questionnaires. You will also be asked for contact information so that researchers can contact you and invite you to participate in their studies.
- b. Sometime later, you will receive a phone call from a researcher who will invite you to participate in a study.
- c. That researcher will tell you the day, time, and place of the study (virtually all studies will take place in the PAS building). If you can make it, you will agree to be a participant. The researcher will be sure to tell you his/her name and phone number. Be sure you write this information down. If you want to participate for credit towards Psych 101 make sure that the study is NOT handled through the "cognitive subject pool". The cognitive subject pool is for pay only and so it can't be used for Psych 101 credits.
- d. After you agree to be a participant, you have made an oral contract with the researcher. This means:
 1. If you fail to show up on time, in the right place, for your experiment, or if you show up too late--after your experimental session has begun (many studies are run in groups and everyone has to show up on time otherwise the study cannot be run)--this means that:
 - (a) you will not receive credit for that experiment;
 - (b) you will actually have to participate in an extra experiment to make up for your missed experiment.

Thus, if you originally were required to be in 3 experiments, if you forget to attend your first experiment, you need to complete 4 experiments (or a combination of 4 experiments/article reviews).

- The reason for this rule is that every year, the no-show rate for experiments toward the end of the term reaches monumental proportions, with many researchers experiencing no-show rates of 50% or more. Take your participation seriously, as the researchers in the Psychology Department take seriously their research. Of course, if you really intended to go to the session, but a legitimate emergency came up, and you simply couldn't make it, you should call the experimenter as soon as you find out to try to reschedule, at least one day before. In extreme legitimate emergencies, on the day of the study, you must call, or get someone else to call, the experimenter running the session or as a last resort e-mail the Research Experiences Group (email: regadmin@watarts.uwaterloo.ca).
2. There is a completely even counterpart to Rule 1: if the researcher fails to show for your experimental session (or is extremely late, beyond a reasonable time period--but remember, experimenters may be running behind from prior sessions), you will get full credit for having participated in that session.
- e. After your experiment, you should receive some kind of written feedback sheet that describes the experiment in sufficient detail for you to be able to write up your experimental summary. The feedback sheet will also provide you with contact information in case you have any additional questions about the experiment.
 - f. Instructions for writing the summary are provided later in this course outline. Please upload your summaries on the course website. The deadline for turning in the experimental summaries (and the alternative article summaries) is the last day of classes (Tuesday, December 5, 2006).

Note on avoidance of academic offenses

“All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy # 71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.”

It is important that students understand that plagiarism can occur inadvertently, but that it still constitutes an academic offence, whether intentional or not. To avoid the possibility of committing plagiarism, we strongly recommend that students consult this website: <http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html>

Note on your UW computer account

All students should activate their UW computer accounts. The accounts give students access to applications such as word processing, statistical and graphics packages, and electronic email as well as access to the Internet. We strongly recommend that students use their UW email accounts. These accounts are as easy to access on the web as other free accounts (e.g., Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.), but they are more reliable and secure. And you can always easily forward email coming in on your other free account to your UW account. Please see this website for details: <http://www.nexusmail.uwaterloo.ca>

Note for Psychology majors (or those thinking about becoming psychology majors)

Psychology majors should check the Psychology Undergraduate Web Site regularly for updates:

<http://www.psychology.uwaterloo.ca/ugradprog/>

(e.g., psychology course offerings for F/W/S, volunteer and/or part-time paid research positions, etc.)

A note from your instructor:

I was born and raised in Montreal and its suburbs, where I first went to Dawson College in Fine Arts, and then to Concordia University in Painting and Drawing. It was after my first year at Concordia University that I transferred into their psychology program where I did some research on ocular dominance. I then came to the University of Waterloo where I did my M.A. and Ph.D. in behavioural neuroscience with Dr. Mike Dixon, looking at the representations of objects in memory in healthy people. I am now a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Kinesiology where I work with Dr. Eric Roy. I continue to look into the representations of objects in memory, but I've also started investigating the representations of actions and their production, both in healthy young and elderly people, as well as in stroke and Alzheimer patients. Other areas of interest of mine involve frontal lobe function, multisensory integration.

A note from your TA:

Hi, my name is Elizabeth McFadden and I am a second year Masters student in Clinical Psychology. I moved to Waterloo a year ago from Prince Edward Island where I had lived for my whole life. I completed my BSc in Psychology at the University of Prince Edward Island and will complete a Masters and PhD here at the University of Waterloo. I started out my university career studying music but decided to switch into Psychology after taking an Introduction to Psychology course. I found this course very fascinating as I had always thought a lot about how people think, feel, and behave and a lot of the material that was covered explained things that I had been curious about. I hope that you enjoy this course as much as I did and I wish you good luck in your studies. Please feel free to take advantage of my help if you are having any difficulties with the work.

Lecture Schedule

About lectures: The lectures and the readings are meant to complement each other. Though they will overlap, material from the text may not be covered in the lectures, and material from the lectures may not be covered in the text. For all examinations, you will be responsible for material presented in the text as well as in the lectures. You are therefore strongly encouraged to attend the lectures **and** to keep up with the readings.

Date	Topic	Modules
September 12	History of Psychology Research Methods in Psychology	1-2
September 19	Neuroscience and Behavior Nature vs. Nurture	3, 4, 5 and 6
September 26	Developmental Psychology Participatory assignment 1 due	7, 8, 9, and 10
October 3	Sensation and Perception	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
October 10	Midterm 1	1-10
October 17	Learning	20, 21, and 22
October 24	Memory Participatory assignment 2 due	23, 24, 25, 26, and 27
October 31	States of Consciousness	17, 18, and 19
November 7	Midterm 2	11-16 and 20-27
November 14	Emotions Guest Lecture by Gillian Munro	37 and 38
November 21	Personality	41, 42, 43, and 44
November 28	Psychological Disorders	45, 46, 47, 48, and 49
December 5	Psychological Therapy Guest lecture by Chris Watson Participatory assignment 3 due	50, 51, and 52

Guidelines for Completing the Summaries for Psychology Experiments

At the end of your experimental session, you will receive from the experimenter:

- (1) Written feedback about the experiment: Use this, plus your own thoughts and analysis, to write the experimental summary;
- (2) A piece of paper with the experimenter's signature: attach this to your experimental write-up

Your experimental summary should include the following information:

1. Area of psychology (e.g., social, cognitive, developmental)
2. A brief description of the procedure used—what happened during the study?
3. Was it an experiment or was it a correlational study (or other method)?
4. Identify the independent variable(s) and dependent variable(s)
5. Identify the hypothesis or hypotheses of the study. What theoretical questions were being addressed in the study?
6. Write a paragraph on your thoughts about the study—what are the implications for everyday life, if any (external validity)? What comments do you have about the method, hypotheses, measures used (factors relevant to internal validity)?
7. **All of your experimental summaries (or the alternative article summaries) are due no later than the last lecture—Tuesday, December 5, 2006.**

An example of an experimental summary is presented on the next page

Sample Experimental Summary

Name: Della Street Student ID Number: 47329884 Date: 28 September 2005
Time: 2:30 to 3:30

Title of Experiment: The Effects of Physical Attractiveness of Defendant on Recommended Sentencing

Experimenter: Perry Mason

Faculty Advisor: Hamilton Burger

Area of Psychology: Social psychology

Procedure: There were three other students in the study. We sat down in a lab room facing a TV monitor. The experimenter gave some brief instructions—we would watch a videotape of a criminal trial and then make a judgment about whether the defendant was guilty as if we were real jurors watching a real trial. We watched the videotape, which lasted about half an hour. The defendant was a woman who was accused of burglary, and the evidence was quite clear to me that she was guilty of stealing \$4,000. After watching the tape, we answered a questionnaire about whether she was guilty. I indicated that I thought she was. Then I answered a series of questions about how much time she should be put in prison. I recommended 6 months. We were then debriefed about the experiment.

Type of study: This was an experimental study.

Variables: Subjects were randomly assigned to one of two conditions. I and the other three subjects were assigned to the physically attractive defendant condition. This defendant was very attractive, I thought. Subjects in other experimental sessions were assigned to the physically unattractive defendant condition. In that tape, every aspect of the testimony and everything that was said was identical, except that they had another actress who was physically unattractive (according to the experimenter). They also had male and female subjects in this study. So there were two independent variables in the study: (1) physical attractiveness, and (2) sex of subject. The dependent variable was the length of the sentence.

Hypotheses: The experimenter thinks that people will tend to recommend shorter sentences for the physically attractive defendant than for the unattractive defendant. This is because we have stereotypes about physical attractive people—that they are more likeable and have more positive characteristics. So this may even influence something as important as jury decisions. They also think that this effect will be stronger for male subjects, because men probably would be more likely to be affected by physical attractiveness of a female.

Thoughts: Internal validity is probably pretty good—because of random assignment, any differences in length of sentence between the two conditions can be due only to the differences in physical attractiveness (because they kept the script identical in the two versions). I couldn't think of any confounded variables. External validity is less clear. This wasn't a real trial, we weren't making a real decision, We didn't discuss the trial, like a real jury would. I don't know whether the physical attractiveness of a defendant would have a strong effect in a real trial. But it's an interesting possibility, and it would have implications for the jury system if this were true. I guess physical attractiveness has the potential to influence more aspects of daily life than I thought before.

Editorial Note: This simulated experiment is based on actual social psychological research demonstrating that the physical attractiveness of a defendant does indeed affect judgments of guilt and sentencing.

[As an alternative to participating in experiments, you may summarize an article about psychology. The following is an example of a cover sheet that we would like for each article.]

Summary of Article

Please Print:

Name _____ I.D. Number _____

Author(s) of Article _____

Title of Article _____

Source (Magazine/Newspaper/Journal):

Date of Article: _____

1. List some basic psychological concepts used in the article. Indicate whether each concept is used appropriately based on how the concept is used in the course (either from the textbook or from the lectures). If a concept is used incorrectly, describe the nature of the error and the implications this may have for the conclusions drawn from the article. It is important to critically evaluate the article with reference to the course material, so be sure to cite page numbers from the textbook in your critical evaluation (if you use the textbook in your evaluation).
2. List the important points of the article. Then critically evaluate them. For example, are the headlines misleading? Do the conclusions fail to distinguish facts from opinions? Are the conclusions based on unspecified or otherwise biased samples? If the article describes a research study, are there any control/comparison groups? Is the study experimental or correlational? If the study is correlational, does the article claim that one variable causes another? If so, what are other possible explanations? Have the researchers and/or author(s) made any errors in reasoning that you can identify? Explain and provide examples where possible.
3. Hand in a copy of the article (be careful with material that you have obtained from the library).