

**Tompkins Cortland Community College**  
**Master Course Syllabus**

**Course Discipline and Number: PSYC103**  
**Course Title: Introduction to Psychology**

**Year: 2018-2019**  
**Credit Hours: 3**

**Attendance Policy:** *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for accommodations. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

### **Course Description**

This course provides students with a basic understanding of psychology. Theories and research relating to emotions and stress, abnormal behavior, motivation, learning, personality, methods of therapy, biology and behaviors, developmental psychology, and social psychology are discussed. PSYC 103 fulfills the SUNY General Education Social Sciences requirement. An honors section is offered. Prerequisites: Prior completion or concurrent enrollment in ENGL 100 or ESL 120, 121, and 122 (or prior completion of ESL 103), MATH 090, and RDNG 116 if required by placement testing. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Fall and spring semesters.

### **Course Context/Audience**

PSYC 103 is a required course in many degree programs and the prerequisite course for all upper level psychology courses. It can be used to fulfill a liberal arts or a social science elective requirement. In addition, the course is appropriate for anyone with an interest in the subject matter.

### **Basic Skills/Entry Level Expectations**

- Writing: WC College-level writing skills are required. See course prerequisites for details.
- Math: M1 If required, the student must be concurrently enrolled in MATH 090. Very basic mathematical skills are required.
- Reading: R3 If required, the student must be concurrently enrolled in RDNG 116. The course requires reading of mostly beginning college-level materials and limited higher college-level materials that will also be covered in class.

### **Course Goals**

The student who successfully completes the course should be able to demonstrate:

1. Familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.
2. An understanding of basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation.
3. The ability to respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, use the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.
4. An understanding and the ability to apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.

5. The ability to weigh evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and respect other values that are underpinnings of psychology as a discipline.
  6. The ability to communicate effectively in a variety of formats.
  7. The ability to recognize, understand, and respect the complexity of sociocultural, international, and human diversity subject matter.
  8. Insight into their own and others' behavior and mental processes and the ability to apply effective strategies for self-management and self-improvement.
  9. Realistic ideas about how to implement their psychological knowledge, skills, and values in a variety of settings.
- Note: The course goals are adopted in part from the work of the Task Force on Undergraduate Psychology Major Competencies appointed and approved in 2001 by the American Psychological Association's Board of Education Affairs.

**Course Objectives/Topics**

<b>Objective/Topic</b>	<b># Hours</b>
Students will be able to define psychology, explain why psychology is a science, identify and explain the primary objectives of psychology, and the various subfields within the field of psychology.	2 Hours
Students will be able to characterize the nature of psychology as a discipline, by demonstrating knowledge and understanding of its history, its overarching themes, theories, persistent questions, and enduring conflicts.	2 Hours
Students will use and explain the concepts, language, and major perspectives (behavioral, biological, evolutionary, cognitive, humanistic, psychodynamic, sociocultural) to account for psychological phenomena and human behavior.	4 Hours
Students will be able to describe the basic characteristics of the science of psychology, explain different research methods used by psychologists, and evaluate the appropriateness of conclusions derived from psychological research.	4 Hours
Students will develop skepticism about explanations and conclusions, inquire about causes and effects, refine their curiosities about behavior, critically analyze arguments, as well as approach problems effectively.	1 Hour
Students will examine human diversity. Specifically, they will examine how cultural beliefs, values, and attitudes affect behavior and mental processes, and vice versa.	2 Hours
Students will develop knowledge of the relationship between biology and behavior.	2 Hours
Students will be able to explain the developments (physical, cognitive, social, and emotional, personality) that occur from conception through death, and consider controversies in developmental studies, such as whether development occurs gradually or in stages.	3 Hours
Students will be able to explain the terms "sensation" and "perception".	3 Hours
Students will be able to define learning, understand and be able to articulate the theory of classical conditioning and how it differs from operant conditioning.	3 Hours
Students will be able to define the three kinds of memory, describe the three processes of memory, explain the three stages of memory, as well as examine how memory affects the ability to learn.	3 Hours
Students will understand and analyze motivation and how it relates to emotions and behavior.	2 Hours
Students will be able to define "personality", describe the various theories of personality development, and discuss how personality tests are administered and used.	3 Hours
Students will be able to define psychotherapy, describe the evolution of therapy, and explain the various methods of therapy used for psychological disorders, adjustment problems, and personal growth.	3 Hours
Students will understand and be able to interpret the concept of social influence as it relates to attitudes and behaviors, explain how society teaches us values that affect our behavior, as well as understand how privilege, power, and oppression may affect prejudice, discrimination and inequity.	2 Hours
Students will discuss how gender and sexuality affects attitudes and behaviors.	1 Hour
Note: See Instructional Methods section for lists of the core content topics and the essential theorists/researchers studied in this course.	

**General Education Goals - Critical Thinking & Social/Global Awareness**

<p><b>CRITICAL THINKING OUTCOMES</b></p>	<p><b>HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES</b> (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)</p>
<p>Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ develop meaningful questions to address problems or issues.</li> <li>➤ gather, interpret, and evaluate relevant sources of information.</li> <li>➤ reach informed conclusions and solutions.</li> <li>➤ consider analytically the viewpoints of self and others.</li> </ul>	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Write in various formats, (essays, note taking, correspondence) and for various purposes (informing, explaining, persuading, defending, teaching).</li> <li>b) Orally communicate in various formats (e.g., group discussion, debate, lecture) and for various purposes (e.g. informing, defending, explaining, persuading, teaching), and articulate ideas thoughtfully and purposefully.</li> <li>c) Use interpersonal communication skills to listen accurately and actively to each other, use psychological concepts and theory to understand interactions with others, and identify the impact of their behavior on others.</li> <li>d) Read various sources, (textbook, supplemental handouts, newsprint, magazine, journal articles) with skepticism about explanations and conclusions.</li> </ul> <p>Sections of this course that require a research paper or project may contribute to student attainment of this goal when they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Locate and use relevant databases, research, and theory, to plan and interpret research studies.</li> <li>b) Collect, analyze, interpret, and report data using appropriate strategies to address different types of research questions and hypotheses.</li> <li>c) Recognize that theoretical and sociocultural context as well as personal biases may shape research questions, design, data collection, analysis and interpretation.</li> <li>d) Evaluate the appropriateness of conclusions derived from psychological research.</li> </ul> <p>Sections of this course that require a research paper or project may demonstrate student attainment of this goal when they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conduct research using relevant databases and other Internet sources.</li> <li>b) Demonstrate the ability to locate, access, and use available library/information resources for research purposes.</li> <li>c) Use the computer to discuss (e.g. on-line, special assignments) issues in psychology.</li> </ul> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Complete assignments (journal entries, essays, projects, presentations), watch videos, take tests, and/or participate in activities that require a personal application of academic concepts and principles.</li> <li>b) Identify and apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings appropriate to the challenges of everyday life.</li> </ul> <p>A knowledge of how the scientific method helps us to understand the natural world will be advanced when students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Recognize (tests, papers, etc) the basic characteristics of the science of psychology.</li> <li>b) Recognize (tests, papers, etc.) different research methods used by psychologists to study human behavior.</li> <li>c) Identify and explain the primary objectives of psychology as a science: describe, understand, predict, and control behavior and mental processes.</li> <li>d) Distinguish (in papers, journals, discussions, etc.) how various research designs address different types of questions and hypotheses of human behavior.</li> </ul>

<b>SOCIAL/GLOBAL AWARENESS OUTCOMES</b>	<b>HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES</b> (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students will begin to understand how their lives are shaped by the complex world in which they live.</li>   <li>➤ Students will understand that their actions have social, economic and environmental consequences.</li> </ul>	<p>Students will increase their knowledge of commonly used psychological modes of inquiry and be exposed to their application to issues and events of the contemporary world when they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Read of research studies, historical events, case studies, etc. in their psychology textbooks.</li> <li>b) Read and recognize the contributions psychological perspectives have made to the human condition and interdisciplinary collaboration.</li> </ul> <p>Students will increase their understanding of history and its relationship to contemporary societies when they study the evolution of psychological perspectives over time through readings, class discussions and/or papers.</p>

### **Instructional Methods**

Several individuals teach this course. Teaching methods may therefore include one or more of the following: lecture demonstration, discussion, use of videos, use of Internet, small activities, group activities, projects, presentations, guest speakers, field trips, etc.

### **Core Content Topics**

#### **What is Psychology?**

Definition of psychology

- Research methods

History

- Behaviorism
- Gestalt Psychology
- Psychoanalysis

How Psychologists View Behavior

- The Biological Perspective
- The Cognitive Perspective
- The Humanistic-Existential Perspective
- The Psychodynamic Perspective

Learning Perspectives

- The Sociocultural Perspective

How Psychologists Study Behavior and Mental Processes

- The Scientific Method
- Samples and Populations
- Methods of Observation
- Correlation
- The Experimental Method

#### **Biology and Behavior**

Neuron anatomy & Neural Impulse

The Synapse

Neurotransmitters: The Chemical Keys to Communication

Methods of Studying the Brain

Brain Anatomy

Nature & Nurture Influence

Kinship Studies

#### **Development**

Jean Piaget's Cognitive-Developmental Theory

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Revised Spr 14

Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory  
Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory  
Attachment

### **Sensation and Perception**

Absolute Threshold  
Difference Threshold  
Sensory Adaptation (rods, cones, positive adaptation, desensitization)  
Visual Perception (Perceptual Organization)  
Hearing - Pitch and Loudness (sound waves-frequency + intensity)

- Perception of Loudness and Pitch
- Smell & Taste Senses

The Skin Senses (Pain)

### **Learning (Behavior & Cognitive)**

Classical Conditioning

- Ivan Pavlov
- Stimuli and Responses
- Types of Classical Conditioning

Factors in Classical Conditioning

- Extinction and Spontaneous Recovery
- Generalization and Discrimination
- The Classical Conditioning of Fear

Operant Conditioning

- Methods of Operant Conditioning
- Types of Reinforcements

Factors in Operant Conditioning

- Extinction and Spontaneous Recovery in Operant Conditioning
- Reinforces Versus Rewards and Punishments
- Schedules of Reinforcement

Cognitive Factors in Learning

- Observational Learning

### **Memory**

Types of Memory (i.e. explicit vs. implicit, retrospective vs. prospective)

Three Processes of Memory (Encoding, Storage, Retrieval)

Three Stages of Memory (Sensory, Short-term, Long-term)

Forgetting

- Methods of Improving Memory

### **Thinking & Intelligence**

Thinking

Heuristics in Decision Making

The Framing Effect

Theories of Intelligence

- Factor Theories of Intelligence

The Testing Controversy: Just What Do Intelligence Tests Measure?

Genetic & Environmental Influences on Intelligence

### **Motivation**

Theories of Motivation

- Evolutionary Theory
- Drive-Reductionism and Homeostasis
- Stimulus Motive Theory
- Humanistic Theory

Emotion (physiological, cognitive & behavioral components of)

### **Stress, Health & Adjustment**

Sources of stress

Psychological moderators of stress

Stress and the body

## Personality

### Psychodynamic Perspective

- Sigmund Freud's Theory of Psychosexual Development
- Other Psychodynamic Theorists

### Trait Perspective

- The Five-Factor Model

### Learning-Theory Perspectives

- Behaviorism
- Social-Cognitive Theory

### The Humanistic-Existential Perspective

- Abraham Maslow and the Challenge of Self-Actualization
- Carl Roger's Self-Theory

### Sociocultural Perspective

- Measurement of Personality (Objective & Projective Tests)

## Psychological Disorders

### Classifying Psychological Disorders (DSM)

#### Schizophrenia

#### Mood Disorders

#### Anxiety Disorders

## Therapy

### Psychodynamic Therapies

### Humanistic-Existential Therapies

### Behavior Therapy

### Cognitive Therapies

### Group Therapies

### Biological Therapies

## Social Psychology

### Social Influence - Obedience to Authority & Conformity

### Group Behavior -Bystander Effect

## Essential Theorists/Researchers

Sigmund Freud

B.F. Skinner

John B. Watson

Ivan Pavlov

Albert Bandura

William James

Abraham Maslow

Carl Rogers

Stanley Milgram

Jean Piaget

Soloman Asch

Updated 2/2010

Erik Erikson

Mary Ainsworth

Howard Gardner

Alfred Binet

Leon Festinger

Hans Eysenck

Albert Ellis

Aaron Beck

Konrad Lorenz

Philip Zimbardo

Harry Harlow

## Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
Special Projects (includes activities, presentations, etc.)	0-100%
Exam(s) Cumulative Course Knowledge	0-100%
Research Methodology Assignments	0-100%
Class Participation	0-100%
Written Assignments (includes in-class writing, research papers, journal entries, special projects, on-line discussions and written requirements)	0-100%
Tests (includes in-class and take home quizzes and exams)	0-100%
Attendance	0-100%

## Text(s)

Required for some courses: PSYCH, Spencer A. Rathus, Latest Edition  
Stangor, C. Introduction to Psychology, Flatworld Knowledge, Latest Edition  
Open educational materials such as: Carnegie Mellon Open Learning Initiative, Introduction to Psychology (oli.cmu.edu)

## Bibliography

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Ernst, R., & Petrossian, P. (© 1996). Teaching of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPSS): Aiming for excellence in high school psychology instruction. American Psychologist, 51, 256-258.

Graham, S. (© December, 1998). Developing student outcomes for the psychology major: An assessment-as-learning framework. New Directions, 7, 165-170.

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McGovern, T.V., & Hawks, B.K. (© 1986). The varieties of undergraduate experience. Teaching of Psychology, 13, 174-181.

Perlman, B., & McCann, L.I. (© 1999). The structure of the psychology undergraduate curriculum. Teaching of Psychology, 26, 171-176.

Scheirer, C.J., & Rogers, A.M. (© 1985). The undergraduate psychology curriculum: 1984. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

## Other Learning Resources

### Audiovisual

Some videos are owned and housed in the TC3 Media collection, others are available through BOCES loan library, or rental is possible. Among the TC3 collection is the Discovering Psychology, Annenberg series, 26 half-hour video programs hosted by Phil Zimbardo. A list of videos is available through the Media Desk.

### Electronic

General Psychology Megasites

### Other

There are a number of supplementary resources for the Essentials of Psychology text by Spencer A. Rathus, Harcourt and Brace, e.g., Instructor's Manual with video, Instructor's Guide, computerized and hard copy Test Bank, Psychology Catalog of Instructional Resources, CD-Rom.