

Psychology 1000A: Basic Concepts of Psychology Spring 2009

Department of Psychology
The University of Lethbridge

Location:

Tuesday and Thursday, 12:15 - 13:30, PE250

Information about Instructors:

Coordinator:

Dr. Margaret Forgie

Office: D-850

Phone: 329-2437

email: forgie@uleth.ca (preferred contact)

Office Hours: By appointment at a mutually convenient time.

Lecturers:

Available members of the Department of Psychology and the Department of Neuroscience at the University of Lethbridge.

Required Text:

Vokey, J.R. and Allen, S. (eds.). (2008). *Psychological Sketches, Eighth Edition Revised*. Psyence Ink: The University of Lethbridge.

Course Description:

This course utilizes an innovative, team-taught approach to the introduction of the content, philosophy, and methods of the broad field of scientific psychology. To this end, your lecturers will be comprised of different faculty members from either the Department of Psychology or the Department of Neuroscience. All lectures will focus on current, sometimes controversial and, we hope, always interesting topics. Given the format of the course, each lecture is intended to stand alone in the sense that other lectures preceding and following it will rarely make explicit cross-references to it. The common ground is to be found in the scientific psychologist's approach to posing and answering questions about any behaviour (e.g., both human and non-human animal models will be discussed).

Course Requirements:

- (1) Lectures. Each eligible member of the Department of Psychology and of the Department of Neuroscience will present lectures on topics within the realm of their teaching and research expertise. Although attendance at lectures is not mandatory, each student is responsible for the material that is presented in the lecture (content, as well as any announcements etc.), whether or not you choose to attend.

NB: Powerpoint slides and other lecture materials will not be distributed to the class.

- (2) Readings. The textbook is composed of a series of essays, written by the lecturers, and designed to be read as companions to the presentations. These readings offer additional background information on the research area under discussion. Three of the lecturers do not have yet their essays incorporated into the current edition of the text, and these readings will be made available on Blackboard prior to the lecture. **Each Lecturer will give their presentation with the expectation that you have read the accompanying reading before the class.**
- (3) Evaluation. Your percentage mark in the course will be based on your performance on three (3) out-of-class tests given throughout the semester (each covering approximately 4 - 5 weeks worth of lectures and readings). All tests will be based on material from both the lecture and the textbook. Each of these tests will consist of multiple-choice questions and will count equally towards your final grade. **Exams are non-cumulative** and material to be covered on each test will be clearly outlined prior to the start of the exam. **There is no cumulative final exam** in this course and, therefore, none will appear on the final exam schedule. The third test will be written during the final exam period. All three out-of-class tests will be closed book, and will be written in the University's Testing Facility using the Blackboard testing utility.

NB. All students are to write the exams within the scheduled dates.

NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE AND THERE WILL BE NO PERSONAL EXTENSIONS TO THE EXAM AVAILABILITY PERIODS

Students with Special Needs:

If you have a documented condition that prevents you from fully participating in this course, including evaluation procedures, it is your responsibility to contact me if special arrangements are necessary to accommodate your individual situation. Please note that you must contact Counselling Services to acquire an official letter concerning your situation. No accommodations will be given without official notification from that office.

Grading:

Letter grades will be assigned to final percentages according to the following scale:

A+ (90+)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (67-69)	D+ (56-59)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (63-66)	D (50-55)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (60-62)	F (< 50)

Experimental Research Participation:

In addition to the foregoing, this course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to participate in the active research projects of faculty members. Calls for volunteers to assist in these projects will be made during the semester, in class or via e-mail. If you are asked to volunteer, and you accept, each project usually requires one hour or less of your time, but this will vary. In recognition of the value of your time, and in recognition that you are learning something about the discipline of psychology, beyond what you would in the normal classroom environment, an extra credit of 1 to 2% for each study in which you participate will be added to your total grade to a **MAXIMUM** extra credit of 5%. Note that there is no guarantee that all students will be able to achieve the maximum extra credit. These extra credits are added only after all grade cutoffs have been established such that students who choose not to participate are not disadvantaged.

Web Sites, Internet Testing, and email:

(1) Course Information:

All students have a U of L computer account. Your account name is equivalent to your username and your password is the same as you use for email. You will need this to access Blackboard (<https://courseware.uleth.ca/webct>) in order to obtain course information, handouts, and to write the online exams. If you require assistance with anything related to using computers at the U of L, please contact the Student Help Desk.

(2) Internet Examinations:

Exams for this course will be closed book exams, written out-of-class, using the online Blackboard testing utility. All students will write their exam at the University of Lethbridge's Testing Facility. Please read the sections of this syllabus that describe the exam format. Should you require assistance with your Blackboard account please contact the Curriculum Redevelopment Centre (CRDC) in LI 108.

The University Testing Facility is located in B770. Access is granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Once you enter the facility, you will be required to present valid picture ID (either your student card or a valid driver's license) and to fill out a brief form that registers your exam. Opening and closing days and times will be given on the course schedule.

The testing centre hours are listed at

http://fusion.uleth.ca/crdc/testcenter/testcenter_student_info.htm

All students must submit their exam by the closing time of the testing centre. Please allow yourself adequate time to complete your exam.

(3) Email Accounts:

Our primary method of communicating with you for general notices will be via email and in-class announcements. Please be sure you check your U of L email account on a regular basis, or have that account forwarded to your usual email provider. Please do your best to remember to do regular housekeeping so that you do not miss important notices that relate to this class due to a full mailbox. PLEASE DO NOT ABUSE THE CLASS LISTSERV by sending irrelevant communications.