

Psychology 1000N – Basic Concepts of Psychology

Spring 2016

Wednesdays, 6:00 to 8:50 p.m. in PE 250



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Office hours: By appointment (email to schedule a mutually convenient time)

Course Description

Psychology is the science of behaviour, mind, and body in both human and non-human animals. Behaviour refers to the observable actions of an individual. Mind refers to an individual's sensations, perceptions, memories, thoughts, dreams, motives, and other subjective experiences. Both of these are inextricably linked to one's fundamental physiology. In short, psychological science is a diverse area of study, with research topics that include all aspects of behaviour and experience. *Basic Concepts of Psychology* utilizes an innovative, team-taught approach to the introduction of the content, philosophy, and methods of the broad field of scientific psychology. In addition to learning about psychological concepts and their real-world applications, the course provides students with an opportunity to meet and hear about the research interests of all members of the [Department of Psychology](#) at the University of Lethbridge.

Required Text and Additional Readings

Vokey, J.R., & Allen, S.W. (Eds.). (2015). *Psychological sketches* ("What If?" ed.). Lethbridge, AB: Psyence Publishing Society.

NB: earlier editions of this text will not contain all of the chapters assigned as required readings.

In circumstances where there is no textbook chapter to accompany a lecture, a supplementary reading will be made available to you in Moodle.

Course Format

Lectures and Readings. Each class, lectures will be presented on particular topics/areas of psychology. Students are expected to prepare in advance of class, which includes reading assigned textbook material or other required readings. Although attendance at lectures is not mandatory, each student is responsible for all material presented in class (which includes lecture content, as well as important announcements and information) regardless of whether you choose to attend. Class meetings may include discussion, films, and other activities that will not be made available or reiterated for students who did not attend class.

Additional Course Information. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with Moodle (<https://moodle.uleth.ca/>). Your Moodle username is equivalent to your U of L email username (the part that comes before "@uleth.ca") and your Moodle password is your email password. Should you require assistance with Moodle, please contact the Teaching Centre staff (email: teachingcentre@uleth.ca).

Important information will be made available in Moodle throughout the semester, including the lecture syllabus and weekly required readings, supplementary course materials, and important announcements. Check the course site *regularly* to keep abreast of these resources. Students should not presume that the materials posted to Moodle encompass all information provided in lecture; these materials, in and of themselves, will not permit adequate preparation for exams. Students will be able to track their standing in the course by accessing the Moodle gradebook.

Email. Other than posts to Moodle, my primary method of communicating with you for general notices and points of interest will be via email to the class listserv. Check your U of L email account on a regular basis, or have that account forwarded to your preferred email provider. Remember to do regular housekeeping of your U of L email account so that you do not miss important notices that relate to this course, due to a full mailbox. Occasionally you will also receive emails from the account “Memorandum, Department” regarding Extra Credit Participation.

Email Policy. Because I cannot verify the sender of any email that does not originate from a University of Lethbridge account, I will reply only to messages sent from a “uleth.ca” account. Furthermore, I will not reply to an email that does not include the *course name* and *section* (i.e., Psyc 1000N) and *topic* of your email in the Subject line. Your *full name* (as it appears on your registration) must be included at the end of your message. Adhering to this structure makes sending accurate replies and keeping track of correspondences much easier! Finally, I will not reply to email inquiries regarding basic course information that has been made available in class, has been posted on Moodle, is provided in this course outline, or if your email message is belligerent or disrespectful.

Copyright, Moodle, and Intellectual Property

With the exception of information that is freely available on the Internet, all course materials should be treated as copyright-protected. You are free to make personal use of any materials posted within Moodle, and you are free to take your own notes in class (of course!). You are *not* permitted to distribute materials or information in any form to persons not registered in this course in this semester. Once information is in your hands, you are responsible for what you do with it; the Instructor will not be held accountable for students who choose to violate copyright law. Audio or video recording of lectures or any other in-class presentation or activity is *strictly prohibited*. Doing so is a *serious* offence as it violates intellectual property rights and the privacy of your classmates who have not consented to have their voice/questions recorded.

Course Grade Assessment

Course Evaluation (100%). Your grade in the course will be determined by your performance on three out-of-class exams scheduled throughout the semester. Exams are closed-book and will be based on material from both the lectures and the readings. Each of these tests will consist of multiple-guess questions and will count equally toward your final grade. Additional work will not be assigned for those who wish to improve their course grade and the weighting of exams will not be changed to offset poor performance.

- **Exam 1:** opens Thursday, February 4, 9:00 a.m.; closes Thursday, February 11, 9:00 p.m.
 - Exam 1 will cover course material up to and including February 3.
 - Class on Wednesday, February 10, will be shortened (ending at 7:15 p.m.) to allow for exam-writing, if necessary.
- **Exam 2:** opens Thursday, March 10, 9:00 a.m.; closes Thursday, March 17, 9:00 p.m.
 - Exam 2 will cover course material from February 10 through March 9, inclusive.
 - Class on Wednesday, March 16, will be shortened (ending at 7:15 p.m.) to allow for exam-writing, if necessary.
- **Exam 3:** opens Monday, April 18, 9:00 a.m.; closes Sunday, April 24, 5:00 p.m.
 - Exam 3 will cover course material from March 16 through April 13, inclusive.
 - This exam takes place during the University’s Final Exam period.

Examination Procedures

Exams will be written at the University of Lethbridge's Testing Centre, using the online Moodle testing utility. Should you require assistance with Moodle or your account, please contact the Teaching Centre staff (email: teachingcentre@uleth.ca).

Students should familiarize themselves with Testing Centre procedures and hours of operation before arriving to write an exam (see: <http://www.uleth.ca/teachingcentre/testing-centre>).

Access is granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Students must submit each exam by the scheduled closing date and time, so be sure to allow yourself adequate opportunity to complete your exam. It is strongly recommended that students write the exam as early as possible during the scheduled exam period as seating in the Testing Centre is limited and demand is high.

Missed Exam Policy

With the exception of *extreme* extenuating circumstances (e.g., prolonged illness, accident, or bereavement), all students must write their exams within the designated period. Should you find yourself in an extreme situation, please contact Dr. Hancock immediately so that I may assist you in understanding your options. Medical reasons must be supported by a physician's statement that you were either unable to attend university for the *entirety* of designated exam period, or that your performance would be seriously affected by your condition during the exam period. Acceptable medical documentation must include the physician's name and contact information. Similar documentation is required for any non-medical reason (e.g., bereavement). Without documentation, a grade of zero (0%) will be recorded for any student who does not write the exam during the designated period.

Grading Scheme

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

A+ ≥ 90	B+ 77 to < 80	C+ 67 to < 70	D+ 55 to < 60
A 85 to < 90	B 73 to < 77	C 63 to < 67	D 50 to < 55
A- 80 to < 85	B- 70 to < 73	C- 60 to < 63	F < 50

Extra Credit for Research Participation

Students have an opportunity to add up to 5% bonus points ("study credits") to their overall grade in this course by participating in active research of Psychology Department faculty members. This participation allows you to gain personal experience in psychology research projects, provides an opportunity to witness what goes on in the psychology labs, and introduces you to senior undergraduate and graduate students conducting their own research projects.

Available studies will be listed and described on the Sona System at: <http://psychleth.sona-systems.com>, beginning on or about January 14, 2016. Your username will be the same one you use to access Moodle. A password (which will *not* be your Moodle password) will be sent to your U of L email account by the departmental Administrative Assistant early in the semester, once the online system is ready. Calls for volunteers to assist in these projects will be made throughout the semester. Each project usually requires one hour or less of your time, but this will depend on the individual research project. In recognition of your time and the fact that you are learning about the discipline of psychology beyond what you acquire in the classroom setting, an extra credit of 1% to 2% per study in which you participate will be added to your course grade.

Note that there is no guarantee that all students who wish to participate will be able to achieve the maximum extra credit. As these are bonus points, students who choose not to participate are not disadvantaged. Because research studies start at various points throughout the semester,

additional projects that were not originally listed may show up, so be sure to check the system periodically. The last date to participate in research studies is April 15, 2016. If you experience problems with the Sona System, or have questions about participating in research projects, please contact Leanne Wehlage-Ellis at wehlage@uleth.ca.

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 your Instructor regarding your individual situation. No accommodations will be given without official notification from the Accommodated Learning Centre (<http://www.uleth.ca/ross/accommodated-learning-centre/>).

Course Rules and Regulations

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Academic Regulations and Policies contained within the University of Lethbridge Academic Calendar (<https://www.uleth.ca/ross/sites/ross/files/imported/academic-calendar/2015-16/part04.pdf>).

As per the University Calendar, Section 5.h.1.: "*When a student disrupts instructional activities, the instructor may exclude the student immediately from instructional space and/or from future scheduled instructional meetings of that course pending further actions by the Dean.*"

When students talk &/or giggle amongst themselves during lecture, it disrupts instructional activities and, consequently, your Instructor must respond according to the University Calendar regulation. To minimize other forms of disruption, turn off your cell phone or any other noise-emitting device prior to the beginning of class. Avoid engaging in off-task Internet use (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, Texting) during lectures as it distracts you and others around you.

Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but not their own facts. Given the nature of the course material, a diversity of viewpoints will inevitably exist in the classroom. Voicing well-reasoned disagreement with others' opinions is perfectly fine; being combative, intolerant, or disrespectful towards others is not (see the University Calendar Section 5.b.1). *Open-mindedness is a prerequisite for learning.*

Tips for success in PSYC 1000

Keep your chin up. Research tells us that texting while driving increases one's risk of car accident to a degree roughly equivalent to that of driving drunk. Instructors' experience tells us that texting during class increases students' risk of failing to a degree roughly equivalent to that of coming to class drunk. Increase your likelihood of success - don't do either, or send a designated note-taker on your behalf.

Understand that your instructor is your ally, not your adversary. As your Instructor, I want nothing more than for you to feel passionate about, engaged in, and enthralled by psychology as much as I am. I want you to learn, understand, and apply the material, to succeed and earn high grades in the course. I can help you achieve this goal, but I can't do it for you. Achieving success requires regular class attendance, showing up on time (i.e., *before* the lecture begins), staying until class has officially ended, paying full attention during lecture, participating in class activities, completing all assigned work, and checking Moodle *frequently* for valuable resources.

If in doubt, find out. If you are unclear about any of the material presented in class or posted as assigned readings in Moodle, or if you have a question that has not been answered in any of the valuable course resources that have been provided to help you, then ASK! Your instructors are more than happy to address any pertinent questions you may have.

Enjoy a great semester as we delve into *Basic Concepts of Psychology*!