General Psychology
T/TH, 12:15-2:05, Meyer 143

Instructor: Lauren Szczurek (laurensz@stanford.edu)
Office: 392 Jordan Hall
Office hours: By appointment
Class google site: https://sites.google.com/site/generalpsychology2013/

Purpose of the course: This course is designed to provide an introduction to the field of psychology, with a focus on how knowledge gained from psychological research can increase our understanding of the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors we observe and experience in everyday life.

Desired course outcomes:

1) You will gain an understanding of the scientific study of psychology. You will know what good research practices are and what factors are important to consider for experimental designs. This goal is important for two reasons:

   a. Everyday, we hear about psychological research in the news and in magazines. You will become a wise consumer of research findings, able to evaluate a psychological study and decide for yourself what the take-away finding is. As part of this course, you will practice these skills.

   b. You will be able to design your own studies or experiments. If you are interested in pursuing psychology as a possible career path, you will have an opportunity to begin thinking about how to answer the questions that most interest you.

2) You will learn about the different areas of psychology, the questions they seek to answer, and the strengths and weaknesses of the research methods they commonly use. You will be able to consider a psychological question from each of these perspectives.

3) You will have an opportunity to think about how the psychological findings we learn about may impact your own life. Gain insight as to how you can make better decisions, improve your relationships, boost your mood, persuade others, and even live longer.
Technology Policy: Student use of computers, smart phones, tablets, and other devices in class is not allowed unless specifically noted.

Processes of the course: On the first day of class, you will be placed into small groups. We will change groups once, in the middle of the course. You will exchange contact information with your group and work together to get to know each other. Throughout the quarter, you will work in your groups on assignments in class. Your group members should also be the first people you contact if you missed class and are looking for notes. Any time you email one group member about this class, cc the other group members so everyone knows what information is being exchanged, whether or not anyone has replied to a question or request, etc.

Each of the groups formed later in the quarter will also be responsible for meeting with Lauren outside of class time once during the quarter. At this meeting, we can discuss whatever you like (examples: your experience in the class so far, any questions you may have about college, graduate school, or getting more involved in research, or how current issues in your life or in the news relate to the concepts we’re discussing in class). As a group, you will be responsible for identifying and emailing Lauren two potential dates and times for this meeting by 5pm on Tuesday, 7/30. I will select one of the dates you’ve provided and bring snacks for our meeting.

There is no assigned textbook for this course, though the textbook *Psychology, 8th Edition* (2011) by Gleitman, Gross, & Reisberg is recommended reading. If you would like additional background or a broader perspective, I recommend obtaining a copy of this text. I will note recommended reading separately from the required reading so that you can get more background on topics that interest you.

Some selected readings from *Psychology, 8th Edition* (2011) will be required- any time materials refer to G.G.R. text, they will be from this book. Other readings will be short sections of chapters that I have selected, or essays and papers. All required readings will be made available on our class google site. The readings have been selected to be as brief and informative as possible.

When you are assigned readings or videos to watch outside of class, it is because I think our class time can be better utilized through discussion or activities. The value of these discussions and activities depends on you coming to class prepared- familiar with the concepts outlined in the assigned readings or videos. Class time will not be used to reiterate or summarize readings or videos- discussions and activities will focus on giving you experience discussing and applying the concepts reviewed in the reading or video, or going over new material.

Apart from the group meeting, watching videos, and in-class work, the rest of your assessment in this class will be completed individually. This includes the Research in Everyday Life Project, the Take-home exam, and the Final Exam. Each of these assessments is described in detail below.
Assessment and Evaluation:

-Research in Everyday Life Project (25%): First draft due 7/9, Peer Review due 7/16, Final draft due 7/23

After we learn about research methods, you will find one example of psychological research being reported in your everyday life (not in a psychology journal)- online, in a magazine or newspaper, or in an advertisement. You will find the original study (we will review in class how to find journal articles), and then turn in the example (or a link to it in the case of a TV advertisement), the original study, and a brief (approximately 2 pages) analysis in which you address whether or not the everyday source described the study accurately.

You will give and get peer feedback (in addition to Lauren’s feedback) as part of the assignment. See handout for more details.

-Take Home Exam (25%): Handed out 7/23, Due 8/1

The take-home exam will be closed notes, and will include short answer and essay format.

-Final Exam (30%): To be completed on the last day of class: Thursday, 8/15

The final exam will have multiple choice, short answer, and essay format, and will be cumulative. Students are expected to work independently on the final exam.

-Class participation and group work (15%): 

You are expected to attend class regularly, complete class assignments (readings, watching videos, completing surveys) and to contribute to class discussions. When we do group activities in class, you are expected to actively contribute to your group’s discussions. You are also expected to be a cooperative group member and communicate with your group and with Lauren about your needs.

-Group meeting with Lauren (5%):

Each group is responsible for letting me know of two possible dates and times to have a group meeting with me outside of our class time. These meetings are important, as they give us an opportunity to get to know each other and provide protected time for you to learn more about the aspects of the course that most interest you. If you cannot attend your group’s meeting due to some unforeseen circumstance, you may attend another group’s meeting, or meet with Lauren on your own.
Schedule and Assignments

Week 1

Tuesday 6/25: Introduction

Due: Make sure you have access to the class google site!

In Class:

-Review syllabus. Introduce yourself and your background. Meet your group, exchange contact information.
-Learn about different areas of psychology and their basic research questions
-Group activity: How might different areas approach the same topic?

Thursday 6/27: Research Methods

Read:

-G.G.R. p. 32-33, 36-40
-Research in Everyday Life Project guide, come to class prepared with any questions
-Recommended reading: G.G.R., Chapter 1

In Class:

-Name that Method! (activity)
-Discussion: strengths and weakness of different study designs
-In class study: Do men or women have faster reaction times?
-Identifying causal language (activity)
-Statistics: What do they tell us?
-How to find original source articles online for Research in Everyday Life Project, how to read a research article
Week 2

Tuesday 7/2: The Brain

Read:

-G.G.R. p. 106-111

-Recommended reading: G.G.R., Chapter 3

Watch: Dr. Krishna Shenoy (15 mins), Thought controlled arms (1 min), Reconstruction of images from brain activity (30 seconds)

In Class:

-Discuss videos and readings

-Group activity: hypothesis testing in the brain

-Brain anatomy and when things go wrong

-Group activity: Brain injury vignettes

Thursday 7/4: Fourth of July (No class)

Week 3

Tuesday 7/9: Learning

Read:

-Recommended reading: G.G.R., Chapter 7

Watch: The Office: Classical Conditioning (1 min), The Big Bang Theory: Operant Conditioning (5 mins)

Due: TWO COPIES of Research in everyday life project

In Class:

-Taste test & Discussion!
- Classical v. Operant Conditioning
- Activity: Operant conditioning strategies
- Habituation and Observational learning
- Exchange papers for peer review

**Thursday 7/11: Memory**

**Watch:** Section of Paul Bloom lecture (5 mins), Video on eyewitnesses (9 mins)

**Read:**

- NYT article on Internet and memory

**Recommended reading:** G.G.R., Chapter 8

**In Class:**

- Activity: Memories and Remembering
- Improving working memory and encoding to long term
- Eyewitness testimony discussion
- The Internet and memory discussion

**Week 4**

**Tuesday 7/16: Development**

**Watch:** Attachment (5 mins), Theory of Mind (6 mins)

**Read:**

**Recommended reading:** G.G.R., Chapter 14

**Due:** Peer review of Research in Everyday Life Project

**In Class:**
- Attachment
- Temperament and Parenting style
- Piaget’s stages + activity challenge
- Delay of gratification
- Zone of proximal development and scaffolding activity

**Thursday 7/18: Emotion & Motivation**

*Watch:* Reappraisal (4 mins)

*Read:*

- Importance of belonging

*Recommended reading:* G.G.R., Chapter 12

*Due:* Complete Social Norm Violation Challenge and submit by email to Lauren by 5pm on Monday, 7/22!

*In class:*

- Functions of emotion
- Emotion regulation
- Belonging Motivation
- Mindset and Achievement
- Social Norm Violation Challenge

**Week 5**

**Tuesday 7/23: Social Influence**

*Watch:* Obedience gone wrong (6 mins), TED talk from Phil Zimbardo on psychology of evil (23 mins)
Read:

- *Recommended reading*: G.G.R., Chapter 13

**Due:** Final Submission of Research in Everyday Life Project

**In Class:**

- Mere presence
- Norms (kinds of norms activity: Utah porn case)
- Conformity, Compliance, & Obedience
- Fundamental Attribution Error: attributions activity
- Hand out take-home exam

**Thursday 7/25: Morality & Positive Psychology**

Read:

- Recent case of the Bystander Effect

**Watch:** TED talk from Jon Haidt on five moral foundations (18 mins), TED talk from Dan Gilbert on the psychological immune system (21 mins), TED talk from Ron Gutman on the hidden power of smiling (7 mins 30s)

**Due:** Complete Personality Assessment (link on Course Google Site) by 5pm on Sunday

**In Class:**

- New groups!
- Bystander Effect
- Cheating, Lying, and Stealing: What helps reduce it? (activity)
- Development of moral reasoning (activity)
-Moral instinct and moral dumbfounding
-Essentializing
-Affective forecasting
-Habits of happiness (activity)

**Week 6**

**Tuesday 7/30: Culture**

**Read:** Intro to *Clash! 8 Cultural Conflicts That Make Us Who We Are*

**Due:** By 5pm, email Lauren with potential group meeting dates

**In Class:**
-What is culture?
-American cultural idea: The American Dream (activity)
-“Neutrality” and ways of doing difference
-Etic vs. Emic approaches to studying cultural differences
-European American vs. East Asian models of self
-Ideal affect

**Thursday 8/1: Personality**

**Reflect:** See assignment on googlesite

**Read:**

-**Recommended reading:** G.G.R., Chapter 15

**Due:** Take-home exam

**In Class:**
-Discuss personality assessment responses

-What is factor analysis? (Activity)

-Q Test

-Person-Situation Interactions

-Twin studies and personality change

**Week 7**

**Tuesday 8/6: Psychopathology**

**Watch:** Automatic thoughts and depression (2 mins 20s)

**Read:**

- *Recommended reading:* G.G.R., Chapter 16

**In Class:**

-What is abnormal? (activity)

-Classifying abnormality: DSM

-Costs and benefits of labeling

-Depression & Diathesis-Stress

-Schizophrenia

**Thursday 8/8: Clinical**

**Read:** G.G.R. p. 684-692

- *Recommended reading:* G.G.R., Chapter 17

**In class:**

- Measuring treatments
-Applying treatments: case studies (activity)

-Other factors influencing treatment outcomes

-CBT in action

Week 8

Tuesday 8/13: Stress & Health

Watch: Robert Sapolsky on why our stress response is not ideal (5 mins)

In class:

-Models of health (activity)

-Outcomes associated with increased stress

-Social ties and stress

-Kinds of coping and the COPE inventory (activity)

-Biopsychosocial interventions

Thursday 8/15: Final Exam
IMPORTANT CLASS DATES

7/9  DUE: TWO copies of Research in Everyday Life Project

7/16  DUE: Peer review of Research in Everyday Life Project

7/22  Submit your picture from the Social Norm Violation Challenge to Lauren by 5pm today!

7/23  DUE: Final draft of Research in Everyday Life Project; Take-home exam handed out

7/28  Complete the online personality assessment by 5pm today!

7/30  Email Lauren two potential dates for your group meetings by 5pm! (one email per group)

8/1  Take-home exam due

8/1-8/15  Group Meetings with Lauren

8/15  Final exam, in class
Academic Accommodations

Students who have a disability that may necessitate an academic accommodation or the use of auxiliary aids and services in a class must initiate the request with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend appropriate accommodations, and prepare a verification letter dated in the current academic term in which the request is being made. Please contact the DRC as soon as possible; timely notice is needed to arrange for appropriate accommodations (phone 723-1066; TDD 725-1067).

Stanford Honor Code

The Honor Code is the University's statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work:

A. The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:
   1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;
   2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.

B. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.

C. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.
Who Can I Turn To?

Throughout this class, we will be discussing issues of mental and physical health. It is important that you are aware of a number of counseling and health resources at your disposal, should you choose to seek them out.

1. **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**  
   *Long and short-term counseling, consultation, emergency and crisis counseling*

   **Phone:** 723-3785  
   - Crisis Counseling (24 Hour) 723-3785  
   - Sexual Assault 725-9955

   **Location:** 866 Campus Drive (across from Wilbur Field) – 2nd floor Vaden Health Center

   **Website:** [http://caps.stanford.edu](http://caps.stanford.edu)

2. **The Bridge Peer Counseling Center** – Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
   - Free & confidential peer counseling  
   - Information & referral resources  
   - Weekly Wellness & Depression support group

   **Phone:** 723-3392

   **Location:** Rogers House, 549 Salvatierra Walk, (next to the bike shop, across from the Law School)

   **Website:** [http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridge](http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridge)

3. **Vaden Student Health Services**  
   - General health care  
   - Health promotion services

   **Phone:** 724-CARE (same as 724-2273)

   **Location:** 866 Campus Drive (across from Wilbur Field)

   **Website:** [http://cowell.stanford.edu/](http://cowell.stanford.edu/)

4. **Sexual Health Peer Resource Center**  
   - Counseling and sexual health services and information resources

   **Phone:** 723-3739 (SAFE-SEX).

   **Location:** Second floor of the Vaden Health Center

   **Website:** [http://www.stanford.edu/group/SHPRC/](http://www.stanford.edu/group/SHPRC/)
5. **Stanford University Grief Website**
   - Memorial opportunities
   - Resources for further support

   *Website:* [http://grief.stanford.edu/resources.html](http://grief.stanford.edu/resources.html)

6. **Healthy eating habits**
   - Important health and nutrition information, resources on signs of disordered eating

   *Website:* [http://www.stanford.edu/group/nutrition/resources.html](http://www.stanford.edu/group/nutrition/resources.html)