

Introduction to General Psychology

Course Number: PSYC 1101
CRN: 94090

Semester: Fall 2026
Format: Asynchronous/online

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Stern (she/her/hers)
Academic Professional

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Office: J.S. Coon Building, 220E

Office Hours:

Tuesdays – 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Thursdays – 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

*You can attend office hours in person or via Teams. You can access the Teams meeting on our course home page in Canvas.

Teaching Assistants: TBD

Please check your GT email and Canvas page at least once a day for important communications.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide a broad survey of the major topics in psychology including, but not limited to, research methodology, biological and social factors influencing behavior, development, learning, memory, personality, and abnormal.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Demonstrate familiarity with major psychological concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends
2. Describe the basic processes underlying a variety of psychological phenomena, including development, emotion, motivation, learning, memory, and consciousness
3. Discuss the ways that environmental and biological processes contribute to psychological phenomena
4. Identify and differentiate among the basic methods of scientific psychology
5. Explain the fundamental changes in behavior and mental processes that occur during the lifespan
6. Discuss how groups and individuals influence behavior and attitudes
7. Identify factors that contribute to an individual's personality and attitudes
8. Recognize psychological disorders and describe treatment options

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9. Apply psychological concepts to general descriptions of human behavior as well as student's own experiences and attitudes
 10. Effectively communicate in writing
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TEXTBOOK

Spielman, R. M., Jenkins, W. J., & Lovett, M. D. (2020). Psychology 2e. OpenStax.
<https://openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e>

*You will access your textbook through Perusall and do not need to purchase anything (see information below)

PERUSALL

This course uses Perusall, an interactive social learning platform designed to support active reading, engagement, and discussion. Students will annotate assigned readings and other course materials directly within Perusall. More information on Perusall can be found under Assignments.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Exams (4 exams, 100 points each)

There will be four cumulative exams. All exams will include a combination of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answer questions. Exams will be proctored using Honorlock. No materials will be permitted. Each exam can be taken any time during the exam window outlined in the course calendar.

Since exams are open for an extended period, no late exams will be permitted. I recommend taking each exam well in advance of the due date. This will allow you time to troubleshoot any problems that emerge (i.e. wifi problems).

2. Pre-Discussion Activities and Discussion Boards (8 discussions, 25 points each)

Each unit will have two activities that you will complete on your own. Once you have completed the activity, you will post a corresponding deliverable to the unit's discussion board. You will then make three follow-up posts, reacting to your classmates.

Your original post is worth 10 points. Each follow-up post is worth 5 points. Follow-up posts must be a minimum of 100 words.

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Your original post for each discussion is **due on the Thursday of the corresponding week**. Canvas will not remind you to do this. Last original posts will result in a 5-point deduction. All follow-up posts are due on Sunday. The due date set in Canvas corresponds to the follow-up posts.

Since discussions require collaboration between classmates, no extensions will be given for discussion posts.

3. Homework (4 assignments, 75 points)

Students will work with a partner throughout the semester to complete four homework assignments. Each assignment will have its own required deliverable. See Canvas for details.

Homework will be accepted up to 48-hours late, with a 10% per day deduction.

4. Perusall (100 total points)

You will complete assigned readings, videos, and other course materials through Perusall. While engaging with the material, you will annotate the content by highlighting passages, asking questions, responding to classmates, and contributing thoughtful comments and insights. All Perusall contributions are due on Sunday of each week, unless otherwise noted.

There is no fixed number of annotations required because Perusall evaluates the overall quality of your engagement. As a guideline, students who receive full credit typically make **6–8 meaningful annotations** distributed across the reading, including a mix of original comments and replies to classmates.

Late Perusall contributions will not be accepted.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Research Exposure Program, School of Psychology, Georgia Institute of Technology:

We in the School of Psychology believe that exposure to research is essential to gaining a better understanding of the scientific study of human behavior. Being involved in research is a good way to experience first-hand and learn about the scientific enterprise. To fulfill the research exposure requirement for PSYC 1101, you must experience research as a volunteer participant in studies conducted in the School of Psychology at GT. You can learn about, and sign-up for, the experiments on the experiment web site: www.gatech-psych.sona-systems.com. Students who are under 18 years old

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may not be eligible to participate in research studies and need to complete alternative assignments (check Canvas for details).

You need to participate in 4 hours of research credit. You have until the last day of class (prior to the reading and exam periods) to complete your research credit. Unsuccessful completion of all research credits can result in up to a letter grade reduction toward the final grade in the course. You will not technically earn points for participating in research hours. By doing 4 hours of research, you get to keep the points you have earned throughout the semester. The breakdown for partial completion is as follows:

- Only 3 hrs completed: -2.5% from total course grade
- Only 2 hrs completed: -5% from total course grade
- Only 1 hr completed: -7.5% from total course grade
- 0 hrs completed: -10% from total course grade

I do take half credits into account rather than rounding up or down. For example, 3.5/4 credits would result in a 1.25% reduction from total course grade and completing 2.5/4 credits would result in a 3.75% reduction from total course grade.

When you sign up for studies, it is important to show up at the appointed time or cancel your appointments at least 24 hours in advance. Missed appointments are problematic because of the time and opportunities lost, such as depriving other students from taking that spot and the lost time of the researchers. Therefore, if there are two unexcused missed appointments during the semester, you will no longer be able to sign up for studies. In this case, you will not be able to complete any further hours of research credit.

Participants who begin a study but do not complete a study session will be given 50% of the SONA credits allotted for that study session. If you are participating in a multi-part study, you may not be able to complete future parts of that study if you fail complete an earlier session. If the study cannot be completed due to technological failure, or other factors beyond the participant's control, please contact the experimenter for the study listed in SONA

ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Option 1: Journal Article Critiques

You will compose journal article critiques (1 research credit per article) of 4 different empirical papers on a topic of your choice (2 pages per article critique). **You have until 11:59pm on 08/5/2026 to complete your article critiques.** Use Georgia Tech's online library to find the articles and use the following link as a guide to what is an acceptable journal for a published article for this assignment:

<https://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php?area=3200>. You can consult with a TA to identify suitable articles. Submit articles by email.

Option 2: Video Content Creation.

Choose 1 topic discussed in your psychology course and make a "Crash Course" video on YouTube. Be as creative as possible, keeping in mind your video could be used as an Open Educational Resource (OER) for others. Be sure the video is accessible to those in the general population by providing enough

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background information and breaking down scientific jargon. Each video (up to 2 videos max, 1 research credit hour per video) must be 3-5 minutes in length. Your video can be privately listed – just be sure your Instructor can see it.

Option 3: Lecture Series. Choose either or both choices below and follow the numbered prompts to complete a max 1 page summary/reflection (up to 2 talks max, 1 research credit per summary/reflection).

1. Attend an invited talk on campus given by someone who has a Ph.D. in the areas of Psychology or Neuroscience, or does research in these areas.
2. Visit the [TED Talks Website](#)Links to an external site. and search for a talk on the subject matter of psychology. Watch one of the talks that interests you, as long as it is a *minimum of 8 minutes in length*. At the top of your response, include the title of the TED Talk, the name of the presenter, when it was filmed, along with a link to the video.

Numbered prompts to complete your summary paper:

1. Give a summary of the talk, emphasizing the speaker's main points
2. What did you find most interesting about the talk, and what will you most likely remember from the talk?
3. What type of data or evidence did the presenter show to back up their claims?
4. Read the biographical information and do some basic background research on the presenter. What area of psychology do they work in?
5. What other questions would you have for this presenter if you could have a conversation with them? What else would you like to know about the topic?

Summary papers must be turned in as a .doc or .docx. Videos must be turned in as a YouTube link or .mp4.

If you turn in a YouTube link, please make sure your YouTube video is set to "unlisted." If it is set to "private," we will not be able to view it, and it will be considered incomplete/not turned in.

You can make multiple submissions if you are turning in more than one summary/video.

It is your responsibility to make sure your assignments are in the correct format. Assignments in other formats (or that cannot be opened) will not be graded.

COURSE POLICIES

Extra Credit: Students may earn up to 20 points of extra credit in the course. Opportunities will be announced throughout the semester.

Make Up Work: In the event of extreme circumstances impacting your performance in the course (e.g. ongoing illness, loss of a loved one), please notify me within 24 hours of due dates. We will work together to develop a plan, when appropriate.

If a scheduled exam falls on a religious holiday or if you are traveling/participating in a school sponsored activity that interferes with a due date, please let me know **at least one week prior to the due date**. With the exception of exams where the entirety of the exam period falls within

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the period you will be absent, you are expected to make up work ahead of travel or holidays. In cases where the exam window does fall entirely within the period you will be absent, you may be permitted to take the exam when you return.

Use of Artificial Intelligence: In this class we treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT, the same way we treat collaboration with other people: you are welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with AI-based assistants.

However, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include anything that was not written directly by you in an assignment without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes).

Including anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying AI, we recommend the following heuristics:

Heuristic 1: Never hit “Copy” within your conversation with an AI assistant. You can copy your own work into your own conversation, but do not copy anything from the conversation back into your assignment. Instead, use your interaction with the AI assistant as a learning experience, then let your assignment reflect your improved understanding.

Heuristic 2: Do not have your assignment and the AI agent open at the same time. Similar to the above, use your conversation with the AI as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your revised knowledge. This heuristic includes avoiding using AI directly integrated into your composition environment: just as you should not let a classmate write content directly into your submission, so also you should avoid using tools that directly add content to your submission.

Deviating from these heuristics does not automatically qualify as academic misconduct; however, following these heuristics essentially guarantees your collaboration will not cross the line into misconduct.

Academic Integrity: Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Syllabus Change Policy: This syllabus should be viewed as a guide. While every attempt is made to provide an accurate overview of the course, circumstances and events may make it

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necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes to the syllabus are at the discretion of the instructor and will be made with clear notice.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Assignment	Points
Exams	400 (100 each)
Discussions	200 (25 each)
Homework	300 (75 each)
Perusall	100
Total Points	1000

Letter Grade	Point Range
A	895 or higher
B	894-795
C	794-695
D	694-595
F	594 or lower

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COURSE CALENDAR

*Dates and assignments are subject to change at the instructor's discretion

*Unless otherwise noted, all work is due at 11:59 p.m. on the assigned day. *Weekly Perusal contributions are due each Sunday at 11:59 p.m.			
Week	Chapter	Assignments	Due Dates
Module 1: Foundations			
1 (8/24 - 8/30)	1) Introduction	Perusal Introduction	8/30
		Week 1 Discussion	
2 (8/31-9/6)	2) Psychological Research	Homework 1	9/6
3 (9/8 - 9/13)	3) Biopsychology	Week 3 Discussion	9/13
4 (9/14-9/20)	4) Consciousness	Exam 1	(opens 9/19) 9/20
Module 2: Cognitive Processes			

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5 (9/21-9/27)	5) Sensation and Perception	Week 5 Discussion	9/27
6 (9/28-10/4)	6) Learning	Homework 2	10/4
Fall break – October 5 and 6			
7 (10/7-10/11)	8) Memory	Week 7 Discussion	10/11
8 (10/12-10/18)	7) Thinking and Intelligence	Exam 2	(opens 10/16) 10/18
Module 3: Individual Differences and Mental Health			
9 (10/19-10/25)	10) Emotion and Motivation	Week 9 Discussion	10/25
10 (10/26-11/1)	11) Personality	Homework 3	11/1

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11 (11/2-11/8)	15) Psychological Disorders	Week 11 Discussion	11/8
12 (11/9-11/15)	16) Therapies and Treatment	Exam 3	(opens 11/13) 11/15
Module 4: Psychology in Social and Real-World Contexts			
13 (11/16-11/22)	12) Social Psychology	Week 13 Discussion	11/22
14 (11/23-11/24)	9) Lifespan Development	Week 14 Discussion	11/29
Thanksgiving Break - November 25 - 27			
15 (11/30-12/8)	9) Lifespan Development	Homework 4	12/8
Final Exams		Exam 4	12/10 – 12/17

OTHER KEY DATES

1. August 28 — Last day to add classes (phase II registration closes at 11:59 p.m. EST)
2. August 31 — Payment deadline (4:00 p.m. EST)
3. October 31— Withdrawal deadline (11:59 p.m. EST)
4. November 2 —last day to change to pass/fail or grade substitute (4:00 p.m. EST)