

COURSE SYLLABUS

Within the undergraduate psychology curriculum, there is a “gateway” sequence of courses meant to introduce the psychology major as well as the discipline and its history. This course is the former—an introduction to the major—and, as such, seeks to inform you about the major in at least two senses. The first is the content of the major—the curriculum and requirements that the Department of Psychology has in place. The second sense is a longer view in terms of what lies beyond graduation with a major in psychology. Although the focus of the course is on psychology at BYU, the course also will consider the major more broadly in the context of American higher education.

In addition to informing you about the major and the department, and your future prospects, the course calls attention to means for improving your academic success. It thus is meant to be both informing and skill-building.

There are three groups of students who compose the class. One is those who have recently declared psychology as their major or are on the cusp of doing so. Second are those who are undecided about a major and are considering psychology among other possibilities. Finally, there are those who are farther along in the psychology major and are circling back to take the required course they should have taken earlier. Recognizing this diversity of clientele, I have endeavored to design a course to appeal to the three groups as a challenging, informative experience.

You will engage the course as a member of a small Team with fellow students. As a Team, you will complete various projects and other assignments. On your own, you will write exams and produce a personal plan.

In order to do well in the course, I encourage you to work supportively with the others on your Team, to be faithful in completing the reading, and to write the exams and your personal plan with clarity, accuracy, and thoughtful argument.

Be sure to read this syllabus closely. Failure to do so may jeopardize your success in the course.

The Textbooks

The following are required for the course:

Kuther, T. L. (2006). *The Psychology Major's Handbook*, 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning.

Sylvia, P. J., Delaney, P. F., & Marcovitch, S. (2009). *What psychology majors could (and should) be doing: An informal guide to research experience and*

professional skills. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

The following is strongly recommended for purchase:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 2nd ed. (2010).
Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

The Requirements

On your own, you will complete certain requirements and, as a Team, others. You will write a mid-semester and a final examination individually, and will complete three Individual Assessments based on assigned reading. The mid-semester exam will require you to produce a personal résumé. In addition to the exams, you will develop a personal plan. Together with the others on your Team, you will complete two projects and prepare questions for the textbook-based Q/A sessions that will take place during class meetings. The Team will also complete three Team Assessments based on assigned reading.

In preparation for the Q/A sessions, each Team should prepare 3 questions specific to the assigned reading. The questions should appear in a single PowerPoint slide. The questions should not merely ask students to recall or recognize what the assigned reading contained. Instead, the questions should go beyond the content of the textbook to raise larger issues, explore what was difficult or unclear in the textbook, or connect the textbook content to other aspects of undergraduate life.

If your Team is selected to present the questions for a Q/A session, you should do so by means of a USB drive or from an e-mail account. The presenting Teams will be selected randomly. There is no need for the Team to provide answers to the questions it poses. Rather, we will discuss the questions first in Teams, then as a whole class. Each Team should submit its questions to Bryan Jensen prior to the beginning of the class meeting when the Q/A session is scheduled (see Course Calendar). Failure to provide questions will result in the loss of 10 points by each Team member. The sets of questions that Bryan will maintain at the Blackboard Web site for the course may be useful in preparing for the assessments and exams.

Each Team should submit its project presentations to JungJae Park prior to the beginning of the class meeting when the presentation is scheduled (see Course Calendar).

Each student is invited to become a volunteer participant in research projects conducted under the auspices of the Department of Psychology during the semester. To complete the requirement in this course, you need to complete 1 credit of research. Research opportunities are described at the department's Web site (<http://psychology.byu.edu>). You should register at the Sona link there in order to schedule participation and receive credit for it. Should you choose not to participate or find yourself unable to schedule participation, you may submit a Video Review instead.

The Video Review criteria are posted at the Blackboard Web site for the course in Assignments. The Video Review will be due at the class meeting on 3 December.

The Final Grade

The final grade will be based on the following requirement-based point scale:

<u>Individual</u>		<u>Team</u>	
Mid-semester Exam	40 points.	Project 1	70 points
Final Exam	80	Project 2	70
Assessments	60	Assessments	60
Personal Plan	50	Q/As	<u>50</u>
Research Participation or Video Review	<u>20</u>		
Total	250	Total	250

The assignment of final grades will be determined as a percentage of the available points: 90-100, A- and A; 80-89.9, B-, B, and B+, etc. My expectation is that most final grades will be in the A-B range.

The Course Calendar

Date	Class Meeting Topic	Assignment
3 September	Orientation; Team formation	
10 September	Conversation about the syllabus; presentation of a developmental view of undergraduate education; introduction to Project 1; Team meeting	Begin reading both textbooks; Project 1 assignment posted at Blackboard Web site
17 September	Q/A 1 on the assigned reading; Team meeting	Kuther, chapters 1 and 2
24 September	Q/A 2 on the assigned reading; Team meeting	Kuther, chapters 3 and 4
1 October	Assessment 1	Kuther, chapters 1-4
8 October	Presentation on Academic Resources and Academic Internships; Q/A 3 on the assigned reading	Silvia et al., chapters 1-5
15 October	Project 1 presentations	Project 1 due; Mid-semester Exam posted at Blackboard Web site
22 October	Q/A 4 on the assigned reading; introduction to Project 2; presentation on webcam operation	Kuther, chapters 5-6; Silvia et al., chapters 6-7; Mid-semester exam due at beginning of class meeting
29 October	Assessment 2	Kuther, chapters 5-6; Silvia et al., chapters 1-7
5 November	Q/A 5 on the assigned reading; Team meeting	Kuther, chapters 7-8; Silvia et al., chapter 8
12 November	Q/A on the assigned reading; Team meeting	Kuther, chapters 9-10; Silvia et al., chapters 9-10
19 November	Assessment 3	Kuther, chapters 7-10; Silvia et al., chapters 8-10

3 December	Lecture: "Human Irrationality and the Evolution of God"	Personal Plan assignment posted at Blackboard Web site; Video Review due
10 December	Project 2 Presentations	Project 2 due
17 December	Final Examination, 7-10 a.m.	Personal Plan due as part of the exam

The Instructional Staff

I am a professor of psychology with research interests in the different effects of gains and losses on choice behavior (behavioral economics) and on the effects of nontraditional assessment formats (applied behavior analysis). My office is 1074 SWKT. I will have regular consultation hours there on Mondays and Thursdays from 12 to 12:50 p.m. except when I am out of town. My phone number is 801-422-8939; my e-mail address is harold_miller@byu.edu.

Two Graduate Teaching Assistants—Bryan Jensen and JungJae Park—will join me on the instructional staff, as will eight Undergraduate Teaching Assistants. Their consultations hours, office locations, and contact information will be posted in Staff Information at the Blackboard Web site for the course. Please don't be a stranger to consultation.

University Policies

Honor Code Standards

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact **be your own work** and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university.

Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

Preventing Sexual Discrimination or Harassment

Sexual discrimination or harassment (including student-to-student harassment) is prohibited both by the law and by Brigham Young University policy. If you feel you are being subjected to sexual discrimination or harassment, please bring your concerns to the professor. Alternatively, you may lodge a complaint with the Equal Employment Office (D-240C ASB) or with the Honor Code Office (4440).

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this course, you should get in touch with the University Accessibility Center (2170 WSC) 801-422-2767. This office can evaluate your disability and assist the professor in arranging for reasonable accommodations.

H1N1 Flu Policy

As are all large communities, BYU is preparing for the potential of the H1N1 influenza virus to spread rapidly throughout the campus during the coming winter. Details of BYU's preparation, and advice on what you can do to prepare, can be found at flu.byu.edu. Please read it! In order to contain any possible infection, the administration has advised course instructors to ask any student who is feeling sick with flu-like symptoms (fever with either sore throat or cough) to remain home, away from class and away from all large gatherings. Sick students should remain at home until at least 24 hours after the fever has gone away. Students should also call their doctor or the student health center for advice as soon as possible.

The administration has asked course instructors to provide adequate make-up opportunities for all work missed during a flu-like illness. Accordingly, I will allow all time as needed to miss class during an illness and to make up work at a reasonable time afterward, provided the student provides a doctor's note to document the illness. ALL students who feel sick with fever and sore throat or cough should call the doctor and visit if so advised. If advised to visit the doctor, please obtain a note whether or not you are diagnosed with the flu! When you are ill please call or email your TA or the instructor as soon as possible, and *continue to communicate* with us until you are well. You should also be in contact as much as possible with one or two class members, in order to keep up on what you miss. We will try to facilitate class communication from the beginning of the semester.

For your protection, your instructors will follow the same rules! If your instructor is sick he or she will try to find a replacement to carry the class forward, else will notify students as soon as possible about a class cancellation.

A Final Word

Please consider Bryan Jensen, JungJae Park, the Undergraduate Teaching Assistants, and me your friends in the enterprise of learning and doing well in the course. If you find your understanding of the assigned material lagging or become discouraged with your experience in the course, please call on us for assistance. We are anxious to promote your familiarity with the psychology major and your success therein as well as in your college career more generally.

Hal Miller