

**SYLLABUS**  
**University of Evansville**  
**Fall 2009**

**Course:** Psychology 121, Introduction to Psychology.

**Time and Place:** 8:00-9:15 (HH 105), 11-12:15 (HH 4) TTh.

**Instructor:** Dr. S. Mark Kopta; HH 210; 488-2533, mk35.

**Texts:** Davis, J. & Palladino, J. (2007). *Psychology (Fifth Edition)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Slife, B. (2006). *Taking sides: Clashing views on controversial psychological issues. (Fourteenth Edition)*. Guilford, CT: Dushkin.

**Course Description:** Surveys the major areas of psychology including research methods, human development, consciousness, learning, memory, personality, and abnormal behavior. There is a focus upon historical development, research findings, clinical applications, and contemporary issues. The course delineates the value of the different areas of psychology to other professions (e.g., medicine, law, business, education). Also, psychological theory and findings are at times placed into a more personal perspective that may relate to the student's own life.

**Course Objectives:** After completing the course, you should:

- 1) Have a general knowledge concerning the various areas of psychology (e.g., human development, learning, psychotherapy) in terms of historical development, research findings, clinical applications, and contemporary issues;
- 2) Understand how knowledge in specific areas of psychology can be of value in the practice of other professions (e.g., law, medicine, business):
- 3) Understand the various career opportunities associated with the different psychological specialties (e.g., clinical psychology, industrial psychology, etc.);
- 4) Have improved personal development in several areas. For example:
  - a) Increased understanding of your own behavior and emotions as well as those of others;
  - b) Increased ability to think critically and logically with intellectual curiosity about human behavior;
  - c) More effective study and exam-taking skills which are an essential means to success in college.
  - d) Communicate more effectively in both speaking and writing.

**Course Evaluation:**

1) Course evaluation consists of three components:

a. There are **7 tests** (approximately 45-60 items) consisting of multiple choice, true-false, and matching questions. The tests inquire about material from the text chapters and class lectures (**See Lecture Notes Packet.**). A final test average is calculated by dividing the total number of correct items for the 7 tests by the total number of items on the 7 tests.

b. The class features group discussions based on articles presented in *Taking Sides*. These issues are relevant for understanding and perhaps influencing many of the challenges facing our society today. **The issues are covered in the following order:**

- Was Stanley Milgram's study of obedience unethical? (Group 1)
- Does a mother's employment harm her children? (Group 2)
- Does the divorce of parents harm their children? (Group 3)
- Does ADHD exist? (Group 1)
- Do video games lead to violence? (Group 2)
- Are humans naturally violent? (Group 3)

**Two reaction papers** are required based on the *Taking Sides* readings that are covered in our discussion groups. They will be due the day of the group discussion and graded as "satisfactory" (S) or "unsatisfactory" (U). See the last page of this syllabus for writing requirements and grading criteria. Two S's adds +2.0% to your final grade average; 1 S and 1 U adds +.5%; 2 U's is -5.0% calculated into your final grade average. **Any absence from a group discussion must be accounted for by documentation; otherwise, I will not accept your reaction paper for that discussion and it will receive a grade of U that cannot be corrected.**

**Good participation in the group discussions can help your grade for the course.**

There may be an **extra credit opportunity** to earn up to +2.5% added to your final grade by **participating as a subject in psychological research.**

2) Course grading scale to compute your final grade is as follows:

92 - 100% A	77 - 79% C+
90 - 91% A-	70 - 76% C
87 - 89% B+	68 - 69% C-
82 - 86% B	60 - 67% D
80 - 81% B-	0 - 59% F

- 3) Your course grade will be calculated using the following procedure:

As an example (number of items are not representative of number of items on the tests):

Test 1 = 40 correct/50 items    Test 6 = 36/50  
 Test 2 = 48/50                      Test 7 = 38/50  
 Test 3 = 44/50  
 Test 4 = 46/50  
 Test 5 = 44/50

TEST GRADE AVERAGE = 296/350                      =        84.6%  
 REACTION PAPER GRADE (2 S's)                      =        + 2.0%  
 RESEARCH PARTICIPATION (if available)=        + 2.5%

84.6% + 2.0% + 2.5% = 89.1% = B+

- 4) **DO NOT MISS EXAMS!** If you do, contact the instructor preferably before or, if unavoidable, as soon as possible after the exam. Make-up exams are given at the discretion of the instructor and may not be of the same format as the original exam (i.e., may include essay questions). ***If a student does not notify the professor before he misses an exam, he may not be allowed to make it up.*** If a student fails (or is not permitted) to make up an exam, the grade will be a zero (0) for that exam and computed as such (i.e., 0% correct) in the calculation of the final grade.
- 5) All exams/tests are subjected to statistical analysis to identify "unfair" items. Unfair items are those where 10% or fewer students get them correct. In such cases, all students will receive credit for items determined as unfair.
- 6) **HONOR CODE, IMPORTANT:** For all course examinations, projects, and papers, you are expected to adhere to the University's honor code. **"I understand that any work which I submit for course credit will imply that I have adhered to the Academic Honor Code: I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid nor will I tolerate an environment which condones the use of unauthorized aid."** Failure to adhere to the code will likely result in receiving an "F" for the course.
- 7) **Withdrawal Policies.** A course may be dropped without a designated grade during the first two weeks of a term of the regular academic year. From the third to the eleventh weeks, a grade of W is assigned. Discontinuance of attendance does not automatically constitute a withdrawal. Students failing to file a proper drop/add form by the appropriate deadline must complete classes for which they are registered or receive a

grade of F. Withdrawal from a course after the deadline requires petition to and approval of the Admissions and Standards Committee and/or Vice President of Academic Affairs. **--Last day to drop with a W grade for Fall 2009 is Friday, November 13.**

- 8) **Incomplete Grade.** An Incomplete grade is given only when the student and professor agree to the conditions under which the Incomplete is allowed; this discussion should occur before the final exam for the course. Additionally, a date will be set as to when the required work must be submitted to the professor. **If this procedure is not followed, then the student may receive an F for course. If an Incomplete grade remains on the record for 1 year, it will automatically be changed to an F.**

**Class Meetings: DO NOT MISS CLASS! Attendance is required and taken at each class meeting. You can miss 2 class periods for whatever reason without penalty; more than two absences results in a reduction of -4.00% from your final grade average for each additional period missed. Excused absences will be considered only in verified, documented circumstances. Each absence period must have separate documentation. This policy excludes tests and discussion group meetings where no absences are expected; any missed discussion group is -4.00% from your final grade average.**

**Class Participation: ASK QUESTIONS!** Questions and comments from students are expected. If you don't know, are confused, feel lost in the material -- let me know please. I intend to help you get through the course in good shape, but I need your help in giving me feedback about where you're having problems.

**Office Hours: HELP IS AVAILABLE!** Drop by my office or phone me. Formal office hours to counsel students about class work are as follows: M 9:00-1:00; Tu,Th 9:15-10:45; 12:15-1:45; Tu 4-5; F 9 - 10:00. Other times can be scheduled by appointment. Or you may take a chance and drop by to see if I'm free at any particular moment.

**Accommodations For Students With Disabilities.** It is the policy of the University of Evansville to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification to faculty from the Office of Counseling and Health Education is required for any academic accommodations. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow two weeks notice. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be received on a timely basis. If you have questions about services for students with disabilities or procedures for requesting services, you may contact the Office of Counseling and Health Education at 488-2663.

**Class Calendar:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic and (Chapter)</b>
08/27-09/03	Introduction; Psychology, Research, and You(1).
09/08	<i>TS Issue; paper due (grp 1).</i>
09/10	<b>Test 1 (1).</b>
09/15-09/17	Development Across the Lifespan (9).
09/22	<i>TS Issue; paper due (grp 2).</i>
09/24	<b>Test 2 (9).</b>
09/29-10/01	States of Consciousness (4)
10/06	<i>TS Issue; paper due (grp 3).</i>
10/08	<b>Test 3 (4)</b>
10/13-10/20	Memory (7)
10/22	<i>TS Issue; paper due (grp 1).</i>
10/27	<b>Test 4 (7).</b>
10/29-11/03	Learning (5).
11/05	<i>TS Issue; paper due (grp 2).</i>
11/10	<b>Test 5 (5).</b>
11/12-11/24	Personality (11).
11/27	<b>Test 6 (11).</b>
12/01-12/03	Psychological Disorders (12).
12/8	<i>TS Issue; paper due (grp 3).</i>
12/14(8) - 12/16(11)	<b>Finals Week--Test 7 (12).</b>

**The pattern of course activities for each chapter is simple: first two classes, lecture; third class, group discussion about Taking Sides issue and reaction paper submitted; fourth class, test.**

## TAKING SIDES REACTION PAPER GUIDELINES

1. Each student is required to do two reaction papers for the course.
2. The paper will be graded as "S" Satisfactory or "U" Unsatisfactory.
3. To achieve an "S", spelling, grammar, and organization must be good. In addition, the content of the paper should follow these guidelines.
  - a. The paper must be at least 3 complete, double-spaced pages and stapled at the top. A cover sheet should be attached that includes reaction paper title, your name, name of course, and time of course. Pages of the paper should be numbered.
  - b. The first page should review the Yes side of the issue as presented by the author. The second page should review the No side as presented by the other author. The third page (and fourth if you choose) is your response to the topic--"Yes" or "No"--including how your response was influenced by the two authors' arguments.
4. If you receive two S's, it will add +2% to your final grade average; one S and one U adds +.5%; no S's subtracts -5% from your average. *Additionally, you may correct and resubmit one U paper in order to raise the grade to an S. When you submit the corrected paper, the original must be attached to it and your corrections underlined/highlighted on your revised paper. Corrections are due the next class after you received the original graded paper. Failure to not follow these guidelines will result in a U on the corrected paper.*
5. You are required to attend two of the group discussions associated with the reaction papers. An unexcused absence from a group discussion subtracts -4.00% from your final grade average; in addition, your reaction paper for that group will not be accepted and therefore graded as a U.
6. Grading Criteria. THE FOLLOWING ERRORS WILL RESULT IN A U GRADE:
  - a. One incomplete sentence. Example: Which Tom decided not to buy.
  - b. One run-on sentence (two sentences punctuated as one). Example: Sheila tried to win the race however she fell during the last lap.
  - c. Two misspelled words.
  - d. A significant error in understanding the reading assignment.

- e. Inadequate coverage of the topic.
- f. Less than the required length of the paper.
- g. No cover page.