

**Sam Houston State University**  
**College of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Department of Psychology and Philosophy**

**Course Syllabus**

**Psychology 131:** **Introduction to Psychology**, 3 semester hours, Fall 2007  
Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
Room 216, Lee Drain Building

**Instructor:** Dr. Thomas A. Wood  
Academic Building IV, Room 332  
Phone: 936-294-4662  
Email: [twood@shsu.edu](mailto:twood@shsu.edu)

**Office Hours:** 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday  
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Monday and Wednesday  
Other times by appointment

**Course Description:**

Psychology 131 (PSY 131) is designed to provide an overview of the field of psychology as a scientific and professional discipline. The course includes major theories, historical developments, sub-disciplines and current controversies in the field of psychology. The scientific process and the relationship of mental processes and human behavior are also included.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Method of Instruction:**

Methods will include lectures, discussion, group activities, demonstrations, and videos. Students are responsible for the material in the required textbook even if not specifically covered in class.

**Course Objectives:**

- The student will develop an understanding of the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes.

- The student will become familiar with the major theorists in psychology and their contributions to the field.
- The student will recognize the sub-disciplines and the concepts related to each area of study.
- The student will build an understanding of the diverse areas of study within the field of psychology.
- The student will develop a basic understanding of psychological research methods and APA style.

**Required Textbook:**

Nevid, J. S. (2007). Psychology: concepts and applications (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

**Attendance Policy:**

Attending class is expected and will be part of the final grade. Each student will be responsible for signing the attendance sheet for each class. Students will be allowed 3 unexcused absences. Excused absences will be at the instructor's discretion. Each unexcused absence after the 3 allowed will result in an attendance point reduction by 10 points. Students are expected to be on time for class and remain attentive until dismissed by the professor.

**Exams:**

There will be 4 exams covering various topics of the course and a comprehensive final exam. All of the exams will be in a multiple choice format. Permission may be given to make up an exam only if the professor determines that the documented and justifiable reason for missing the exam is valid. Make up exams must be taken within one week of the regularly scheduled exam.

**Grading Plan:**

The final grades for this course will be calculated as follows:

4 exams at 100 points each = 400 points

Final exam at 200 points = 200 points

Journal reports 4 @ 50 points each = 200 points

Attendance/Participation 100 points = 100 points

Total possible points = 900 points

**Grade Breakdown:**

A = 810 – 900 points

B = 720 – 809 points

C = 630 – 719 points

D = 540 – 629 points

F = less than 540 points

**Extra Credit:**

Opportunities for extra credit will be announced throughout the semester through participation in departmental research/training activities. Credit will vary depending on the extent of participation required. Credit will be awarded on the basis of 10 points per clock hours of activity.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials:

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

**Religious Holidays:**

Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for the absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

**Visitors in the Classroom:**

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered

student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

This policy is not intended to discourage the occasional visiting of classes by responsible persons. Obviously, however, the visiting of a particular class should be occasional and not regular, and it should in no way constitute interference with registered members of the class or the educational process.

### **Instructor Evaluations:**

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

### **Assignments:**

In addition to class attendance and exams, students will be required to review 4 psychology research articles from professional psychology journals no more than 5 years old. Students will submit a one page typewritten double spaced report that reviews and critiques each article. Use of inappropriate journals or reports less than one page will be rejected. Entries of the title, author, etc. of the article must be in APA style. A photocopy of the first page of the article must be stapled to the report. Reports will be graded on a 0 – 50 point grading scale. Late reports will not be accepted.

**Required Supplies:** Textbook, paper, pens, and stapler

### **Study Tips:**

Suggestions regarding how to study will be provided by the instructor. Students having major difficulty should avail themselves to the SAM Center on the second floor of the Academic Building IV for study assistance.

### **Classroom Rules of Conduct:**

Students in PSY 131 are expected to behave like adults. Do not talk while the instructor is talking. Use of cell phones in the classroom is prohibited. Students should review the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline at <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>.

## Tentative Schedule for Psychology 131

Date (2007)	Topic	Reading
8/21	Course Introduction, Syllabus, etc.	None
8/23	Introduction to Psychology and Methods of Research	Chapter 1
8/28	Introduction to Psychology and Methods of Research (cont.)	Chapter 1
8/30	Biological Foundations of Behavior	Chapter 2
9/4	Biological Foundations of Behavior (cont.)	Chapter 2
9/6	Sensation and Perception	Chapter 3
9/11	Sensation and Perception (cont.) <b>Article Report # 1 due</b>	Chapter 3
9/13	Consciousness	Chapter 4
9/18	<b>Exam 1</b> over Chapters 1, 2, 3	None
9/20	Consciousness (cont.)	Chapter 4
9/25	Learning	Chapter 5
9/27	Learning (cont.)	Chapter 5
10/2	Memory	Chapter 6
10/4	Thinking, Language and Intelligence <b>Article Report # 2 due</b>	Chapter 7
10/9	Thinking, Language and Intelligence (cont.)	Chapter 7
10/11	<b>Exam 2</b> over Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7	None

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### **Tentative Schedule for Psychology 131 (continued)**

<b>Date (2007)</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
10/16	Motivation and Emotion	Chapter 8
10/18	Child Development	Chapter 9
10/23	Child Development (cont.)	Chapter 9
10/23	Adolescence and Adulthood	Chapter 10
10/30	Adolescence and Adulthood (cont.) <b>Article Report # 3 due</b>	Chapter 10
11/1	Gender and Sexuality	Chapter 11
11/6	Gender and Sexuality (cont.)	Chapter 11
11/8	<b>Exam 3</b> over Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11	None
11/13	Personality/Psychological Disorders	Chapters 12, 13
11/15	Personality/Psychological Disorders (cont.)	Chapters 12, 13
11/20	Methods of Therapy	Chapter 14
11/22	Enjoy Thanksgiving Holiday – no class	
11/27	Psychology and Health <b>Article Report # 4 due</b>	Chapter 15
11/29	Social Psychology	Chapter 16
12/4	<b>Exam 4</b> over Chapters 12, 13, 14, 15	None
12/6	Review for Final Exam	Book
	<b>Final Exam (Comprehensive) – to be announced</b>	