

PSYC S100: Introduction to Psychology

Fall 2025



1 Course information

Class schedule Section 01: 1:00–1:50 pm
Section 02: 2:00–2:50 pm
Room J208

Instructor Alan Jern
Office: A202D
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Open meeting time Thursdays 3:00–3:50 pm (on Teams)

Required book Paul Bloom, *Psych: The Story of the Human Mind* (digital acceptable)

2 Overview

Psychology is the study of mind and behavior. This course will provide you with a broad overview of the science of psychology. While it's not necessary to take this course before taking other psychology courses, if this is the first and only psychology course you take, it should give you a solid foundational understanding of most of the key ideas of the major subfields of psychology including:

- Cognitive psychology: How we perceive and think about the world, and remember our experiences.

- Developmental psychology: How our mental and social lives change across our lifespans.
- Social psychology: How we perceive other people and are influenced by them.
- Personality psychology: How we are all different from one another.
- Abnormal psychology: How our thoughts and behavior sometimes become dysfunctional or disordered and how clinicians help to treat these conditions.

As you will learn in this course, we often have far less insight into our behavior than we think. We will address questions like the ones above by treating people like scientific subjects. We will consider psychological theories, experiments, and case studies from each of these subfields of psychology. By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Explain some of the basic concepts and broad themes of psychology, with examples.
- Read a psychology journal article and summarize its findings.
- Interpret the results of a psychological or behavioral study.
- Conduct a simple behavioral research study.
- Evaluate psychological or behavioral research by identifying some of the strengths and potential flaws in its design.
- Recognize the unique difficulties of studying psychology compared to other sciences.
- Apply psychological principles to everyday life.

3 Assessment

Component	Points
Quizzes (8)	120
Assignments (2)	150
Reading notes	50
Participation	150
Leading discussion	50

3.1 Quizzes

There will be an in-class quiz at the beginning of class on Fridays (except for weeks 0, 1, and 5). These quizzes will be multiple choice and completed on Moodle, so remember to bring a device with you. They will ask questions about the readings and class content from the preceding weeks. You may not access notes, the readings, or the web when taking the quizzes.

No make-up or late quizzes will be allowed unless you have a doctor's note, are away on a Rose-affiliated trip, or have accommodations from Student Accessibility Services. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped to account for any unexpected events that arise.

3.2 Assignments

There are two assignments. Each one will require you to think more deeply about a topic or apply it in some way and then write a short paper.

3.3 Reading notes

You and a couple other students will be assigned to one chapter of the book. Your group will create a set of online notes for the chapter that will be available for the rest of the class.

3.4 Participation

This course will be heavily dependent on discussion. Therefore you are expected to come to class having already completed the required reading and prepared to discuss it thoughtfully.

Your in-class participation will be self-assigned using a rubric I will provide you. At three points in the quarter, you will use the rubric to determine what participation score you have earned for that third of the quarter. I will review these scores and may make adjustments if I feel they are off the mark. Your class participation score will be the sum of these scores.

To help you prepare for discussion, I will post questions on Moodle that I plan to ask in class. Your Moodle responses will not be graded, but you are strongly encouraged to respond before class for two reasons:

- I will review your responses so I can adapt the discussion and address anything you found confusing.
- If you consistently provide thoughtful responses before class, you may get a boost to your final grade (see the “Final grade” section).

3.5 Leading discussion

On one day, you and a couple other students will be appointed the discussion leaders. You will lead discussion for about 30 minutes of class that day. I will randomly assign everyone to a day during the first week of class. Your group will post discussion questions for the assigned reading on Moodle at least 12 hours before we are scheduled to discuss that reading in class. On the day of class, you will use these questions as the basis for a discussion of the readings.

I will post some general guidelines on Moodle for running an effective discussion that you should aim to follow. I will also post a grading rubric for leading the discussion on Moodle.

3.6 Final grade

Grades will be assigned as follows.

Points	Grade
$\geq 90\%$	A
87%–89.9%	B+
80%–86.9%	B
77%–79.9%	C+
70%–76.9%	C
67%–69.9%	D+
60%–66.9%	D
$< 60\%$	F

3.6.1 Grade boost

I won't round up grades, so don't contact me if you are close to the grade boundary unless you believe I made an error. However, if your grade is within 1 percentage point of the next level (for example, an 86%), I will use your responses to the Moodle discussion questions to judge whether to boost your grade to the next level. I will take the quality of your responses and whether you consistently submitted them before class into account to decide whether to boost your final grade.

4 Course policies

4.1 Late assignments

Late assignments (including the self-assigned participation scores) will receive a point penalty that doubles for each additional day they are late. Specifically:

- 1 day late: 1% deduction
- 2 days late: 2% deduction
- 3 days late: 4% deduction
- 4 days late: 8% deduction
- 5 days late: 16% deduction
- 6 days late: 32% deduction
- 7 days late: 64% deduction
- 8+ days late: No credit

An assignment counts as 1 day late as soon as the deadline for that assignment has passed. If you submit an assignment late, you do not need to notify me. Just submit the assignment on Moodle. It will be automatically timestamped and I will deduct the appropriate number of points when I grade it.

There will be no exceptions made to this late policy and no assignments will be accepted later than 7 days after their deadlines. You should plan to submit your assignments before the deadline. The purpose of this policy is that if something unexpected comes up, you can submit one or two days late with minimal penalty.

4.2 Anonymous grading

Do not include your name on anything (including file name) you submit on Moodle, unless I say otherwise. The reason for this is because I use a feature on Moodle called blind grading that lets me grade your assignments without seeing your names. Your names are revealed after I've finished grading the assignment.

4.3 Asking for help

I highly encourage you to contact me if you ever need help in this course. That's what I'm here for! But I also want to encourage you to be self-sufficient. So if you ever ask me a question that can be easily answered on this syllabus or the Moodle page (a due date, a page limit, a detail about the late policy), **I will deduct 1 point from your grade total.**

The corollary of this policy is that if you ever find anything on this syllabus or the Moodle page that looks like a genuine mistake (the wrong date, inconsistent information) and you ask me about it, **I will give you 1 point of extra credit.** (Only the first person to tell me gets the extra credit.)

You don't need to be afraid to contact me. The point of this policy is to incentivize you to try to find answers yourselves first. If you look for an answer and honestly can't find it, I want to know that too. Just tell me you tried to find it on your own first and where you looked. You won't be penalized for this.

4.4 Academic integrity

Academic misconduct will be addressed according to the policies described in the [Rose-Hulman student handbook](#). Academic misconduct includes: (1) submitting work that is not your own (including AI-generated work); (2) copying ideas, words, or graphics from any source without appropriate citation; (3) misrepresenting your work or yourself (i.e., deliberately submitting the wrong assignment or lying to explain a late assignment); (4) collaborating with other students when this is not permitted; and (5) submitting the same work for credit in two courses without prior consent of both instructors. If you are unsure whether something qualifies as academic misconduct, please check with me before doing it.

5 Course schedule

The following schedule lists topics, readings, and due dates for the whole term. This schedule is subject to change.

In the readings column, all chapters refer to the Bloom book. You are expected to do these readings during the week(s) they are assigned. Other readings (articles) will be found on Moodle. You are expected to read the articles before class on the day they appear in the schedule because we will discuss them in class that day.

* indicates an in-class quiz that day.

† indicates a student-led discussion.

Week	Date	Quiz	Topic	Reading	Due
0	9/4		Intro		
	9/5		Intro	Bloom Prologue	
1	9/8		Intro	Roediger & Pyc	Syllabus quiz
	9/9		Intro	Pennebaker et al	
	9/11		The brain	Ch 1	
	9/12		The brain	Ch 1	
2	9/15		Consciousness	Ch 2	
	9/16		The unconscious	Ch 3	
	9/18		The unconscious	Wamsley & Stickgold†	
	9/19	*	Consciousness	Killingsworth & Gilbert†	
3	9/22		TBD		
	9/23		Learning	Ch 4	
	9/25		Learning	Ch 4	
	9/26	*	Learning	Watson & Rayner†	Participation 1
4	9/29		Development	Ch 5	
	9/30		Development	Ch 5	
	10/2		Development	Ruffman et al	
	10/3	*	Perception / Memory	Bigelow et al†	
5	10/6		Perception / Memory	Ch 7	
	10/7		Perception / Memory	Ch 7	
	10/9		BREAK		
	10/10		BREAK		
6	10/13		Perception / Memory	Ch 7	
	10/14		Perception / Memory	Ch 7	
	10/16		Thinking	Ch 8	
	10/17	*	Thinking	Meyer & Frederick†	
7	10/20		Thinking	Ch 8	Assignment 1
	10/21		Motivation / Emotion	Ch 9	
	10/23		Motivation / Emotion	Ch 9	
	10/24	*	Motivation / Emotion	Barrett†	
8	10/27		Social behavior	Ch 11	
	10/28		Social behavior	Ch 11	

Week	Date	Quiz	Topic	Reading	Due
	10/30		Social behavior	Ch 12	
	10/31	*	Social behavior	Bohner & Schlüter†	
9	11/3		Social behavior	Ch 12	
	11/4		Personality	Ch 13	
	11/6		Personality	Ch 13	
	11/7	*	Personality	Rohrer et al†	
10	11/10		Disorders	Ch 14	
	11/11		Disorders	Ch 14	
	11/13		Disorders	Ch 14	Participation 3
	11/14	*	Conclusion		Assignment 2