



**PSYCO 104**  
**BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES**  
**SECTION BI, WINTER 2003**  
**MWF, 10:00-10:50, CAB 265**

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## Introduction

Psychology is distinctive because it involves the study of topics that, at first glance, would seem to be completely unrelated. For example, during this term we will discuss such diverse subjects as: how we remember grammatical information, why drugs modify consciousness, how neural conduction occurs, and how animals communicate. The scientific discovery of the principles and mechanisms that govern and connect these and other topics of human behavior is the basis of this course.

## Objectives

The first objective of this course is to help you understand the basic mechanisms that determine how we sense the world around us, perceive its structure, learn, remember, and dream. It is hoped that by understanding these processes, you will come to a deeper appreciation of human nature. A second objective is to describe the scientific methodology that allows us to study such topics. Knowing this methodology should help you learn and use analytical and problem solving skills; it is also hoped that you will become better able to evaluate critically claims about human nature and human behavior. The third objective is a sales job. PSYCO 104 is the prerequisite to other courses offered in the Department of Psychology. We hope that you will find psychology to be a fascinating and challenging discipline and will explore some of the other courses offered in this field.

## Course Organization

This section of PSYCO 104 is a special "technologically enhanced" class that will involve extensive use of the

internet to explore topics of the course. All students in this course are expected to be proficient in the use of the internet and to have access to the world wide web. There will be weekly discussions of course material using internet resources.

This section will have *one* formal meeting each week, on Wednesday morning. This meeting will be used to identify important issues and topics. By Friday evening all students are expected to have made a substantive contribution to internet discussions concerning the week's topic. Each discussion group is then expected to submit a evaluative summary of this discussion by Monday morning.

Members of the class will be assigned a discussion group; each group will have about ten members. The purpose of the discussion groups is to provide a forum in which students can exchange ideas and comments and, together, compose a group response to issues raised during the term. An internet discussion forum will be established for each group to post responses to these issues at times convenient to individual members.

During the term, there will be two discussion assignments posed to the class prior to the week's class meeting. One of these assignments will involve critical evaluation of a position statement regarding the week's topic. The other will consist of the exploration of a topic, usually by means of a web-based exercise. Each of these assignments will ask your informed opinion and commentary. You must post at least one substantive contribution to the group's discussion of each assignment on the forum by 23:45 on Friday. Your group is then responsible for a collective

reply to each assignment by 12:34 on Monday. In the case of the critical evaluation assignment, your group is to decide on the best response to the question; the mark for this assignment will be based on your group's ability to provide an informed critique of the issues involved. In the case of the exploration assignment, your group will provide a summary of the responses to the exercise; the mark for this assignment will be based on how well the summary describes the responses of the individual members of the group. How your group decides to write the individual assignments is up to you and your group.

## Grading

A student's grade will be determined by individual test performance and by the group response to the weekly topic. The final grade will be determined in the following way:

**Midterm.** There will be one midterm examination during the term, covering the text and lecture material up to that point. It will count 20% towards the grade.

**Weekly discussion response.** Each of the two weekly discussion responses that your group submits will be marked on a scale from zero to five points. Provided that you have made a *substantive* contribution to the group's discussion (either a comprehensive single posting to each assignment, or a number of helpful shorter ones) you will receive the group's mark. The total weekly discussion marks will count 40% of your final grade.

**Research participation requirement.** This is a requirement for all students in Introductory Psychology and counts towards 10% of the final mark. It will be explained later in the term.

**Final examination.** There will be a final examination which will include material from all parts of the course. It will be worth 30% of the final mark. The date of the final examination is set by the University registrar.

## Textbooks

There is one required textbook. It is

*Psychology: The science of behaviour (Second Canadian Edition)* by N.R. Carlson, W. Buskist, M.E. Enzle, and C.D. Heth.

Copies are available at the University Bookstore. Be aware that some previous years used the first Canadian edition; the newer edition contains substantial changes.

## Schedule

The schedule of topics will be as follows. Topics that will require a group discussion response are denoted with an asterisk. Note that, as explained above, the group answers to the week's topics are due five days after the date of each lecture.

January 8	Introductory Material
January 15	The Science of Psychology*
January 22	Ways and Means*
January 29	Evolution, Heredity & Behaviour*
February 5	Biology of Behaviour*
February 12	Biology of Behaviour*
February 26	First Midterm
March 5	Learning & Behaviour*
March 12	Sensation*
March 19	Perception*
March 26	Memory*
April 2	Consciousness*
April 9	Review

## Additional Information

It is a departmental policy that, in classes with large enrolments, make-up examinations cannot be given for missed midterms. If you cannot make the midterm examination you must see Dr. Heth within one week of the exam. In those cases for which a legitimate reason can be established, the percentage weight of that exam will then be transferred to the Final Examination. Reexaminations and deferred examinations are determined by policies set by individual Faculties. You should consult your Faculty regarding the conditions under which it will grant a reexamination. Any deferred examinations will be given on May 2.

Marks from the different parts of the course will be computed as a percentage of the maximum. They will then be weighted and combined to compute a total mark for the course. These total marks will then be converted into the University's nine-point grading system using the normative expectations of the University as a guide for the frequency of each grade.

The Department of Psychology is deeply committed to the right of each student to be evaluated fairly and equitably. Any attempt by a student to obtain information in an unauthorized way during an examination, or to misrepresent authorship of a course assignment, is an infringement of that right. Cheating is not only deeply offensive to the rest of us, but is also a violation of the Student Code of Behavior. In the event that an incident of cheating is observed, the Department of Psychology will follow the procedures outlined in the Student Code.