

The University of New Mexico – Los Alamos

Psychology 105, Section 300, Spring 2008

Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR: Carol S. Furchner, Ph.D. **PHONE:** 505-412-3379 (cell), 662-0331 (office)
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OFFICE HOURS: M W 4:00 – 5:00 PM or by appointment cfurchner@gmail.com

CLASS LOCATION: UNM-LA, Rm 612 **DAY/TIME:** Th 6:00 – 8:30 PM

TEXTBOOK (required): **Psychology: Concepts and Applications**, 2nd Edition, by Jeffrey S. Nevid (2007)

COURSE WEB SITE: <http://furpaw.com/psy105>

NOTE: *The syllabus, class schedule, assignments, announcements, lecture notes and supplementary information will be posted on this web site. Use it! You should check the schedule weekly to see if there are any changes. If it is necessary to cancel the class because of weather or illness, I will post that information on the web site as far in advance of the class as I can.*

ON-LINE STUDY CENTER:

http://college.hmco.com/psychology/nevid/psychology/2e/student_home.html

The On-Line Study Center contains study aids such as practice quizzes and flashcards, which are designed to help you improve your comprehension of the material. Access to most areas of the Study Center is free; some portions, such as tutorials, require that you purchase a Webcard. Purchase of a Webcard **is not required** for this class. However, if you do choose to purchase a Webcard to access password-protected portions of the Study Center, you can obtain it from on-line retailers like Barnes and Noble (<http://bn.com>) or from the publisher's web site: <http://tinyurl.com/2k9t8e>

The Webcard should have this ISBN: **0618749888** or **978-0618-749-881**. The retail cost is approximately \$20.

COURSE DESCRIPTION (from catalog):

Overview of the major content areas in psychology. Topics to be covered include learning, cognition, perception, motivation, biological systems, social and abnormal psychology, development, personality and approaches to psychotherapy. Meets New Mexico Lower Division General Education Common Core Curriculum Area IV: Social/Behavioral Sciences.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Present an overview of the major concepts and theories of psychology
- Introduce scientific methodology and critical thinking tools as used in psychology
- Relate major concepts and areas of psychology to modern issues and applications
- Communicate ideas in a scientific style and framework
- Challenge students' beliefs about "human nature" and "common sense"

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students should have acquired critical thinking skills in psychology, along with the ability to evaluate reports of psychological research as described in the popular press. Students should have a good overview of and should be able to discuss and describe key topics in:

- The biological bases of behavior
- How to evaluate the influence of nature vs. nurture on behavior and mental development
- Psychological development over a lifetime
- Sensation and perception
- Learning and memory
- States of consciousness
- Impacts of stress on health
- Social influences on behavior
- Mental disorders and psychotherapy
- The nature of and some basic tools of research in psychology

COMPUTERS AND COMPUTER ACCOUNTS

You will need to have access to a computer and to the internet. Several assignments will require access to web sites. If you don't have a computer or access to the internet at home, you can use computers in the UNM-LA Library, Computer Center, Tutor Center, Mesa Public Library, or other public libraries. **Lacking a computer or internet access at home will not be an acceptable excuse for not doing computer-based assignments.** If you need help using a computer, please see me.

Each student is now required to have two computer accounts:

1. The first is a UNM-LA computer account; sign up for this on the computer at the right of the entrance into building #3. This account will allow you to log in to computers on the UNM-LA campus. When you obtain this account, you will be assigned a *userid* and a password, which you will use to log in to Los Alamos campus computers.
2. The second is your UNM main campus account. You are assigned a *netid* (*your_netid*) and password when you apply to UNM. This is the account that you use to access LoboWeb, register for classes, check your UNM e-mail, print your transcript, check your financial status, check your degree progress, etc.
 - You may access your main campus account from UNM-LA web site at <http://www.la.unm.edu>: click on **MyUNM**, and then log in with *your_netid*. Your UNM e-mail is available under the **UNM E-mail** tab.
 - You are responsible for any information e-mailed to you either by the course instructor or by the University and you should therefore check your campus e-mail frequently.
 - If you prefer to use an email account other than your *unm.edu* account, you may forward all e-mail from your *unm.edu* account to your preferred account.

GRADES AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Your grade will be determined by the number of points you earn during the semester. Here's how you earn points, and here are the ground rules. Grades will be based on the following components:

Activity	Maximum Possible Points	Comment
Hourly Exams (2)	200	A mixture of T/F, multiple choice, short-answer, fill in blank, short essay questions. Part in class, part take-home. 100 pts each.
Final exam	120	Same format as hourly exams
Quiz/Assignments (QAs) – Take-home (12)	125	One per week: Quiz (T/F, multiple choice, fill-in-blank, short answer, essay) and/or Assignment. 10-15 pts each; miss one 10-pt QA without penalty. Handed out in class, due in the following class. Up to 10 extra credit points if all QAs are turned in.
Beginning-of-Class Quizzes (15)	42	Questions given at beginning or at break in each class, turn in answers at end; 3 pts each, up to 3 extra credit points if all BOCQs are turned in. Miss one BOCQ without penalty.
Term Paper	100	Information and topics posted on web site
Total	587	This total may change, e.g. if a class is canceled.

The percentage of the total possible of points (582) that you earn will be translated to the UNM fractional grading scale. The minimum requirement for getting an A+ is earning at least 95% on both hourly exams and the final exam and the term paper; in addition, points from QAs, BOCQs and extra credit must bring the total percentage of points to 99% or greater.

A+: 99-100%	A: 93-98%	A-: 90-92%
B+: 88-89%	B: 83-87%	B-: 80-82%
C+: 78-79%	C: 73-77%	C-: 70-72%
D+: 68-69	D: 63 - 67%	D-: 60-62%
	F: <60%	

Note that you must earn a C or better (not a C-) for this class to count towards some majors, academic programs and prerequisites. See the UNM-Los Alamos Course Catalog for specific requirements.

➔ **Exams:** There will be two hour-long midterm exams and a final exam. Exam 1 and Exam 2 will cover the first two-thirds of the course (lectures, viewgraphs, videos, handouts and reading), and the final will cover the final third – it will not be cumulative over the entire class, except to the extent that the later topics depend on understanding the earlier topics, and it will also cover major themes of the course. Each exam will have an in-class closed-book portion consisting of multiple choice, T/F, matching, short answer and fill-in questions, and a take-home open-book portion consisting of one or more essay questions. The take-home portion will be handed out the week before the in-class exam and will be due the day of the in-class exam.

- If you miss taking the in-class portion of Exam 1 or Exam 2, you may make it up **ONLY WITH AN ACCEPTABLE WRITTEN MEDICAL EXCUSE**. You must notify me before the exam that you will not be able to take it, and you must make arrangements to make it up within one week of your return to classes, preferably before the next meeting of this class. The exam may differ from that given to your classmates.
- If you miss the Final exam, you may make it up **ONLY WITH AN ACCEPTABLE WRITTEN MEDICAL EXCUSE**. You must notify me before the exam that you will not be able to take it. **In addition, you will most likely receive an Incomplete for the course** and you must make arrangements with me to make it up. The exam may differ from that given to your classmates. Note that Incompletes automatically revert to a grade of F after one year if missing work is not completed.

Exam 1 and Exam 2 will be given during the first hour of class; during the remainder of period we will hold a regular class, including a BOCQ.

Exam	In-class date:	Take home portion due:
Exam 1	2/28	2/28
Exam 2	4/10	4/10
Final	5/15	5/15

Error correction: I believe that exams should be learning experiences as well as assessment tools. After Exam 1 and Exam 2, you may correct your incorrect answers to receive partial credit for questions that you missed. Instructions and due dates for corrections will be given out when each of these exams is returned to you. This is optional, but I hope that you will take advantage of it. (This will not be possible for the Final exam, because final grades must be turned in 24 hours after you take it.)

➔ **Quizzes/ Assignments (QAs):** In most classes you will be given a short take-home quiz and/or an assignment. These are designed to aid in your study of the materials and in some cases to provide demonstrations of or experiences with key concepts. Each QA is due at the beginning of the next class. Quizzes will consist of several questions that cover material from that week’s reading assignment and lectures and/or from the reading assignment for the next week. Assignments will be related to the topic of the current or next week. Most QAs will be worth 10 points each; two will be worth 15 points each (those due 2/21 and 3/27).

There will be **NO make-ups on QAs**, and **late QAs will not be accepted without an acceptable written medical excuse**. If you don’t turn it in when it is due, you will not get any points for that QA. (I will be happy to review and correct late QAs in order to provide you with feedback.)

- Each QA will be posted on the class web site by the Friday evening before it is due (see the Schedule on the class web site for links to QAs), so if you miss the class when it’s handed out, you can still turn in the QA at the next class, on its due date. Be aware that sometimes the QA will ask for follow-up on demos or exercises done in class, for which you need to be present or get notes.
 - If you are unable to download a QA from the web site, NOTIFY ME IMMEDIATELY so that I can correct the problem and email you a copy of it.
- If you can’t be present to turn in a QA, you may email your answers to me (not the questions); I must receive the answers by the beginning of the class in which the QA is due for it to count. *If you email your QA answers, make sure you request a receipt and get in touch with me promptly if you don’t receive one within 24 hours!*

Total possible points for the purpose of figuring out grades are calculated to allow you to miss one 10-point QA without penalty. You will get credit for all of the QAs that you turn in; thus, if you turn in all of the QAs, you can earn up to 10 extra credit points.

Twelve QAs will be handed out. No QA will be handed out the weeks before exams or the final. There will be occasional opportunities to earn a few extra credit points on the QAs.

QAs are due each Thursday (except as noted on the schedule)

→ **Beginning of Class Questions:** At the beginning of each class, pick up the BOCQs as you enter, and turn in the answers before you leave. The questions will pertain to information discussed in that day's class. Each BOCQ is worth 3 points. There are 15 BOCQs, and 42 points will count towards figuring out your grade. If you answer all 15 BOCQs correctly, you can earn up to 3 extra credit points. There is **no make-up** for missed BOCQs; you must be present in class to take them and turn them in.

→ **Term paper:** Each student is required to write a term paper. The term paper enables you to explore a topic in psychology that is of interest to you in more depth than is possible in the classroom, and to practice and demonstrate critical thinking skills in psychology that you have acquired in the class. Your term paper should be on a topic that relates an issue of current interest to psychological principles, research and data. Some possible topics would include drug abuse, increases in autism diagnoses, violence in schools, prescribing antidepressant medications to children, anger management, teen-age suicide, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc. A list of suggested topics will be placed on the class website, and you must either choose from this list or get prior approval from me for a topic that you suggest.

The paper must be typed, double-spaced, and should be around 1000 – 1500 words (5-10 pages). You may hand it in on paper or email it to me. It must contain at least two citations to published materials other than your textbook. Citations should be in APA format – see the class web site home page for links on how to do this.

Your term paper will be worth up to 100 points. It will be graded on organization, coverage, clarity and logic of the writing and how you present the information, and on proper use of citations. If I receive your paper on the day it's due, you get 100% of the assigned grade (which depends on my evaluation of the paper). **If the term paper is turned in late, your grade will be reduced by 15% per day.**

Term Paper is due May 8

If you email your term paper, make sure you request a receipt, and follow up promptly if you don't get one within 24 hours!!!.

If you turn in a draft of your term paper in to me no later than April 24, I will review the draft and give you feedback by May 1 on how you can improve the paper. This is not required, but it will give you an opportunity to learn more about how to write a psychology paper, and most likely you will improve your grade.

→ **Emailing assignments to me:** If you are unable to attend class to turn in a QA, take-home portions of exams, or term paper, you may email the assignment or the answers to me. (Answers only on QAs and exams, please!) If you email materials to me, make sure that you request a receipt, and **follow up with me promptly if you don't get a receipt within 24 hours.** Email sometimes fails, but that won't be accepted as an excuse for lateness unless you can show me evidence of a failed email attempt, such as a nondelivery notice.

Emailed assignments must be in a **format** that I can read on my computer. These include: Microsoft Word document (.doc), Plain text (.txt) or email format, HTML, PDF, or Rich Text Format (.rtf) [you can save a paper written with other word processors, such as Word Perfect, in Rich Text Format. This is normally given as an option on the "save as..." function.]

→ **Handing in assignments on paper outside of class:** If you need to turn in written work on paper and can't do it in class, you should make sure that it is turned in before 6:00 PM on the day that it is due. You may slide it under my office door (room 508) or ask the receptionist in Building 1 to put it in my mailbox. Note that the receptionist usually leaves by 5 PM.

→ **Preparation, Attendance and Participation:** You are expected to have read the reading assignments for each week **before** the class in which it is discussed. You will get a lot more out of the class and the lectures if you come to class prepared.

Attendance and participation in class are important to your learning experience in this class. You are expected to attend and participate in all classes, and attendance will be taken, per University policy. If you must miss a class, please discuss it with me, in advance if possible. **Missing more than two consecutive classes or more than a total of four classes may result in your being dropped from the course, at my discretion.** If you miss two consecutive classes or a total of four classes, please contact me immediately!

Classes will start at the scheduled time, and I will take attendance at the beginning of class. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to let me know after class that you were present; otherwise, I might not notice.

Classes will end at the scheduled time. Please be considerate of your classmates and DO NOT start packing up your materials and shuffling your papers before 8:30.

There will be a 10 minute break about halfway through the class. In order for your attendance to “count,” you are expected to attend both the first and second half of each class.

If you must arrive late or leave early, please be considerate of your classmates and enter or leave quietly and unobtrusively.

→ **How Much Work Will This Class Require?** You can expect to spend 6-9 hours per week outside of class on reading and studying the material, on QAs and on assignments. In my experience teaching this course:

- Attending class alone will NOT be sufficient to pass this course. You may have been able to get through high school just by attending class and not spending much time on homework, but this strategy will not work for you in this class, or in college in general.
- Attending class IS important, however, because not all of the material that you need to learn is available in the textbook. You probably will not be able to pass the class unless you attend almost all of the classes and get notes for those that you miss.

→ **Retention of Materials:** Please do not discard any materials that you have turned in until after you have received your final grade. In the event of a discrepancy between what grade you think you earned on an item (QA, BOCQ, Exam, Paper) and my records, my records will prevail, unless you can show me the graded item in dispute.

→ **Academic Honesty:** Following UNM-LA policy, I expect students to “abide by the highest standards of conduct in all academic matters, including tests, quizzes, and assignments, both in class and outside of class.” Cheating or plagiarizing in any form will result in a penalty, ranging from a 0 on the assignment or exam in question, up to and including a failing grade (F) in the course.

Your term paper must be your own ORIGINAL work, which you have written yourself. You must give credit for (cite) any quotes or ideas that you get elsewhere. This includes ideas that you rephrase in your own words. Taking the work or ideas of someone else and claiming them as your own is called **plagiarism**, and it won't be tolerated. If I determine that all or even part of your written work has been plagiarized, a penalty will be given, up to and including an F in the course. **Read the links on Plagiarism and how to avoid it – you will find them on the home page for this class.**

You may work together on the take-home QAs, if you choose, but the answers you turn in should be your own, and not answers you have copied from someone else. You may **not** work together on the mid-terms and final exams, including the take-home portions. If your answers suggest that you have collaborated with your classmates, all affected papers will receive a 0.

SCHEDULE

The initial version of the schedule of classes and assignments is attached; the **OFFICIAL** schedule containing any changes will be maintained on following website, and changes will be announced in the Announcements box on this class's home page: <http://furpaw.com/psy105/schedule.htm>

OFFICE HOURS

If you cannot see me during my office hours (MW 4:00 – 5:00), please set up an appointment if you have questions, problems or want to talk; I will be happy to meet with you. Also feel free to email me with questions, or call me on my cell phone between 9 AM and 9 PM.

BAD WEATHER – WILL CLASS BE CANCELED?

In case of bad weather, class will be canceled if the University closes. Here are several ways to check for closing:

- Call the University Switchboard at 662-5919 or 1-800-894-5919 and listen for a recorded announcement.
- Check your local TV and radio stations. Or check local TV station web sites, e.g., <http://www.krqe.com> (Channel 13) and <http://www.koat.com> (Channel 7). (Channel 4's reports are not updated as frequently as the others.) If you do not hear UNM in Los Alamos specifically mentioned, the campus will remain open.
- Check Announcements on this class's web site; I will post notices of class cancellation there if at all possible.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

"Students should inform the instructor of any special need(s) as soon as possible to ensure that such need(s) is/are met in a timely manner."

CELL PHONES

Turn them off, or set them on a "polite" no-ring setting. If you must take a call, take it outside the classroom. Refrain from text-messaging during class.

FINAL GRADES

Your grades will be available electronically through LoboWeb (Banner) and will not be posted. If you give me a self-stamped, self-addressed envelope when you turn in the final exam, I will mail your final exam and final grade to you.

Tips for Succeeding in This Class (or any other, for that matter)

- 1. Become INVOLVED with the subject matter**
 - DO participate in class: ask questions, offer answers, discuss and disagree.
 - DO try to relate the subject matter to your experiences, people you know, current events.
 - DON'T just sit in the back of the classroom and let the words wash over you.
 - DON'T expect to learn the material by sleeping with the book under your pillow; you won't absorb much, and you'll probably wake up with a stiff neck.

- 2. ORGANIZE the subject matter**
 - Try to see the "big picture" of each chapter – outline it or diagram its major concepts.
 - Re-read it and try to see where the details fit, and how they relate to each other and to the big picture.
 - Build a structure of information (schema) and integrate the details into the structure; the more you know, the easier it will be to absorb additional material.

- 3. KEEP UP with the coursework and assignments.**
 - DO read each chapter before the corresponding lectures, and again afterwards.
 - QUIZ yourself using questions from the textbook and the On-Line Study Center to check your comprehension. Studies show that the act of testing yourself helps you to remember the material.
 - QUIZ yourself using the flashcards on the On-Line Study Center; much of what you learn will involve new vocabulary.
 - DON'T procrastinate, and DO study frequently in short sessions. You'll learn the material and remember it better in several short sessions than one long session.
 - DON'T wait to do your first reading of the material the night before the exam.

- 4. Papers:**
 - USE CITATIONS (references) for ideas, concepts or quotes that you get from a book, periodical or web. Failure to do so is called plagiarism.
 - Use the internet and the library to find and bring in related materials. Be judicious in your choice of materials found on the internet – there's a lot of garbage out there. If you just use materials from the textbook, you will probably be almost as bored writing your paper as I will be reading it. See what additional information you can bring to the topic at hand.
 - Organize your thoughts; figure out what points you want to make and then make them; don't ramble.
 - Use your computer's spellchecker, and then get someone to proofread it for you. If no one is available, read it aloud. Accurate spelling and grammar are expected of college-level students. If you need help with these, visit the Tutor center in Building 2.
 - Type it. You will do yourself a huge favor by learning to use a word processor program if you don't already know how.

- 5. Exams:**
 - Read each question thoroughly and make sure you understand it before you answer it.
 - If you don't know an answer right away, skip the question and come back to it later.
 - On multiple choice questions, eliminate as many alternatives as you can. If you're unsure about the answer, go with your first choice, unless you're pretty sure you misinterpreted the question.
 - On essay questions, outline the main points before you begin writing your answer.
 - Get a good sleep the night before an exam. At that point, sleep is more helpful than cramming.

- 6. RELAX!**
 - Use relaxation techniques taught in this class, or any others that you've learned to help you reduce anxiety about the class, assignments, or taking exams.
 - Remember that listening, taking notes, studying, writing and taking tests are all skills that you can learn. If you need help with these, ask your instructor, or ask for help at the Tutor center.

FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED: WHY INTRO PSYCH IS A TOUGH COURSE

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Because the course is "introductory," some students imagine that Intro Psych ought to be a relatively easy course. Yet many students are shocked to discover that it is one of the most difficult courses they take, especially early in their college careers. There are several reasons why this happens, and listing some of them for you to think about--and maybe do something about--may save you some hassle, disappointment, and grief.

In fact, most introductory level courses will be more difficult than many students imagine for these same reasons.

The first reason Intro Psych is a tough course is that we will cover a very broad range of topics through the semester, from concepts and ideas that are very biological to others that are very "social," from topics that may sound like common sense to others that are challenging technical areas. Each of those topical areas will have its own vocabulary and concepts to learn, enough so that some observers claim that Intro Psych requires that a student learn more new terms than he or she would in a semester-long course in a foreign language!

A second big reason that Intro Psych turns out to be extremely demanding for many students is that they have little or no existing knowledge to attach this new content to. Researchers who study memory and the acquisition of knowledge tell us that the more you know about a topic, the easier it is to learn even more (because you will have more things to "hook" the new ideas, facts, etc., onto in your memory--sort of a Velcro theory). Knowledge grows by becoming woven into the body of your existing knowledge. If you don't know much at the beginning, if you have trouble finding these "hooks," it is surely more difficult to make such connections. Take heart, though, if you work at it you can often find aspects of your own "real life" experience and previous study that do in fact "hook" into the material you will study in Intro Psych. And as time goes by, you should be able to find connections from new material you encounter to material you studied earlier in the term.

Third, some students have to adjust (or learn for the first time!) the study habits needed to match the demands of college work. Some bring adequate or better skills, jump right in, and do just fine. Others, however, may never have had to work very hard at their studies in the past, and now discover that their study habits just don't work in college. Good questioning skills, good listening skills, good note-taking skills, good reading skills, good thinking skills, and--most importantly--good time management skills simply have to be there, if you are going to succeed in college. Confronted with the complexity of the material in a course like Intro Psych, a student may really struggle, if he or she has not developed those skills. If your academic skills are not good (or as good as you would like them to be), see your advisor for help and talk to your instructors (talk to me!) about how you might improve them. Then, as the commercials say, "JUST DO IT!": Nothing can replace individual effort. Exactly like athletes developing and honing their special skills by practicing all alone in the gym or on the field, those study skills require your individual dedication to improvement.

Newly-developing skills can't, and won't, get better overnight. Similarly, developing knowledge can't, and won't, blossom overnight. Any decent athlete or musician knows that what pays off is a routine of daily effort, going over what is already well studied or practiced, spending extra time on things that are more difficult, and extending their study and practice to new material. Learning the material in Intro Psych can't be done overnight, either. So establishing a routine of daily study (which some students never seem catch on to) will be a key to success in this course, as well as others.

Fourth, many students just find ways to mess up the simple stuff: They don't come to class, they don't read the textbook, they don't do the assignments or only do part of the assignment or don't follow the instructions for the assignment or they turn them in late (or any combination). So they throw away opportunities to earn what often is cheap credit toward their course grade. And of course they are also less well prepared for the tests. Can you see the lesson? Come to class, read the book, do the assignments (the whole thing, on time, following all the directions--and, yes, it does matter). Is that so hard?

My old boss used to say, "You control two things, your activity and your attitude." Intro Psych will always be a hard course because the material is complex and broad, but it may be even more difficult for you because you may lack background and experience to tie all this new material to, and because your academic skills may be less-than-perfect. The material itself won't get any easier, but you yourself can improve in these other areas--IF you have the attitude that you CAN do it, and IF you put in the effort TO do it.