



Course Syllabus
Brain & Behavior
PsycX193
Fall 2009



Instructor Erin Dupuis **Course Time** MWF 12:30-1:20
Office Monroe 411, 865-3133
E-mail egoforth@loyno.edu
Office Hours M (10:00-11:00) and T (1:00-2:00), but I will also be in my office often.

Required Text (1) Marcus, G. (2006). *The Norton Psychology Reader*. W.W. Norton & Company, New York, NY.
(2) Supplemental articles will be available on Blackboard. See course calendar.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is one of the required freshman seminars. You will learn about the brain, behavior, and how neuropsychologists study both. This course is intended to give you, the student, an overview of nervous system organization and the biological basis of behavior. The course will cover topics ranging from the functioning of nerve cells to complex behaviors such as religious practice, sexual behavior, drug addiction, and violence. I'm very excited about teaching this course – I hope you are excited to be taking it!

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To expand (or build new) knowledge of human behavior from a multidisciplinary approach (psychological, biological, cognitive, and philosophical).

Psychology is a broad field. In this course, I will expose you to many different subjects that fall within the realm of biopsychology. You should become familiar with terms and concepts such as neuron, cortex, brain specialization, and so on. You should also be able to differentiate between different theories that might explain human behavior.

To develop an ability to think critically.

Critical thinking skills are mental tools. These skills enable you to ask questions, weigh evidence, modify judgments based upon available evidence, and make well-informed decisions. For example, can you tell the difference between a viable scientific claim and a “pseudo-scientific” claim? These skills are invaluable in this course and in your future. To help you acquire critical thinking skills you will be asked to write several application papers, participate in

class discussions, and engage in self-reflection. By the end of the semester, you should be able to evaluate research, analyze assumptions and biases, and consider alternative interpretations.

To engage you in your own personal development and discovery of the personal relevance of psychology.

It is my hope that this course will help you develop an understanding and appreciation of what psychology can do for you in various aspects of your life. Perhaps you will look at the world in a new light and begin to ask new questions about human behavior. I expect that you each will respect the opinions of others in this class and I hope that you will gain a broader respect for opinions that differ from your own.

Class Expectations

Attendance:

A large part of the learning in this course comes from participating in class discussions and activities. You should notify me if you are going to miss class for an extended period of time (i.e. family emergency, athletics). If you miss a class be sure to get the notes and any materials from a fellow student and check in with me. **Missing more than 3 classes will drop your grade a letter point** (i.e., 4 = B+, 5 = B, 6 = B-, etc...). Given the content and expectations of this course, I will not be comfortable give a passing grade to a student who misses more than 12 classes.

Cheating and Plagiarism:

I don't expect that you will cheat. Cheating only hurts you in the long run and can result in serious consequences. Any violation of academic ethics (cheating, plagiarism, etc...) will result in an F for the assigned topic and possibly the course. Notification will be sent to the department and possibly to the Dean's office. The University has posted a bulletin about academic honesty at:
http://bulletin.loyno.edu/2008undergraduate/academic_regs/contents.php.

Class Etiquette:

Although the following guidelines might be obvious, I am putting them in writing in order to better facilitate a beneficial environment for all of us.

Please do not use laptops, cellphones, IPODs, etc... Please try your best to be attentive in class. This will make you a better classmates and a more successful student. It is distracting to your fellow classmates (and to my teaching) if you are engaging in texting or online activities.

Be On Time: Please arrive to class on time. Given the short period of time we are able to spend together, I will not be able to repeat material if you do come in late. Occasionally coming in late cannot be helped. If you must come late, please enter the room quietly. After class, make sure that you get the notes you missed from a fellow classmate. Since

being in class is so important to your success, **three late arrivals will be entered as an absence.**

Respect your classmates: You are in a diverse college setting. Often you will find that your fellow students do not share your background or opinions. This is the wonderful thing about college! I will be very disappointed if you show disrespect (i.e., eye rolling, smirking, blatantly teasing) for your fellow students.

Also:

Come to me if you need help. Successful students are those who are not afraid to ask for help. You will enjoy the material much more if you understand it. Don't wait until it's too late to rectify the problem.

All assignments should be typed; no hand written assignments will be accepted.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Service Learning/Research Paper	100 points
Online Quizzes	100 points (10 points each)
Thought Provoking Questions	50 points (10 points each)
Class Discussion Leader	45 points
Application Papers	100 points (50 points each)
Participation	30 points
Brain Structure Wiki	10 points

435 Total Points

Grading Scale

A= 405-435	B+= 378-391	C+= 334-347	D+= 291-304	F= 260 and below
A-= 392-404	B= 361-377	C= 318-333	D= 274-290	
	B-= 348-360	C-= 305-317	D-= 261-273	

All grades will also be posted on BB. I strongly urge you to sign into Blackboard frequently to check your grade.

* Your grade at the end of this course is NOT negotiable.

1. **Service Learning** – In this course you will be expected to engage in service learning. This experience is meant to further your understanding of how the brain controls psychological behavior. For example, choosing to work with children might help you understand cognitive development or principles of learning; working with a substance abuse facility might help you better understand addiction. See attached sheet for more information.

2. **Service Learning Research Paper** – Based upon your SL assignment, you will write a research paper integrating your experiences with outside scholarly articles and books. See attached sheet.

3. **Thought Provoking Questions** – For each TPQ, you will write a thought provoking question related to the readings. These questions should stimulate further thinking about the topic and should require more than simply a yes/no answer. For example, “Why is the case of Phineas Gage still considered important today? That is, why did the case have such a large impact on our understanding of the brain and how did it influence psychologists’ thinking about brain specialization?” Try to think critically about the material we have covered.
 - i. After writing your question, you should post it on the blackboard blog with your own response (5 points).
 - ii. You must also respond to at least one thought provoking question raised by a fellow classmate (5 points). You will be allowed to skip writing a response two times during the semester.

4. **Class Discussion Leader** – One time during the semester, you will be expected to work with another student to lead a 15-minute class discussion. I will give you a sheet with the pairings – this is a good opportunity to get to know a fellow classmate. You can integrate activities if they are relevant. You may also use PowerPoint to illustrate concepts or show images, but you should not rely solely on PP for your presentation. You should try to think of some questions about the topic/readings that will stimulate discussion from your classmates. You will be graded on several criteria:
 1. Knowledge (15 points)
 2. Preparation (10 points)
 3. Interaction with class (10 points)
 4. Clarity in presentation (10 points)

5. **Application Paper** – You will write two (approximately 1.5-2 pages) application papers throughout the semester. You will be able to choose from any of the course topics that seems particular relevant. Please try to relate the topic to some aspect of your life (or the life of a family member, acquaintance, etc...). Application papers will encourage reflection about the application of psychology and biology to everyday life and the social world. These papers will be graded based upon the following:
 1. Relevancy of application to topic (20 points)
 2. Use of key terms and concepts (15 points)
 3. Grammar/Spelling (10 points)
 4. Clarity (5 points)

6. **Online Quizzes** – Before the beginning of each topic, one class will be lecture format. In a course such as this one, you must understand brain structures and their functions in order to discuss them thoughtfully. You cannot possibly discuss the amygdala, for example, if you don’t know what it is or does. In order to evaluate your understanding, after each lecture a quiz will be posted online. This quiz **must be completed by midnight on the day it is posted**.

7. **Participation** – Because such a large part of this class will rely on discussion, you will be graded on your participation. If I don't know your name by the end of the third week or so, you can assume that you have not been effectively participating. Further, I may pop quiz you every now and again to check that you have been reading the assignments. You cannot participate effectively if you have not read the articles.
8. **Brain Wiki** – There are many interesting parts of the brain and given our unfortunate lack of time, we will not be able to cover all of these structures. I will send around a list of structures and you will sign up to research one structure (i.e., where is it generally, what does it do, how does it affect behavior). You will then post your research on the class wiki. We will then use the wiki as a reference source when we come across a structure we are unsure of.

Late Assignments:

I will accept late assignments, but they will lose 5 points from the final grade for each day they are late (i.e. 1 day late results in an automatic 95 starting point). However, it is better to turn in a late paper than no paper at all. Papers that are more than 10 days late will automatically start at a 55. Allowing yourself to fall too far behind will hurt you in the long run. Please try to keep up with readings and assignments.

- **If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations, you must register with the Academic Resource Center, Monroe Hall Room 405 (865-2990). They will work with you in developing a plan to address your specific needs. Without documentation from the Counseling Office, I cannot accommodate you.**

Extra Credit Opportunities:

Extra credit will be limited to 2 points added to your final calculated grade for the semester. I will only award extra credit for attendance at talks that can be related to psychology (I will inform you of the dates of these talks). After listening to these talks, you should write a 1½ - 2-page paper about the content of the talk and a critique of the talk (i.e. what you did or did not like, how it related to class, critical reactions etc...). Each talk you attend and write a paper about will be worth 1 point with a limit of 2 points. (If you have any suggestions for talks that may be worthwhile, please inform me.)

Research Participation: 1 point per experiment with short written paragraph.

COURSE CALENDAR

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Due</i>
Aug. 31	Introduction	
Sep. 2	The Basics: Nervous System	Reader: William James 3-11 Online Quiz 1
Sep. 4	The Basics: Brain Physiology	Reader: Damasio (Descartes' Error) 57-69 Reader: Oliver Sacks 70-79 Online Quiz 2
Sep. 7	No Classes Labor Day	
Sep. 9	Lateralization & The Split Brain	Wiki Due: Individual Research on Brain Structures Read: BB One Brain or Two?
Sep. 11	<i>Video – The Human Body</i>	TPQ 1 Due
Sep. 14	Importance of Genetics: Nature versus Nurture	Debate in Class: Please read 1. Reader 45-56 2. Reader: 291-303 3. BB What Makes You Who You Are? <i>After Class: Post Arguments on Blog</i>
Sep. 16	Gender <i>Video- Science of the Sexes</i>	Read BB: Math is Hard Barbie Said Read BB: Separating Science from Stereotype
Sep. 18	Motivation: Drugs and Addiction	<i>Video Pizza/Munchies Night: Reefer Madness</i> Online Quiz 3
Sep. 21	Motivation: Drugs and Addiction	Read BB: Stress & Addiction
Sep. 23	<i>Video: Drugs in Culture</i>	SL ASSIGNMENT IN PLACE TPQ 2 Due
Sep. 25	Motivation: Eating	Read BB: FMRI Rewards & Obesity Read BB: Addiction to Food and Rewards Online Quiz 4
Sep. 28	<i>Video – The 750 Pound Man</i>	
Sep. 30	Motivation: Reproductive Behavior	Online Quiz 5
Oct. 2	Motivation: Reproductive Behavior	Reader: Angier 255-261 Read BB: Sexual Orientation & The Brain TPQ 3 Due

Oct. 5	Motivation: Emotions & Health	Reader: LeDoux p232 – 244 Application 1 Due
Oct. 7	Interactions: Hearing & Language	Reader: Pinker p.96-107
Oct. 9	Interactions: Body Senses Musical Ability	Read BB: Brain and Music Processing
Oct. 12	Complex Behaviors: Learning	Reader: Watson p.117-128 Reader: Cognitive Development 145-163
Oct. 14	Complex Behaviors: Memory	Reader: Schacter p164-176 Online Quiz 6
Oct. 16	Complex Behaviors: Memory	
Oct. 19	NO CLASSES FALL BREAK	
Oct. 21	Complex Behaviors: Intelligence	Reader: Bell Curve P.187-198 Reader: Goleman: 199-208
Oct. 23	Complex Behaviors: Psychological Disorders	Online Quiz 7
Oct. 26	NO CLASSES PSYC ADVISING	PLEASE SEE ADVISOR
Oct. 28	Complex Behaviors: Psychological Disorders	SHOW ME SL HOUR SHEET W/ SIGNATURES
Oct. 30	Complex Behaviors: Psychological Disorders	Reader: Autism 358-364 TPQ 4 Due
Nov. 2	Complex Behaviors: Consciousness	Reader: Freud 12-16 Read BB: Ghost in the Machine
Nov. 4	Complex Behaviors: Sleeping	BB Article: Do We Dream in Color? Online Quiz 8
Nov. 6	Complex Behaviors: Sleeping Disorders	
Nov. 9	Religious Behavior	BB Article: Neural Markers of Religious Conviction BB Article: Sensed Presence and Magnetic Fields
Nov. 11	<i>Video – Taboo: Religious Pain</i>	TPQ 5 Due
Nov. 13	Social Neuroscience: Violence and Aggression	FIRST DRAFT PAPER DUE
Nov. 16	Social Neuroscience: Belonging and Ostracism	Reader: Taylor 273-281
Nov. 18	Social Neuroscience: Group Conflict	Online Quiz Due 9
Nov. 20	Culture	Reader: 317-341 Application 2 Due

Nov. 23-27	NO CLASSES THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Nov. 30	Student Choice of Topic	SERVICE BLOG DUE PAPER FINAL DRAFT DUE
Dec. 2	CLASS PRESENTATIONS	
Dec. 4	CLASS PRESENTATIONS	Online Quiz 10
Dec. 7	CLASS PRESENTATIONS	
Dec. 9	CLASS PRESENTATIONS	Online Quiz 11
Dec. 11	LAST CLASS DAY	

This calendar is subject to change. If class is canceled, any tests or papers will be due the following class day and the professor will update the class calendar.

IN THE EVENT OF A HURRICANE EVACUATION:

In the case of evacuation, all class material will be posted on blackboard and all students will be expected to keep up with the class material. We will keep in contact with each other via the class blog.

University policy requires that students be online within 48 hours of an evacuation. I realize that sometimes this is not possible. If you are not able to get online, you will be given one week to complete the work your classmates worked on during evacuation.

I believe that you will learn more by engaging in experiential, hands-on learning than you will learn hearing me lecture. As such, the service learning component of this course comprises a large portion of your grade. You will be able to integrate what you learn and your experiences into our course discussions. Through discussions and experience, you will be able to really apply biopsychology to everyday life.

As part of your grade for this course, you will be expected to complete 10-15 hours of service learning at a local agency. This may seem to be a lot of work; however, you cannot make meaningful deep connections by simply visiting an agency and then leaving, without really becoming engaged. Please follow the timeline set forth in the course calendar. You will not be able to complete this project if you wait until the last minute. Furthermore, waiting until the last minute will reflect poorly on you and me. It will also create headaches and additional work for the kind folks in the service learning office.

You will be allowed to work individually or in groups of two. Please keep in mind, however, that an agency that you are hoping to work for may not need more than one volunteer. I would prefer that you do not work for an agency/program with which you have already worked for or are currently working with. Please go outside your comfort zone a bit. Remember that completing the assignment and connecting with an agency is ultimately your responsibility.

Your grade for this project will be composed of your service, your paper, and your presentation.

The following is the grade breakdown:

Service = 40 pts

Blog/Paper = 50 pts

Presentation = 10 pts

Service: You will be evaluated by your supervisor at the agency you choose to work for. This evaluation will be your grade for the service aspect.

*Please see additional packet for more information.

BLOG/PAPER: Due November 30th

This assignment is actually two separate assignments. The actual research section will be 3-4 pages. This means NO LESS than 3 FULL pages. Papers should be double spaced and stapled. You should use Times New Roman (size 12) font with 1 inch margins. You should **include** an introduction, conclusion, reference page and citations. I will deduct points for each guideline that you do not follow. The second part of this assignment will be to post your experiences/reflections on the blog.

I will offer 3 extra credit points if you utilize the Writing Center located on campus. You should visit the center before the paper is due and incorporate their comments in your final draft. You should attach your first draft that you worked on with the center and have your tutor sign that draft. Their appointments fill quickly; do not procrastinate (Bobet Hall Room 100, X2297).

FIRST: Your 3-4 page paper should tie in your service learning experiences with biopsychology. You need to utilize **at least two outside scholarly articles**. Define and discuss the area of biopsychology you are covering using your outside resources. Additionally, answer the following questions (in no more than 1 page): Did your experiences make this area clearer? How does what you learned at the agency exemplify or contradict what you have learned from class/readings? Please include information from your readings and make sure to cite information/ideas that are not your own. **I will not grade papers that do not have any in-text citations.**

SECOND: The blog section should give a brief summary of what your service learning entailed (i.e., what did you do while at the agency?) You should discuss your prior expectations before visiting and working for the agency. What did you expect to do? What did you expect the people (clients and supervisors) to be like? Did your expectations/attitudes change after engaging in the service learning? I would also like you to give an overall reflection of your experience. What did you learn about yourself through this experience? What did you learn about others? What did you do that seemed particularly effective? Ineffective? What changes would you make to the program or to your own actions in the program? How can you use what you learned through experience in your future coursework or in your future career? Will you continue to be of service in the future? Why or why not?

You will be graded on the following:

1. Blog: 15 pts
 - a. Summary of your service: (5)
 - b. Overall reflection of experiences: (10)
2. Paper: 30 pts
 - a. Application and summary of your experiences to what you have learned in psychology: (10)
 - b. Depth and accuracy of analysis using at least 2 articles: (20)
3. Organization, grammar, clarity, and spelling: 5 pts

Presentation

You will be expected to give a brief (5-10 minute presentation) at the end of the semester. In this presentation you will relay to the class: 1) Where you worked; 2) What you did there; and 3) How it ties into what we have learned throughout the semester – this may require you to teach the class about a particular brain structure(s).

You will be expected to prepare a PowerPoint for this presentation. Your PP should be concise and include relevant information. It should be clear and easy to read.

Your most helpful ally

Kelly Brotzman, Office of Service Learning

Email: kbrotzma@loyno.edu

Office: BO 113

Phone: (504)865-2282

Note: If the service learning experience is absolutely something that you cannot or are not willing to participate in, there is another option available. This option will include just as much work and may be somewhat more difficult. You **must** see me by September 18 in order to complete an alternative activity. I will not allow alternative options beyond this date.