



PSYCH 103: Introduction to Psychology

Raritan Valley Community College Spring 2025

Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday 8:00 – 10:00 AM

Description:

Prerequisite(s): and Corequisite: Placement into ENGL 111 English Composition I with ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or higher.

This course will provide students with a basic overview of psychology - the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. The course will focus on the interactions among biological, social, and personal influences that describe, explain, predict, and control behavior. Additionally, students will learn to critically understand and evaluate theories in psychology and how the theories apply to phenomena experienced in people's everyday life. Whenever possible, the course will focus on research with real world implications and the application of psychological concepts to real world scenarios. This course will cover a variety of topics: including research methods, cognition, human development, and social psychology.

Required Texts:

Grison, S. & Gazzaniga, M. (2019). *Psychology in your life (3rd edition)*. NYC, New York., W. W. Norton & Company.

Textbooks must be returned at the end of the course. Additional readings will be brought in and distributed at the discretion of the professor.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Differentiate among the fundamental principles of the basic schools of thought in psychology,
2. Explain research methods used by psychologists including an analysis of their merits and limitations.
3. Identify ethical issues associated with the research and practice of psychology.
4. Discuss the complex interaction among hereditary, environmental and maturational factors in shaping human behavior.
5. Describe the basic principles of learning and memory.

6. Differentiate the processes that influence sensation and perception.
7. Compare and contrast classic and contemporary theories of personality.
8. Examine the social influences on human behavior.

Format:

This course will consist of a mixture of lectures and discussions. Small group activities will be used as appropriate.

Code of Student Conduct:

Charges of improper academic conduct (cheating, plagiarism, or disruption of the class) will be investigated by the college. Issues related to possible safety and security violations will be referred to the DOC for resolution. If the student behavior presents a concern for immediate safety of the student or members of the community, the student may be suspended by the college until a disciplinary review is held.

Learning can occur only when all students are respectful of each other and their instructor. This means:

1. Listening to your teacher and classmates and not speaking out of turn.
2. Avoiding profanity.
3. Speaking in an appropriate tone of voice.
4. Treating all program materials and DOC property with respect.
5. Following your facility's rules and procedures.
6. Maintaining a professional demeanor at all times.

Disruptive, inappropriate, or belligerent behavior is likely to result in your immediate removal from the classroom and may warrant filing a DOC Incident Report. This may not only result in your withdrawal from the course, but your removal from the RVCC Associate degree program as well. Students are welcome to discuss the above conduct requirements and any other class policy with the instructor.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes and laboratories for every course in which they are enrolled. To accommodate students' reasonable, personal situations that might prevent them from attending classes, each student is entitled to excused absences amounting to the equivalent of one week's class time in a semester. Any absences in excess of this standard can prevent students from achieving the course learning outcomes as evaluated by the instructor and may result in a lower grade for the course.

Attendance means more than just being present in class. It means that you are prepared and participate in each class. Being prepared includes completing all homework that is assigned (including reading), taking part in class activities (such as discussion, group work, and peer review), completing your major out-of-class assignments on time, and maintaining a positive learning environment (such as being on time for class).

It is the student's responsibility to request a withdrawal from a course. Your counselor cannot process a withdrawal on your behalf unless you first make the request. Exceptions will be made only if the student has a documented reason for being unable to initiate a withdrawal, such as a facility transfer or hospitalization. Any student who stops coming to class and fails to request a withdrawal by the semester deadline may receive an F grade for the course. Your teacher will announce the withdrawal deadline at least two weeks before the date.

If you are struggling and are considering withdrawing from the course, please talk to your STEP counselor.

In this three-credit course, you should anticipate that success in this class will require a minimum of 126 hours of work throughout the semester. You should manage your time accordingly.

Plagiarism:

Raritan Valley Community College requires independent, honest work on the part of its students, and students are expected to conduct themselves with scholarly integrity. Each confirmed incident of academic dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism must be reported by the faculty member, in writing, to the college. In addition, the college recognizes that faculty members have the authority to issue a failure on the paper, exam, assignment, or course in which cheating or plagiarism was established.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

1. Copying answers from a textbook to submit for a grade.
2. Quoting text or other works without citation when requested by the faculty member to present one's own work.
3. Submitting a paper, project, or report written by another student or spouse as one's own.
4. Submitting a paper wholly or in substantial part using the exact phrasing of source material.
5. Submitting a paper closely paraphrased from source material, where the original source material is edited with only minor word changes occurring.
6. Submitting a paper closely paraphrased from source material, splicing together sentences from scattered segments of the original.

Make-Up Policy

Make-up tests will be given only if you have a documented emergency. Late work will result in a reduction of one letter grade for each day the assignment is late, and we do not accept work that is more than a week late. If you are absent when an assignment is due, please turn it in as soon as possible to avoid a significant grade reduction.

Grading:

Reading response and participation	20%
Assignments (6x)	30%

Midterm exam	20%
Final exam (non-cumulative)	20%
Class participation	10%

Grading Scale: A: 90-100; B+: 86-89; B: 80-85; C+: 76-79; C: 70-75; D: 60-69; F: >60.

Assignments:

1. Reading responses (20% of final grade)

You will hand in a short (min ½ - max 1 page) reading response in the beginning of each week of class in which you discuss a question related to that lecture’s reading assignment. All questions will be provided in the first class. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to shape your thoughts before coming to class. Please write the **date**, the **reading response number** and your **first and last name** at the top of the page.

There are 13 reading responses in total, and per response you can receive a maximum of 5 points: half of it (2.5 points) for handing in on time and the other half (2.5 points) for a thoughtful argument. No late responses will be accepted, but you are allowed to miss up to *three* with no penalty.

2. Assignments (6x, 30% of final grade)

Throughout the course, you will complete a series of assignments meant to help you apply the knowledge you gained from recent classes and prepare you for the exams. You should work on these individually, and can use the book, lecture notes or any other resource available to you. Each assignment is graded out of 25 points.

3. Midterm exam (20% of final grade)

The midterm exam will cover all the material leading up to the midterm exam.

4. Final exam (20% of final grade)

The final exam will cover all the material after the midterm exam.

5. Class participation (10% of final grade)

You are expected to come to each class having completed the assigned reading and actively participate in class discussion. You will receive up to 60 points for satisfactory class participation.

Schedule:

Date	Week	Day	Topic	Reading (completed before class begins)	Instructor	Notes
Jan 23	1	Thurs	Welcome		All	

Jan 28	2	Tues	Introduction/History	Ch. 1	Matthew	
Jan 30	2	Thurs	Introduction/Methods		Yoonseo	
				Ch. 4		Assignment 1 due today; Deadline for add/drop
Feb 4	3	Tues	Development		Stevie	
Feb 6	3	Thurs	Development		Stevie	
Feb 11	4	Tues	Development		Stevie	
Feb 13	4	Thurs	Development		Stevie	
				Ch. 2		Assignment 2 due today
Feb 18	5	Tues	Biology		Stevie	
Feb 20	5	Thurs	Biology		Stevie	
Feb 25	6	Tues	Consciousness	Ch. 3	Matthew	
Feb 27	6	Thurs	Consciousness		Matthew	
				Ch. 14		Assignment 3 due today
Mar 4	7	Tues	Disorders & Review		Matthew	
Mar 6	7	Thurs	Midterm		Yoonseo	Midterm
				Ch. 5		
Mar 11	8	Tues	Sensation and Perception		Casey	
Mar 13	8	Thurs	Sensation and Perception		Casey	
				Ch. 6		Assignment 4 due today
Mar 18	9	Tues	Learning		Casey	
Mar 20	9	Thurs	Learning		Casey	
Mar 25	10	Tues	Learning		Casey	
Mar 27	10	Thurs	Learning		Casey	
Apr 1	11	Tues	Memory	Ch. 7	Casey	
Apr 3	11	Thurs	Memory		Casey	
				Ch. 8		Assignment 5 due today
Apr 8	12	Tues	Thinking		Yoonseo	
Apr 10	12	Thurs	Thinking		Yoonseo	Deadline for withdrawal
				Ch. 9		
Apr 15	13	Tues	Motivation and Emotion		Yoonseo	
Apr 17	13	Thurs	Motivation and Emotion		Yoonseo	
				Ch. 12		Assignment 6 due today
Apr 22	14	Tues	Social Psych & Self		Yoonseo	
Apr 24	14	Thurs	Social Psych & Self		Yoonseo	
Apr 29	15	Tues	Personality	Ch. 13	Matthew	
May 1	15	Thurs	Personality		Matthew	
May 6	16	Tues	Final exam		Matthew	Final