



Course Syllabus: General Psychology

College of Midwestern State University

PSYC-1103-101

Fall 2026

Contact Information

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Course Description

Introduction to the exciting field of Psychology. Each chapter is a survey of a major area of study within the field. This class will also serve as a way of increasing multiple-choice test-taking skills and improve study skills/time management. This will be accomplished by:

1. Taking tests.
2. Instruction on study and test-taking skills.
3. Having questions over sections of the chapter that are not discussed in class.
4. Having to decipher ambiguously written questions.
5. Having to choose between the "best" and "almost best" answer.
6. Become proficient with taking tests online and with a LockDown browser.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Free see Syllabus Folder Spielman, R. M., Jenkins, W. J., & Lovett, M. D. (2020). Psychology 2e. Rice University, [OpenStax](https://openstax.org/r/psychology-2e).

Students have three options regarding the textbook. You may view it online, download a PDF, or purchase a print copy. All three options are available at the [OpenStax](https://openstax.org/r/psychology-2e) link.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

Study hours and tutoring assistance are available at the tutoring center.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

Grading

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Study Skills Quiz	10
Assessment for Skills	15
In-class Ethics Assessment	25
Research Requirement	10
Three exams at 50 points each	150
Final Exam	50
Total Points	260

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	260 to 233
B	232 to 207
C	206 to 180
D	179 to 154
F	Less than 154

Research Requirement

It is important that students of scientific psychology learn firsthand something about the scientific nature of the discipline. Therefore, all students in PSYC 1103 and 2203 are required to participate in one of the two following research-related exercises. **The deadline for completing the research requirement is 2 weeks before finals week.** Students are required to complete 120 minutes of research participation.

<http://msutexas.edu/academics/libarts/psychology/undergraduate-research.php>

Quizzes

(10 Points) Study Skills Quiz-10 items over the first week of study skills. Will be completed in D2L. The quiz will be open for 24 hours and students have 10 minutes to complete it.

(15 Points) Assessment for Empirical and Quantitative Skills-15 items over research methods, sampling, and correlation vs causation. Core requirement for the State of Texas. Students will complete this independent quiz after reading Chapter 2.

Exams

(150 points-50 points each) Each **exam** will be worth 50 points and the lowest score will be dropped. This means a student who has earned an **"A"** average on the first 4 exams does not have to attend the final (those students will be notified after the 4th exam). Students with a **"B+"** or lower must attend the final (this is solely based upon test grades. No other points will be considered). Tests will be multiple choice. I reserve the right to add essay questions at any point during the semester.

Note: Exams will be taken in D2L and open from 8am day 1 till 10pm day 2. Students who do not have access to a computer/tablet and/or internet at home can take the exam at the Clark Student Center computer lab or the first floor Dillard computer lab. Lack of access to a computer/tablet and/or internet is not an excuse for failing to take an exam. Questions will be randomly chosen from the test bank. Each exam will last 60 minutes, only one test question will show on the screen, but you will be able to go back and see past questions.

Your exams require the LockDown Browser and a Webcam.

Most of the time you will not encounter any problems, however, listed below are some common issues.

1. Make sure you have the most recent version of the [LockDown Browser](#) on your computer. You can install the latest version at the link above.
2. The most common issue is the loss of connection during the test. If you get a blank page or a spinning wheel, you will need to exit the test, close the browser, and re-enter the test.
3. If you are taking this test at home, it is best that no other device is being used that requires the Internet while you are taking the test.
4. **Chromebook Laptops are NOT compatible with the LockDown Browser**, so you will need to locate a different device. If you have the ability to come to

campus, the LockDown Browser is on the computers in the Clark Student Center lab and the first floor Dillard lab. **Note:** There are no cameras on these computers, you will need to bring your own webcam or check one out from the Library.

If you need assistance with issues, please use the Report a Problem link at the top of this page or email d2lhelp.

Always let your Instructor know that you've had a technical difficulty and have reached out to us.

Please be aware of:

1. The LockDown Browser flags problematic behavior like going off camera, talking, or even being back lit. The instructor gets an alert. All moderate and high alert notifications result in the video being watched for evidence of academic dishonesty. Please don't sit with a lamp or bright light behind you as the camera has a hard time reading your face.
2. Please do not take an exam with anyone else present. If you are in an MSU computer lab, we understand that other people may be around. Please don't have conversations with them until after you complete the exam.
3. The **environment scans are not acceptable in many cases**. Students are to show the room including the desk/table top and the wall behind the computer. Students who fail to properly scan the environment are watched very closely. Any behavior that appears like a person is looking at notes or another device may be reported as academic dishonesty.

Writing Assignment

(25 Points) In-class ethics assessment-written assessment. Core requirement for the State of Texas. A key aspect of Psychological Research is the ethical treatment of participants. Although research ethics are strongly emphasized by modern psychologists, early studies sometimes crossed ethical lines, exposing participants to risks that would be considered unacceptable today. For this assignment, you will choose one famous psychological study that raised ethical concerns and analyze it using the following guidelines. In your essay you should:

1. Provide an overview of the study
 - a. What questions were the researchers trying to answer?
 - b. Who were the participants?
 - c. What were the procedures
 - d. Summarize the key findings
2. Analyze the ethics based on APA standards
 - a. Identify which ethical principles or standards were most relevant
 - b. Discuss any specific ethical concerns raised by the study
 - c. Clearly explain how the study violated these guidelines
3. Impact on Modern Psychological Research
 - a. How did this study influence ethical practices in modern psychology?
 - b. How would this study need to be redesigned today to meet ethical expectations?

Studies to Choose from: The Monster Study 1939, The Aversion Project 1970s and 1980s, The Stanford Prison Experiment 1970, The Monkey Drug Trials 1969, Landis' Facial Expressions Experiment 1924, Little Albert 1920, Learned Helplessness 1965, Milgram Study 1974, The Well of Despair 1960, David Reimer 1965-2004 (see Ethics Article Option folder under Content for brief descriptions of each study).

Final Exam

The final exam will take place on D2L during the first week of December. This exam is cumulative, meaning it will cover all chapters covered throughout the semester. Those that have an A in the course after taking all exams will be exempt from taking the final exam.

The final exam replaces your lowest test grade. Your grade **will not be affected negatively** by taking the final exam. Your grade can only improve.

Extra Credit

I do not accept extra credit for this course.

Late Work

Late work is not generally accepted. However, I recognize that at times emergencies happen and at times may accept late work if extenuating circumstances occur.

Make Up Work/Tests

Towards the end of the semester I will open up exams for those that did not take an exam for any reason. This will be on a specific day towards the end of the semester and will only be available for a few hours.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: August 24, 2026
- Deadline to file for graduation: September 21, 2026
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 23, 2026
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. Although in general students are graded on intellectual effort and performance rather than attendance, absences may lower the student's grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member. In those classes where attendance is considered as part of the grade, the instructor should so inform students of the specifics in writing at the beginning of the semester in a syllabus or separate attendance policy statement. An instructor who has an attendance policy must keep records on a daily basis. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to being dropped from the class. Instructor's records will stand as evidence of absences. A student with excessive absences may be dropped from a course by the instructor. Any individual faculty member or college has the authority to establish an attendance policy, providing the policy is in accordance with the General University Policies.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ****Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.*** Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Some faculty may not permit recordings of their classes. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Instructor Class Policies

Unless you have accommodations that allow electronic devices to be used in the classroom, I have a **zero-tolerance policy** regarding electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, iPads, laptops, recording devices, etc.).

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 8/24 to 8/28	Semester Overview/Course Requirements Study and Test Taking Skills	8/29 Study Skills quiz on D2L closes at 10 pm
Week 2 8/31 to 9/9	Chapter 1 – Introduction to Psychology	N/A
Week 3 9/11 to 9/21	Chapter 2 - Psychological Research	Writing Assignment Due 9/13 at 10 pm
Exam I on D2L closes 9/23 at 10 pm		
Week 4 9/23 to 10/2	Chapter 4 – States of Consciousness	N/A
Week 5 10/5 – 10/14	Chapter 11 - Personality	N/A
Exam II on D2L closes 10/16 at 10 pm		
Week 6 10/16 to 10/26	Chapter 9 – Lifespan Development	N/A
Week 7 10/28 to 11/6	Chapter 6 - Learning	Research participation due 11/6 at 10 pm
Exam III on D2L closes 11/8 at 10 pm		
Week 9 11/9 to 11/16	Chapter 15 – Psychological Disorders	N/A
Week 10 11/18 to 12/1	Chapter 16 – Therapy and Treatment	N/A
Exam IV on D2L closes 12/3 at 10 pm		