McLennan COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WACO, TEXAS

COURSE SYLLABUS
AND
INSTRUCTOR PLAN

General Psychology
PSYC 2301

Susan Nash Spooner, Ph.D.

NOTE: This is an 16-week online course.

COVID 19 Notice:

McLennan Community College is committed to providing you with every resource you need to reach your academic goals including your safety. We will continue to monitor the evolving situation with COVID 19 and adjust our safety guidelines to make sure we offer a safe environment for you and our faculty. Please make sure to consult your faculty and the MCC website at https://www.mclennan.edu/crisis-management/coronavirus-updates/index.html on any changes to these guidelines.

Course Description:

PSYC 2301 General Psychology is a survey of the major psychological topics, theories, and approaches to the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. It includes topics such as the scientific methods used in psychology, development of personality, learning, sensation and perception, and abnormal psychology. Semester Hours 3 (3 lec). *Prerequisite:* Must have passed the reading portion of the TSI Assessment or have credit for INRW 0402. (For additional information regarding the course content, see Learning Outcomes and Core Objectives below.)

Required Text & Materials:

Your **required** course materials for this class are included in your course fees and are substantially discounted. You will be provided instructions on how to access and use these materials the first day of class. You will be required to use your McLennan email address, so please make sure you can read and reply to emails via that account.

Instructor Information:

Instructor Name: Susan Nash Spooner, Ph.D.
MCC E-mail: SSpooner@mclennan.edu
Office Phone Number: 254-299-8932
Office Location: MAC 309

Conference Hours:

Please contact me using your MCC email address. I am at my computer between 8:30 and 9:30 Monday and Wednesday mornings, as well as many other times. Unless I am teaching class or in a meeting, I tend to check emails routinely throughout the day. However, please give me up to 24 hours to respond to you on weekdays. On many weekends I am unavailable. I will respond to messages sent on the weekends as quickly as possible, but messages sent after 3pm on Friday may not be answered until the next Monday morning.

Zoom appointments. If you need to visit with me, please send me an email using your MCC email account, and we can set up a zoom meeting. I am available at many times. If you prefer, we also can chat on the phone, and sometimes email will suffice. I am flexible! ***If you need to visit with me, please let me know, and we will work something out!***

Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations:

Psychology is the systematic study of behavior and mental processes and the factors that influence those processes. This course will *survey* the field of psychology with special emphasis on the use of the scientific method as the means for exploring the mind and behavior. Consideration is given to such topics as the specialties within psychology, current psychological perspectives, developmental and social psychology, brain/behavior relations & drug effects, learning and memory, personality, mental health, and abnormal behaviors.

Communication between instructor and students: Because this is an exclusively online course, the majority our communication will be through written messages. Written communication can be a difficult method of communication. First, because we cannot see the expressions of the writer, it is difficult at times to interpret the tone of the messages. For that reason, I often include emoticons to help with the problem of tone. Another reason messages and email are problematic is the fact that many people use informal English in such correspondence. While this may be appropriate if you are writing to a friend, it is not appropriate in a college course when writing to

your professor. Communication between a professor and a student is a professional communication. It is expected that any communication will be professional and respectful.

An example of an inappropriate message to a professor would be one like this:

> hey i didn't see a grade for my assignment and so can u tell me my grade?
> 2cute4u@bbd.com

An appropriate message:

> Dear Dr. Spooner,
>
> I finished and submitted my assignment on memory. I was concerned that I might not have submitted it correctly, so I was wondering if you could check to make sure it is there. Thank you!
>
> Jane Smith

PLEASE BE CAREFUL!!!! If you are upset about a grade or an assignment, etc., your emotions may result in your message to me sounding terse and rude (even if that is not what you intended). Please re-read any messages before sending. I promise to always be respectful in my communication with you, and I expect the same in return.

Study skills: To successfully complete this internet course, students will need to have good study skills. The following information might help you as you plan for your study time.

Study time expected: You should log in to Brightspace and our course daily. If you were in a face-to-face class, you would spend 3 hours IN class each week, and be expected to spend at least that much time working on the course outside class each week. *Please plan on spending a minimum of 6-12 hours per week on this course.*

Learning the material: In a course like this, it is obvious that a student must read the assigned material in the text. However, it may not be so obvious that most students will need to read the material more than once, perhaps as many as three or four times. Psychology can be dense; re-reading is just an essential part of learning it. It is very helpful to take reading notes as you go. Summarizing the material helps you to put it in a form in which you can more easily remember it. Because we will cover a significant amount of dense material in this course and because the final exam is cumulative, it is imperative that you diligently take good reading notes as you go through the course.

An Internet course requires a high level of motivation and independence. Depending upon your individual situation and characteristics, an Internet course can be an excellent way to learn. If you follow the guidelines given in this syllabus, you have a good chance of succeeding in this class.

Expectations of an online student: If you are taking an online class you need to have access to an up-to-date, functional computer on a regular basis so that you will be able to complete all the course work. In most cases, you will be expected to check email, discussions, announcements, etc. daily. There are computers located on MCC's campus that are available for student use. Not having access to a computer for any reason is not a valid excuse for missing an assignment or exam.

Methods of Teaching and Learning:

An Internet course requires a great deal of personal discipline and work. Students enrolled in Internet courses should plan to work on those courses for approximately 6-12 hours/week in long semesters. In this class you may be

required to read, do written reports/papers, post to a discussion board, conduct internet research, take exams & quizzes, and work in an online tutorial software lab.

Reading is the primary means by which the Internet course works. The Internet student must be able to read and comprehend content independently to succeed. That includes reading instructions as well as the textbook assignments carefully. Virtually everyone who reads Psychology, including professionals, finds that it is necessary to read most psychological material more than once. As beginning students of psychology, you should expect to read the assignments two, three, or even more times. The material can be dense, complex, and challenging. Further, since we all tend to see ourselves as "amateur psychologists," we tend to assume we "know" the material. I have found that this false sense of knowing the information results in less studying and poor exam grades. Most students must work harder to really learn the information and pass the tests in psychology.

All course information will on Brightspace. Students are responsible for consulting Brightspace daily to read announcements and to note any changes to course structure, assignments, etc. In addition to the assigned readings, you will be expected to do several other graded assignments for each Unit during the semester.

Course Objectives and/or Competencies:

Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human. Courses involve the exploration of behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

- **Critical Thinking (CT) --** to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
- **Communications Skill (COM) --** to include effective written, oral, and visual communication.
- **Empirical & Quantitative Skills (EQS) --** to include applications of scientific and mathematical concepts.
- **Social Responsibility (SR)** -- to include intercultural competency, civic knowledge, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global

Learning Outcomes:

Psychology is the systematic study of behavior and mental processes and the factors that influence those processes. This course will survey the field of psychology with special emphasis on the use of the scientific method as the means for exploring the mind and behavior. Consideration is given to such topics as the specialties within psychology, current psychological perspectives, developmental and social psychology, brain/behavior relations & drug effects, learning and memory, personality, mental health and abnormal behaviors. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

1. Identify various research methods and their characteristics used in the scientific study of psychology. (CT, COM, EQS, SR)
   Taught through lectures, assigned reading, and class discussions
   Assessed by objective exams, written assignment, and/or class projects.
2. Describe the historical influences and early schools of thought that shaped the field of psychology. (CT, COM, EQS, SR)
   Taught through lectures, assigned reading, and class discussions
   Assessed by objective exams, written assignment, and/or class projects.
3. Describe some of the prominent perspectives and approaches used in the study of psychology. (CT, COM, EQS, SR)

Taught through lectures, assigned reading, and class discussions
Assessed by objective exams, written assignment, and/or class projects.

4. Use terminology unique to the study of psychology. (CT, COM, EQS, SR)
   Taught through lectures, assigned reading, and class discussions
   Assessed by objective exams, written assignment, and/or class projects.
5. Describe accepted approaches and standards in psychological assessment and evaluation. (CT, COM, EQS, SR)
   Taught through lectures, assigned reading, and class discussions
   Assessed by objective exams, written assignment, and/or class projects.
6. Identify factors in physiological and psychological processes involved in human behavior. (CT, COM, EQS, SR)
   Taught through lectures, assigned reading, and class discussions
   Assessed by objective exams, written assignment, and/or class projects.

Course Outline:

Unit 1 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- Ch. 1: The Science of Psychology
- Ch. 6: Memory
- Ch. 7: Thinking, Intelligence, and Language

Unit 2 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- Ch. 8: Development
- Ch. 9: Motivation and Emotion
- Ch. 10: Personality
- Ch. 11: Social Psychology

Unit 3 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- Ch. 2: The Brain and Behavior
- Ch. 3: Sensation & Perception
- Ch. 4: States of Consciousness
- Ch. 14: Health Psychology

Unit 4 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- Ch. 5: Learning
- Ch. 12: Psychological Disorders
- Ch. 13: Therapies

This course outline is subject to change. Updated information, more specific details and any other changes will be posted in Brightspace. Please find your Course Calendar that includes the detailed weekly reading assignments and the exam dates posted on Brightspace under Reading Assignments and Exam Dates. More specific weekly assignments that include quizzes, assignments, and other readings will be posted each week on the Announcements page of Brightspace.

Course Grading Information:

Course grades are based on a weighted average system. **I do not use a point system**.

This course is organized into units. Each unit will have specific weekly assignments and activities with due dates. These weekly assignments will culminate with a unit test. You will find the assigned readings and exam information in the **Readings and Exam Dates** document posted in Brightspace. This document lists the topics to be covered,

textbook sections to read and the material covered on each unit test. It also provides a tentative timeline for the course. **Specific assignments and due dates will be posted as Announcements each week.** Students are responsible for carefully reading the instructions and submitting the assignment according to those instructions; not following assignment instructions will result in lower grades. Students should always keep a copy of their submitted work on their computer or have a hard copy. There are times when submitted work gets lost. It is the student's responsibility to have copies of all work submitted.

How do I earn my final course grade?

Extra Credit: I do **not** offer extra credit because I want you to spend your time doing your assignments and preparing for the quizzes and exams. Please do not ask for extra credit opportunities. Do well on your required class assignments and exams.

Smartbook Questions: All Smartbook grades will be graded on a 100% scale, averaged at the end of the semester, and count as 10% of your final grade. You may not make up any missed Smartbook assignments. However, at the end of the semester I will drop the two lowest grades from the Smartbook chapters.

Chapter Quizzes and other Assignments: Other assignments, quizzes, discussion board postings, etc., will be graded on a 100% scale; then all these grades will be averaged and will count as 10% of your final grade. Missed assignments may be made up based on the course make-up policy (keep reading!).

These assignments are for the students' benefit. The purpose of these assignments is to provide feedback on how well you know the material before you take the unit tests. These assignments will be posted in Brightspace and the grades should automatically be put into the Brightspace gradebook. *Together, these two categories are worth more than a test grade!* It only makes sense to do well on all these assignments so that your Assignment averages are high and will contribute positively to your test average.

Unit Exams: There will be 4 multiple-choice **Unit** exams. They will be taken online, and the scores will be posted on Brightspace. The four Unit Exams will count as 70% of your final grade. No exams may be taken over; however, you may make up one missed exam as per the course make-up policy (keep reading!).

Cumulative (Comprehensive) Final Exam: At the end of the course, there will be a required **cumulative (comprehensive)** final exam. The final exam will count as 10% of your final grade. Cumulative means that the entire course will be covered on the exam. Sometimes you may hear Comprehensive Exam, which is typically the same thing. The final exam will be comprised of multiple-choice questions like the unit exams and will be timed. You must finish the exam within the allotted timeframe. These questions will be taken directly from the material covered by the text and will require that students have knowledge of course concepts and be able to apply/use such concepts. Although the questions will not be identical to those on the unit exams, they will be similar. The final exam will be available for a set time interval. If for any reason you are unable to take the final exam, you must contact me immediately or you may be assigned a course grade of "F".

Rules for taking online exams: *You are free to use any chapter notes and the textbook. The unit exams and the final comprehensive exam are timed. If a student takes more than the allotted time to finish a unit exam or the final exam, one percentage point will be deducted from the score for each minute that exceeds the specified time.* It also is very important to be using a computer that will not likely lose its Internet connection, for losing this connection may result in the student receiving a zero for the test. Exams may be taken in the McLennan library or the McLennan testing center if a student needs a computer with a connection that is secure. If a student encounters any problem while taking an exam, the student may be required to come to the McLennan campus (or other approved testing site) or set a Zoom meeting with the professor to take an alternative exam. Exams are available for an entire week, so plan and do not miss the deadline. Please see the Make-up Policy for Exams if you miss taking an exam. No exam grades will be dropped.

Make-up Policy for Smartbook chapter questions, chapter quizzes, and other assignments: Announcements in Brightspace will provide specific details and due dates prior to the start of each week and each unit. Assignments and quizzes will not be available after the due date. *You will not be allowed to make up any missed Smartbook chapter questions, however, at the end of the semester I will drop the two lowest grades from the Smartbook chapters.* Students will be allowed to make up one missed assignment (other than the Smartbook questions). After using your one make-up, any additional assignments will receive a zero. To make up an assignment or quiz, you must send me a message asking for the make-up at least 48-hours before you need to take it, and you must make-up the assignment by the deadline for that unit exam. For example, if you miss Quiz 1, which is part of Unit 1, you must contact me at least 48 hours before, and make up that quiz before, the deadline for the Exam 1. From the Attendance policy in this syllabus: *"If a student does not complete 80% of all assignments, he or she will be considered non-participating and may be dropped according to the guidelines of the attendance policy."*

Make-up Policy for Exams: Announcements in Brightspace will provide specific details and due dates for each unit exam. Each exam will be available for an entire week. If you miss an exam, you must contact me within 2 days of that exam deadline to schedule your make up exam. Make up exams will be taken during Week 16. Ten percentage points will be deducted from the make-up exam grade. You may only make up **one** exam. From the Attendance policy in this syllabus: "*…if a student fails to take an exam and does not contact the instructor and make up the exam according to the syllabus policy, the student may be dropped according to the guidelines of the attendance policy."*

Current Grade in Brightspace: In the Brightspace grade book you will see a Current Grade column. Throughout the semester this is the best current estimate of your grade. After all grades are entered, including the final exam grade, then this column will reflect your final course grade.

Grade Calculation
Smartbook Questions will be averaged and will equal 10%.
Other assignments will be averaged and will equal 10%.
Unit Tests (four tests, 17.5% each) will equal 70%.
Final Exam (**cumulative**) will equal 10%.
For a TOTAL of 100%.

Your final grade should be posted to WebAdvisor within 24 hours of the end of the final exam.

For you analytical folks, here is the formula used to determine your final grade:

(Avg. of Smartbook * 0.10)
plus
(Avg. of Assignments * 0.10)
plus
(Avg. of 4 unit exams * 0.70)
plus
(Final Exam * 0.10)

Student Behavioral Expectations or Conduct Policy:

While the University experience is one which values academic freedom and liberty, it cannot reach its goals of facilitating learning if some structure does not exist. To that end, then, please review the following list of appropriate behaviors and act accordingly. If a student chooses to violate these expectations, I reserve the right request a change in their behavior. Repeat offenders may be permanently withdrawn from the class with an F or a W.

- Students are expected to engage in the work of the class.
- Students are expected to put in the requisite work each day/week, as if they were sitting in a classroom.
- Students are expected to participate until the end of class.
- Students are expected to use good manners, be courteous and act with decorum toward their instructor, their peers and anyone who may be facilitating the learning process.
- Students are encouraged to ask questions at any time.
- Work is expected on the date it is due.
- Students are expected to abide by the policies in the McLennan Highlander Guide.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Plagiarism is cheating and is defined as the unacknowledged borrowing of information, wording, organization, or ideas. Whether the original source is public (e.g., a newspaper, book, journal article, the Web) or private (e.g., a classmate's paper), you need to indicate your indebtedness to it. Where you repeat the exact language of your source, you must treat the borrowed material as a quotation and place it within quotation marks. However, by merely changing a few words or the word order or by paraphrasing, you do not avoid plagiarism.

In an online class, examples of plagiarism/cheating can include taking an exam for someone else, taking an exam in collaboration with someone who also is taking the exam, turning in the same assignment, and printing an exam and asking for a retake. If any type of plagiarism / cheating is suspected, all parties may receive a zero for the assignment, may be required to do an alternate assignment or exam, may be required to come to campus and make-up the assignment or exam, and/or may be dropped from the class. Consequences are at the discretion of the instructor. Instances of plagiarism/cheating will be reported to Student Discipline.

McLennan Attendance Policy:

*** Click Here for the MCC Attendance/Absences Policy**
(https://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide/policies.html)
Click on the link above for the college policies on attendance and absences.

In addition to the MCC Attendance/Absences policy, our course includes the following additions regarding attendance in an online class:

McLennan requires instructors of Internet classes to devise a method for likening "attendance" with "participation." In other words, since there is no physical attendance in an online course, the instructor is obliged to come up with a plan for participation which substitutes for actual coming to class as is required in face-to-face courses. **In this course**, participation includes completing the unit assignments and tests by the due dates (assignments are anything assigned to be turned in to the instructor by a particular date). As long as a student is completing unit assignments, taking quizzes, and taking exams by the required due dates, he or she is considered to be participating. *If a student does not complete 80% of all assignments, he or she will be considered non-participating and may be dropped according to the guidelines of the attendance policy. If a student does not participate in the course for a total of 21 days (3 weeks), he or she will be considered non-participating and may be dropped according to the guidelines of the attendance policy. Finally, if a student fails to take an exam and does not contact the instructor and make up the exam according to the syllabus policy, the student may be dropped according to the guidelines of the attendance policy.* If you plan to drop the course, please message, or email me and let me know. It is your responsibility to notify me that you intend to withdraw. If you do not initiate the drop for the course, it may result in a grade of F for the course. Students are responsible for knowing my specific attendance policy as well the entire McLennan College attendance policy.

MCC Bookstore Website: http://www.mclennan.edu/bookstore/

* *You will need to access each link separately through your Web browser (for example: Mozilla Firefox, Chrome, Microsoft Edge or Safari) to print each link's information.*

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McLennan COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ACADEMIC RESOURCES/POLICIES

Accommodations/ADA Statement:
Any student who is a qualified individual with a disability may request reasonable accommodations to assist with providing equal access to educational opportunities. Students should contact the Accommodations Coordinator as soon as possible to provide documentation and make necessary arrangements. Once that process is completed, appropriate verification will be provided to the student and instructor. Please note that instructors are not required to provide classroom accommodations to students until appropriate verification has been provided by the Accommodations Coordinator. For additional information, please visit www.mclennan.edu/disability.

Students with questions or who require assistance with disabilities involving physical, classroom, or testing accommodations should contact:

disabilities@mclennan.edu
254-299-8122
Room 319, Student Services Center

Title IX:
We care about your safety, and value an environment where students and instructors can successfully teach and learn together. If you or someone you know experiences unwelcomed behavior, we are here to help. Individuals who would like to report an incident of sexual misconduct are encouraged to immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator at titleix@mclennan.edu or by calling Dr. Drew Canham (Chief of Staff for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion/Title IX) at (254) 299-8645. Individuals also may contact the MCC Police Department at 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center at MCC at (254) 299-8210. The MCC Student Counseling Center is a confidential resource for students. Any student or employee may report sexual harassment anonymously by visiting http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mclennan/.

Go to McLennan's Title IX webpage at www.mclennan.edu/titleix/. It contains more information about definitions, reporting, confidentiality, resources, and what to do if you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct, gender-based violence or the crimes of rape, acquaintance rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence, or domestic violence.

Student Support/Resources:
MCC provides a variety of services to support student success in the classroom and in your academic pursuits to include counseling, tutors, technology help desk, advising, financial aid, etc. A listing of these and the many other services available to our students is available at http://www.mclennan.edu/campus-resource-guide/

College personnel recognize that food, housing, and transportation are essential for student success. If you are having trouble securing these resources or want to explore strategies for balancing life and school, we encourage you to contact a Success Coach by calling (254) 299-8226 or emailing SuccessCoach@mclennan.edu. Students may visit the Completion Center Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. to schedule a meeting with a Success Coach and receive additional resources and support to help reach academic and personal goals. Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) provides free food by appointment to students, faculty and staff based on household size. Text (254) 870-7573 to schedule a pantry appointment. The Completion Center and pantry are located on the Second Floor of the Student Services Center (SSC).

MCC Foundation Emergency Grant Fund:
Unanticipated expenses, such as car repairs, medical bills, housing, or job loss can affect us all. Should an unexpected expense arise, the MCC Foundation has an emergency grant fund that may be able to assist you. Please go to https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/scholarships-and-resources/emergencygrant.html to find out more about the emergency grant. The application can be found at https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf.

MCC Academic Integrity Statement:
Go to www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity for information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating.

Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's D2L|Brightspace:
Go to https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty-and-Staff-Commons/requirements.html for information on the minimum system requirements needed to reliably access your courses in MCC's D2L|Brightspace learning management system.

Minimum Technical Skills:
Students should have basic computer skills, knowledge of word processing software, and a basic understanding of how to use search engines and common web browsers.

Backup Plan for Technology:
In the event MCC's technology systems are down, you will be notified via your MCC student email address. Please note that all assignments and activities will be due on the date specified in the Instructor Plan, unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

Email Policy:
McLennan Community College would like to remind you of the policy (http://www.mclennan.edu/employees/policy-manual/docs/E-XXXI-B.pdf) regarding college email. All students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to use their McLennan email addresses when conducting college business.

A student's McLennan email address is the preferred email address that college employees should use for official college information or business. Students are expected to read and, if needed, respond in a timely manner to college emails.

Instructional Uses of Email:
Faculty members can determine classroom use of email or electronic communications. Faculty should expect and encourage students to check the college email on a regular basis. Faculty should inform students in the course syllabus if another communication method is to be used and of any special or unusual expectations for electronic communications.

If a faculty member prefers not to communicate by email with their students, it should be reflected in the course syllabus and information should be provided for the preferred form of communication.

Email on Mobile Devices:
The College recommends that you set up your mobile device to receive McLennan emails. If you need assistance with set-up, you may email Helpdesk@mclennan.edu for help.

Forwarding Emails:
You may forward emails that come to your McLennan address to alternate email addresses; however, the College will not be held responsible for emails forwarded to an alternate address that may be lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

Disclaimer:
The resources and policies listed above are merely for informational purposes and are subject to change without notice or obligation. The College reserves the right to change policies and other requirements in compliance with State and Federal laws. The provisions of this document do not constitute a contract.