Syllabus

Introductory Psychology - PSYC-1310

Dr. Chris S. Dula, Instructor

Ms. Barbara Chamberlain, Course Coordinator - Mr. Jim Fulbright, Course Coordinator

Course Description  An introduction to the basic concepts, principles, and theories of the science of psychology. Topics included are biological and developmental processes, perception and awareness, learning and thinking, motivation and emotion, personality and individuality, adjustment and mental health, and social behavior.

Course Objectives  This course has been designed as an introduction to psychology as a science of behavior. It includes topics such as the biological foundations for behavior, learning, personality, emotion, abnormal behavior, treatment of psychological disorders, social and developmental psychology, psychological testing and intelligence. The main objective is to learn basic principles and concepts in psychology. You will also be encouraged to develop critical thinking skills and find opportunities to apply the material to your own life and circumstances.

Specific Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will have a basic understanding and be able to competently discuss:

1. the differences between biological, cognitive, developmental, and social components of psychology;
2. the major theoretical and historical contributions to psychology;
3. the scientific method, basic research design concepts, and basic statistics;
4. the brain, nervous system, and the endocrine system;
5. major theories of development, including organismic versus environmental influences;
6. basic learning/conditioning principles, cognitive processes/biases, memory, and
intelligence;
7. major theories of personality and their empirical support;
8. the influence of others on us as individuals (and vice versa) and group information processing;
9. broad groups of psychopathology, the distinction between psychologists and other mental health professionals and, treatment approaches for psychological disorders.

**Description of Tests**  There will be a total of 5 multiple-choice tests, one for each module. All tests will cover the material presented during the lecture videos. Each test will consist of 25 multiple-choice items (4 points per item for total of 100 points). Tests are timed, limited to 30 MINUTES, and must be taken in one sitting. You may use your notes and other materials to take the test, but as you only have very limited amount of time to take the test, it is strongly suggested that you study the material very diligently before taking the tests. **You have ONLY one attempt at each test.** You may NOT work with anyone else on your tests.

**Chris S. Dula’s Personal Statement on Education**  My appreciation for academia has its roots in a non-traditional source, namely the industry of construction. After my high school graduation, I moved out on my own and by random chance became involved in the trade of floor installation. Eventually, I became proficient (i.e., made my living) in that and eventually two other trades (carpentry and sheet rock hanging/metal stud framing). During this period I discovered that skilled labor, no matter how skilled, was still laborious. Thus, it was a tiresome way to earn a living day in and day out. Working as a tradesman offered little in terms of long-term security and intellectual challenges, though it did offer a wealth of character development opportunities. I have the deepest respect for people who earn their living plying a trade or in service work. After five years of trade work, and with parental support and my own hard work, I was lucky enough to begin college.

I started at Central Piedmont Community College in 1992, where I was introduced to Psychology and Philosophy, both of which became passions of mine. I earned an A.A. degree (GPA = 3.9) and entered the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. There, I earned a B.S. in Psychology and a B.A. in Philosophy (GPA = 3.9). I graduated from Appalachian State University in 2000, earning my M.A. in Clinical Psychology (GPA = 4.0).
graduated from Virginia Tech in 2003 with my Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology (GPA = 3.9). During my academic career, while always taking full-time academic loads (and often overloads), I always worked at least half-time (20-30 hours per week, plus construction side jobs) to support my family, who mean the world to me. I have been a full-time father since 1993.

My academic achievements came not from being any kind of a genius (e.g., I scored in the 50th percentile on the GRE), but from a strong work ethic where I was willing to recognize how much effort would be involved in succeeding and dedicating myself to accomplishing all the requisite tasks. I am now enjoying a career in the field of my choice. These factors and others too numerable to mention, have led me to the following general conclusions regarding higher education (not necessarily in order of importance after #1).

**Dr. Dula’s Top Twelve Academic Thoughts**

1. Above all, obtain your education while maintaining the highest of ethical standards.
2. Making an education one of great quality is as much the responsibility of the student as it is of the teacher, and perhaps more so.
3. Look at your quest for an education as a blessing and not a curse, and adjust your attitude accordingly regarding any demands it makes of you.
4. A quality education creates valuable intellectual property, which can never be taken away.
5. Obtaining a quality education can create opportunities for you in professional arenas that you’re interested in, where experience and/or charm will not.
6. Actively search for avenues of study that will lead you to a career that you will enjoy.
7. Do the very best you can, all of the time. Don’t worry as to whether it’s “good enough” for someone else. Work such that you are genuinely proud of yourself.
8. Never believe that your academic achievements or lack thereof, make you any better or worse of a person than anybody else.
9. Have respect for all points-of-view, including your own, and always try to see things from the other side(s).
10. Have respect for all your fellow students and teachers, and never get offended by
anyone else’s opinion. When appropriate, don’t be afraid to express your own considered opinion.

11. Always be willing to teach others what you have learned (even, and sometimes especially, for free).

With enough **DESIRE, EFFORT & PERSISTENCE** you can learn and do almost anything!