

Sul Ross State University  
Behavioral and Social Science Department  
PSY 1302 Course Syllabus

**Course Title:** Introduction to Psychology

**Required Text:** Please note that you need to purchase the textbook or digital platform access for **(Achieve for Psychology with Myers & DeWall Psychology in Everyday Life ebook)** for this course.

**Contact Information:** Maureen Pakalapati

**Office Hours:** Fridays 4pm to 6pm EST. Appointment scheduled by email only.

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**Description**

Psychology is the *scientific* study of behavior and mental processes. Science is important because psychologists use the same scientific method that biologists, chemists, agricultural scientists, physicists and geologists use. But there is a slight difference! Our ‘objects’ are human beings and not necessarily inanimate objects. Essentially human beings are our subjects, and we use the scientific method to observe, analyze, describe, and infer their behavior and mental processes. Now, studying behavior is clearer because you can actually observe how many times a human being may act, but mental processes become tricky. In order to observe, analyze, describe and infer/predict mental processes, we use more sophisticated methods like neuroscientific procedures and brain imaging.

In this class, we will focus solely on observable phenomena in psychology and understand why this is a scientific discipline. We will track the development of psychology and research, and venture into examining personality, the body and brain, learning, perception and action, emotion and motivation, memory, and psychological disorders.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Throughout the course, these are the outcomes that we will aspire to gain:

1. Given the basic characteristics of the *science* of psychology, students can explain the nature of psychology as a discipline and the different divisions in the American Psychological Association (APA).

**Method of Formative Assessment:** Activities, Participation and Exams

2. Given the necessity for ethical behavior and social responsibility in all aspects of the science and practice of psychology, students can identify research ethics and the psychologists who abided by

those ethics, and explain why ethics are important.

**Method of Formative Assessment:** Checklists, Activities, Participation and Exams

3. Given the connections between mind and body, students can label parts of the brain and body that impact psychological processes and describe the mechanisms and/or operations that enable those connections to be viable or not.

**Method of Formative Assessment:** Checklists, Activities, Participation and Exams

4. Given the significance of the scientific model and the importance of this model to the discipline of psychology, students can discuss basic research and statistical concepts in scientific psychology, including experimental and correlation methods.

**Method of Formative Assessment:** Checklists, Activities, Participation and Exams

5. Given sociocultural and international contexts that influence individual differences in a person's beliefs, values, and interactions, students can examine how psychology's main principles in learning, perception and action, and memory have demonstrated those differences.

**Method of Formative Assessment:** Checklists, Activities, Participation and Exams

6. Given how psychological states can negatively or positively affect personal development, students will evaluate themselves using theories from emotion, personality, and psychological states, to determine the validity/reliability of these theories. In addition, the knowledge gained will hopefully strengthen self-understanding and intercultural competence to effectively engage with others in local and global communities.

**Method of Summative Assessment:** Checklists, Activities, Participation, Exams and Portfolio

### Recognizing Course Requirements:

1. **The text MUST be obtained.**
  - a. Please follow the instructions in Blackboard to access the Macmillan Learning website for registering for the course **for the full term**.
  - b. The cost of the textbook for this course is \$54.99
2. Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

3. I am to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create a supportive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

### Core Curriculum (2025-2026)

1. *Social Responsibility*. Students learn intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

### Required by Americans with Disability Act Statement (ADA) - ADA Statement

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director or Ronnie Harris, LPC, Counselor, at 432-837-8203 or email [mschwartze@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartze@sulross.edu) or [ronnie.harris@sulross.edu](mailto:ronnie.harris@sulross.edu).

### Honoring Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. **Students should submit work that is their own** and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Other instances of academic misconduct are lying in connection with your academic work, cheating, misrepresenting facts and/or collusion and **using open AI** sources unless *permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall. All these are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and will be dealt with **most severely** to the extent of the university's disciplinary policy and/or through legal action if indicated. An instructor who determines that a student has been dishonest academically can at a minimum issue no credit for the assignment/exam, and/or pursue more severe penalties, including but not limited to failing the course. Further information about *Academic Honesty* can be read in the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

In this course, students shall give credit to AI tools whenever used, even if only to generate ideas rather than usable text or illustrations. When using AI tools on assignments, add an appendix showing (a) the entire exchange, highlighting the most relevant sections; (b) a description of precisely which AI tools were used (e.g. ChatGPT private subscription version or DALL-E free version), (c) an explanation of how the AI tools were used (e.g. to generate ideas, turns of phrase, elements of text, long stretches of text, lines of argument, pieces of evidence, maps of the conceptual territory, illustrations of key concepts, etc.); (d) an account of why AI tools were used (e.g. to save time, to surmount writer's block, to stimulate thinking, to handle mounting stress, to clarify prose, to translate text, to experiment for fun, etc.). Students shall not use AI tools during in-class examinations. Overall, AI tools should be used wisely and reflectively with an aim to deepen understanding of subject matter.

### Observing Class guidelines

#### Class Participation

This is a course that requires online engagement and discussion. **Class attendance IS REQUIRED and will be determined with ONLINE participation.** Class participation will be worth **20%** of the final grade. The percentage is considerable so your presence will *help* your ability to complete all of assignments for this class.

**Online Participation** - You are expected to participate in ALL online activities in **Macmillan Achieve**. You should be actively involved. *Active involvement includes active listening, writing, participating via an online poll or quiz, engaging in online discussions, and taking exams by the deadline dates.* To be successful in this course, you need to check your Blackboard messages daily, and Macmillan announcements and deadlines, and keep up with **Achieve for Psychology with Myers & DeWall Psychology in Everyday Life** readings.

**Attendance and Online Meetings** – Class attendance is governed by the SRSU Undergraduate Academic Regulations policy stated in the schedule of classes. If you are unable to participate online and in class frequently (every week), please discuss the reason with me and arrange to review the online notes, handouts or assignments you may have missed. Excused absences entail established religious observance, or providing emergency, university-authorized, legal, or medical documentation. **Excessive unexcused absences (more than 3 weeks) will result in a failing grade for the course.** Most of the course curriculum is FULLY ONLINE with Macmillan Achieve and we will be meeting Tuesday and Thursday, 1:45pm to 3:05pm Blackboard Collaborate. You are expected to attend these Blackboard Collaborate meetings. I elaborate further in these meetings on the **Achieve for Psychology with Myers & DeWall Psychology in Everyday Life** readings and answer questions about the course.

**Regular communications with the professor:** It is essential that you keep me current on your progress and any difficulties you may be having so that I can respond in real time to support your success. The most efficient way of contacting me via email- [msh25jh@sulross.edu](mailto:msh25jh@sulross.edu)).

GENERAL QUESTIONS are to be posted to in the Messages platform in Blackboard. For PERSONAL

or PRIVATE ISSUES email me at [msp25jh@sulross.edu](mailto:msp25jh@sulross.edu). I strive to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours during the work week (Monday-Friday), please resend your email.

**Course Behaviors - Respect and Disruptions:** Watch the VIDEO on NETTIQUETTE - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk\\_Zv7nB8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zv7nB8) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80uRE972uQ0>.

You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts in this web-based course in the same manner as in a face-to-face course, to the extent that we need to return online fully. Please treat each other with dignity and respect and avoid disruptive behaviors. You are responsible for knowing what behaviors are acceptable versus unacceptable in online courses.

### Late Assignments/Projects/Checklists

You are expected to meet assignment/checklist deadlines. Quizzes and pre-class reflections submitted after their due dates will be marked as zero. Late assignments or projects will be reduced by 5% for the first day of lateness and for every day for 14 days beyond that for unexcused absences. For excused absences (university-authorized, legal or medical issues), speak with me **before the absence** so arrangements can be made.

### Discussing Evaluation

*Quizzes* – This is a 10-question chapter quiz given to ensure that you have read the chapters and understand the most pertinent concepts. Some of these questions will be on the midterm and final exams. These quizzes are available immediately after the chapter is discussed in class and are **due** before the following chapter is introduced. These are automatically graded. Quizzes are only accessible for the time posted so make sure you do them as soon as they are available!

*Assignments* – These exercises will be assigned for each chapter in the *Macmillan Achieve for Psychology with Myers & DeWall Psychology in Everyday Life*. When you log into Macmillan Achieve, you will see that these assignments have due dates. The first half of the assignments must be completed by the midterm date – **Tuesday October 21st at 11:59pm** and the second half of the assignments must be completed by the end of the semester – **Monday December 8th at 11:59pm**.

*Pre-Class Reflections* – These reflections will be assigned for before each chapter in the *Macmillan Achieve for Psychology with Myers & DeWall Psychology in Everyday Life*. When you log into Macmillan Achieve, you will see that these exercises are assigned every Thursday and Sunday at 11:59pm before a new chapter begins. The reflections will only be available before a new class chapter begins.

*Video Activities* – These video activities will be assigned for some chapters in the *Macmillan Achieve for Psychology with Myers & DeWall Psychology in Everyday Life*. The first half must be completed by

the midterm date – **Tuesday October 21st at 11:59pm** and the second half must be completed by the end of the semester – **Monday December 8th at 11:59pm**.

*Midterm and Final Exams* - Two (2) exams will be given during the course of this term. They consist of 50 to 60 questions each. Some of the questions for these two exams will be derived from the quizzes. The dates of the exams are planned for the dates listed below in the class schedule. Please note that there will be no make-up exams unless it is an excused absence with corresponding documentation.

*Self-Introduction* – Write two pages about yourself and your experience in this class. Use one psychology vocabulary word, and the name of a psychologist in your introduction that inspired you (50 points). The deadline for this paper is **Wednesday December 3rd**.

### Grading

Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class sessions and to engage in thoughtful discussions in light of these assignments. In addition, students will take an in-class midterm and an in-class final exam (objective short answer, multiple choice and/or essay).

<b>Grading:</b>	<b>1000 points total</b>	<b>Final Grade</b>
Quizzes	80 (8 @ 10 points each)	8%
Assignments	270 (27 @ 10 points each)	27%
Video Activities	160 (16 @ 10 points each)	16%
Reflections	40 (8 @ 5 points each)	4%
Attendance/Participation:	200 points total	20%
Midterm Exam:	100 points	10%
Final Exam:	100 points	10%
Self-Introduction:	50 points	5%

## Course Outline

(This schedule and the topics listed below are subject to modification by the instructor.)

### Unit 1 – Introduction to Psychology and Research Methods & Neuroscience and Biological Foundations

Day	Content
Week of August 25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>START HERE</b> Introductions – Who are you? What is Psychology? Learning Macmillan...
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 1 - Psychology's Roots, Critical Thinking and Self-Improvement Tools
Week of September 2 <sup>nd</sup> <i>Module 1</i>	Chapter 1 - <i>Psychology's Roots, Critical Thinking and Self-Improvement Tools</i> (HOLIDAY - Labor Day – September 1st)
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 1 Assignments
Week of September 8 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 1</i>	Chapter 1 - <i>Psychology's Roots, Critical Thinking and Self-Improvement Tools</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 1 Assignments
Week of September 15 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 2</i>	Chapter 2 - <i>The Biology of Behavior</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 2 Assignments
Week of September 22 <sup>nd</sup> <i>Module 2</i>	Chapter 2 - <i>The Biology of Behavior</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 2 Assignments

### UNIT II: Emotion & Motivation and Perception & Sensation

Day	Content
Week of September 29 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 3</i>	Chapter 3 – <i>Motivation &amp; Emotion</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 3 Assignments
Week of October 6 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 4</i>	Chapter 4 - <i>Sensation and Perception</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 4 Assignments
Week of October 13 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 4</i>	Chapter 4 - <i>Sensation and Perception</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 4 Assignments  <i>Last Day for Assignments: Tuesday October 21st.</i>

## UNIT III: Learning, Memory, Psychological Disorders &amp; Treatments and Personality

Day	Content
Week of October 20 <sup>th</sup> <b>MIDTERM Exam</b>	<b>Midterm Exam – Thursday October 24<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 5 Pre-Class Reflections
Week of October 27 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 5</i>	Chapter 5 - <i>Learning</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 5 Assignments
Week of November 3 <sup>rd</sup> <i>Module 6</i>	Chapter 6 – <i>Memory</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 6 Assignments
Week of November 10 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 7</i>	Chapter 7 – <i>Psychological Disorders</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 7 Assignments
Week of November 17 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 8</i>	Chapter 8 - <i>Personality</i>
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 8 Assignments
Week of November 24 <sup>th</sup> <i>Module 8</i>	Chapter 8 - <i>Personality</i> (Thanksgiving Break – Wednesday November 26 <sup>th</sup> – Friday November 28 <sup>th</sup> )
<b>Homework</b>	Chapter 8 Assignments

## UNIT IV: Self-Introduction and Final Exam

Day	Content
Week of December 1 <sup>st</sup>	Work on Self-Introduction <b><i>Due Date for Self-Introduction – Wednesday December 3<sup>rd</sup></i></b> <b><i>Last Day for Assignments: Monday December 8<sup>th</sup></i></b>
<b>Homework</b>	Study for Final Exam
	<b>Final Exam</b>