

**PSYCHOLOGY 1302:001 - INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY**  
**Spring - 2026**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

Dr. James W. Downing  
LH 302, 837-8369

Office Hours:

In Person: Wednesdays, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm,  
Thursdays, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm,  
Fridays, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Virtual: Wednesdays, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm,  
Thursdays, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm,  
Fridays, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm,  
or by appointment

**E-MAIL ADDRESS:**

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**PREREQUISITE:**

There is no prerequisite for this course.

**CLASS MEETINGS:**

M, 6:00 p.m.-8:50 p.m.  
Lawrence Hall Room 200

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Wood, S.E., Wood, E.G., & Boyd, D. (2018).

Mastering the world of psychology (6<sup>th</sup>.  
ed.). Boston: Pearson/Revel.

Memo to: Students in PSY 1302:01, Sul Ross State University

From: Jay Downing

Introduction to Psychology! Ugh! What a distressing title for such a potentially interesting course. Fortunately, the title does imply a chance to do anything we wish that will add significantly to our own learning about psychology. It gives an opportunity for each of us to read about and think about such things as: the origins of personality, the definition of abnormality and insanity, how we learn new behaviors, how to improve memory, the relationship between biology and psychology, how to actually do psychology, the nature of perception and consciousness, the nature of human development, and how the social environment influences us. This is only a partial list based on the Wood & Wood text, but it gives a notion of the broad range in which each can develop her or his own curriculum. I will be interested to see what you make of this semester in terms of your learning.

Here are some of my own thoughts for the course thus far. All of my plans are subject to change if you wish, within the limits of my own schedule and yours.

*The First Meeting, Monday 1/26, 6:00 p.m. - 8:50 p.m.*

You will meet the BASS academic assistant at this meeting and get the written materials for the course. Be sure to check the Blackboard site for the course to get some work to complete before our first meeting on 2/2. There is a link to the first two chapters of the text on the BB site.

*The Second Meeting, Monday, 2/2, 6:00 p.m. – 8:50 p.m.*

This should be a long enough session to enable us to get acquainted, to consider plans for the remainder of the course, and to go over the reading list.

I would also like to use this time to draw out your own notions of other psychological issues which may be of even greater concern to you than those previously mentioned. For example, I have said nothing about the nature and measurement of intelligence, the origins of creativity, or the ways clinical and counseling psychology attempt to assist those in emotional distress.

### *The Group Experience, Monday 2/9 & 2/16, 6:00 p.m. - 8:50 p.m.*

During these sessions we will have the chance to participate in an encounter group experience in which, among other goals, we will each have the opportunity to grow in the following areas: understanding and acceptance of ourselves, self-worth, and sensitivity in relationship to others. This group will be a place for us to be ourselves, to express our immediate feelings about ourselves and others.

### *Reading List*

The Wood & Wood text is an enjoyable look at many of the different areas of study that make up psychology. Each chapter introduces you to the state of the research in the different fields that constitute psychology. It is a good place to peek at the heart of psychology. I encourage you to look up the papers that are referenced in your text to get an even better idea of what is going on in the field.

I have tried to prepare a broad-gauge reading list of topics in psychology. The list includes a wide range of writings from different theoretical perspectives—humanistic psychology, psychoanalytic theory, behaviorism, biological theories, and social theories. If these names scare you do not panic because the Wood and Wood text explains what each perspective involves. Because of my own interests, I am sure the list is slanted in a social-humanistic direction, but I would be happy to have suggestions which would give it wider range.

The list represents instead a rich storehouse from which you may draw the kinds of things that have the most meaning to you. You may also want to go well beyond this list into other areas of psychology that have special interest to you. I look forward to hearing your impressions of the things you read.

In the following pages you will find the tentative topic schedule for the course. The specific days and topics are subject to change, but the schedule should prove relatively accurate with respect to order of coverage and test material.

### *Requirements*

There are several aspects of the course which will be required. These are as follows: I wish to have a list of the readings you have done for the course turned in at the beginning of class on **Monday, February 23**. I want to have the updated list turned in again at the end of the course. In the lists you will write entries that indicate the way you have read the selection. For example, you might list a book and state, "Chapters 3 and 6 were read thoroughly." You might list another book and state "Skimmed the book and found it was over my head." You might list another book and say, "I got so much out of this book that I read it twice and made careful notes on Chapters 5 through 12." You might state, "I was repelled by the whole point of view and only read enough to become convinced that I was disgusted with the author." In other words, **what is wanted is an honest account of what you have read and the depth to which you have read the material you covered.** The books or articles do not necessarily have to be on the reading list. **I do want to read entries for everything you read for this course during the fall term. As you get into the Wood and Wood text, please write a separate entry for each chapter in it as you complete your reading log.** You will turn in a final copy of your reading log at the end of the term.

The **second requirement** is that you write a paper, which I refer to as a “Personal Change Paper”. This paper may be as brief or as lengthy as you wish about your own ideas about the most significant areas of psychology to you and the ways those ideas have changed or not changed because of this course. **In general, for students in the past this paper has run five to seven pages in length, not including the title page or references.**

A **third requirement** is that you write one reaction report every other week based on any readings, any experience, or any discussion you may have had. This report can be as long or as short as you desire. It should, however, be limited to your reactions, by this I mean your feelings. I want you to feel as free as possible in these reports in expressing your feelings about anything you want to write about, whether or not it has anything to do with the course. **Your first reaction report is due at the beginning of class on Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>.** Subsequent reaction reports are due at the beginning of class on February 23, March 2, March 16, March 30, and April 13. **You will submit these reports via Blackboard, and the submission period will close at 5:30 pm on the Mondays they are due.**

The **final requirement** is to be your personal reaction to the course as a whole. I would like this turned in via the provided portal on the Blackboard site. You are at liberty, however, to tell me to, “Please do not open until the final grades have been turned in.” If you mark the submission in this fashion, I assure you I will honor your request.

In this reaction, I would like you to state very honestly what the course has meant to you, both positively and negatively. I would like any criticisms you have to make of the course and suggestions of ways in which it might be improved. This in short is your opportunity to evaluate the course, the instructor, and the manner in which the course has been carried out. It will in no case have any influence on your final grade but if you are fearful that it might have such an influence please mark your submission as suggested, and I will not open it until all the grades have been turned in.

**Other activities will come up during the term, and you are expected to complete them fully and on time.**

**I feel it is important that students learn about deadlines. Therefore, I do not accept work after its due date.**

**Failure to complete any of the requirements will result in a failing grade being assigned for the course.**

A passing grade in the course will not be turned in until all of these requirements have been fulfilled.

Attendance is very important in this class. I reserve the right to drop a student from the class with a failing grade if they miss three class days.

***Please note: Every member of the class is assured of a passing grade if the basic requirements listed here are completed fully and on time. Whether the student obtains a “C,” “B,” or “A” depends upon his or her achievement on the objective examinations, which will be based on the material covered in the course. The final letter grade assigned in the course does not represent a measure of achievement in the realization of any personal values other than knowledge of specific factual information. The most important self-evaluations will have to be made by you some time in the future, perhaps months from the end of the class.***

I have made it a point to emphasize one rule concerning personal communication technology. Here it is:

**Turn off all electronic equipment before you enter the classroom. This means cell phones, IPads, etc. I want to be able to count on your full attention during our time together.**

## TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE FOR PSYCHOLOGY 1302:001

<u>DATE</u>	<u>WEEK</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>TEXT READINGS TO MASTER</u>
1/19	1	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day- <b>NO CLASS!</b>	
1/26	2	First Meeting	
2/2	3	Introduction, Course Overview, & Conversation	
2/9	4	Encounter Group, Day 1	<u>Chap. 13 &amp; 14</u> <u>Pages 510-513</u> <u>&amp; 522-531</u>
2/16	5	Encounter Group, Day 2	<u>Chap. 13 &amp; 14</u> <u>Pages 510-513</u> <u>&amp; 522-531</u>
2/23	6	Personality and Abnormal Psychology,	<u>Chap. 13 &amp; 14</u> <u>Pages 510-513</u> <u>&amp; 522-531</u>
3/2	7	Personality and Abnormal Psychology Continued...	
3/9	8	<b>Spring Break! NO CLASS THIS WEEK!</b>	
3/16	9	Learning and Information Processing	<u>Chap. 5 &amp; 6</u>
3/23	10	Learning and Information Processing Continued... <u>Chap. 5 &amp; 6</u>	
3/30	11	Psychology as a Science	<u>Chap. 1 &amp; Appendix A-1</u>
4/6	12	Developmental Processes	<u>Chap. 8</u>
4/13	13	Biology and Behavior	<u>Chap. 2</u>
4/20	14	States of Consciousness	<u>Chap. 4</u>
4/27	15	Social Psychology and Final Class Conversation	<u>Chap. 16</u>
5/1	16	<b>FRIDAY NIGHT! FINAL EXAM, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 PM, LH 200</b> <b>(Covers material from all texts &amp; any other class materials or experiences)</b>	

Below you will find the Program Learning Objectives (PLOs) dealt with in this course. The student learning outcomes follow and relate, to a greater or lesser extent, to each PLO dealt with in the course.

**Program Learning Objective (PLO #1)**

1. The students will be able to demonstrate competency in the biopsychosocial approach.

**Program Learning Objective (PLO #2)**

2. The students will be able to demonstrate their critical thinking skills via tasks related to student thought, complexity, and originality.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

**Required Task-Reaction Reports:**

Goal One: The student will demonstrate the ability to engage in the self-expression of emotions by writing bi-weekly reaction reports. (Affective Domain: Respond)

Goal Two: The student will demonstrate value development by reporting an emotion they experienced in the reaction reports. (Affective Domain: Value Development)

**Required Task-Reading Log:**

Goal Three: The student will write an evaluation of the readings they complete for the course that will be examined both at the mid-term and the end of the semester. (Cognitive Domain: Evaluation)

Goal Four: The student will demonstrate an awareness of their responsibility for their development as a life-long learner by taking personal responsibility for the volume of readings they complete. (Affective Domain: Value Development)

**Required Task-Personal Change Paper:**

Goal Five: The student will write a critical evaluation of the issues they have learned about in the course. This evaluation will compare and contrast the state of their knowledge about psychology at the beginning of the course and towards its close. (Cognitive Domain: Evaluation)

Goal Six: The student will create an original paper that compares and contrasts the state of their knowledge about psychology at the beginning of the course and towards its close. (Psychomotor Domain: Creation)

Goal Seven: The student will freely express their opinion that demonstrates the student has been independently studying and thinking about issues in psychology. (Affective Domain: Value Development)

## Core Curriculum Components Assessed in this Course

### **Social Responsibility**

Students will develop principles of social responsibility for living in a diverse world, to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision making.

## Marketable Skills Assessed by the Tasks Completed in this Course

1. Speaking Effectively: Students will demonstrate competency in public speaking and communicating scientific information to diverse audiences.
2. Describing Feelings: Students will demonstrate empathic or active listening and conversational skills, and/or write clearly about their affective stance, respectfully attuned to the needs of their audiences.
3. Identifying Resources: Students will demonstrate the aptitude to locate, organize and evaluate the credibility of information from multiple sources.
4. Analyzing: Students will demonstrate ability to examine the underlying issues of scientific problems, attending to the pertinent details and creating action plans, recognizing ambiguity and complexity as essential components. Students will communicate effectively in writing.

## SPECIAL NOTATION FOR EDUCATION STUDENTS:

I know that some education students may take this course. This course addresses some of the objectives of the TExES Exam for the subject area of social science, which includes a psychology portion. Specifically, this course may address the following objectives, among others.

### **Domain III**

#### **Geography, Culture, and the Behavioral and Social Sciences**

##### **Competency 13 (Social, Anthropological, and Psychological Concepts and Processes)**

**The teacher applies sociological, anthropological, and psychological concepts and processes to understand cultural formation and change, intergroup relations, and individual development.**

- Demonstrates knowledge of the history and theoretical foundations of psychology.
- Demonstrates knowledge of the behavioral, social, cognitive, and personality perspectives of human learning.
- Understands basic psychological principles and including those related to motivation, sensation and perception, personality, relationships between biology and behavior, and relationships between the self and others.

The interested student is informed that for full information concerning the TExES exam in education concerning psychology as a part of the social sciences, they should contact the SRSU Education Department for materials concerning test preparation and administration. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of this course if he or she is a candidate for the exam. If so, the instructor can guide them to resources that will assist with their exam preparation

## **Libraries**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine. Offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires logging in with your Lobold and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

## **Disabilities Act Statement**

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with 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. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Ronnie Harris, M.Ed., LPC-S, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email [counseling@sulross.edu](mailto:counseling@sulross.edu).

Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Room 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

## **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. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: 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.

The **second requirement** is that you write a paper, which I refer to as a “Personal Change Paper”. This paper may be as brief or as lengthy as you wish about your own ideas about the most significant areas of psychology to you and the ways those ideas have changed or not changed because of this course. In this paper, use the space to show me what you have learned about the field and yourself because of your efforts in the course. In the past, this paper has generally been five to seven pages in length, not including the title page and references. Your research paper should have at least four (4) references other than the text. Use the APA reference manual for format guidelines. Go to library or SRSU Writing Center for help or use the internet resources provided on Black Board for this course. Please ask for help early on so that you do not get overwhelmed. See the attached PERSONAL CHANGE PAPER CHECKLIST below for specifics on components of the paper.

Downing  
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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

#### PERSONAL CHANGE PAPER CHECKLIST

The following must be included in your paper: (from syllabus)

- 1) Explore the most significant areas of study of psychology to you. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Explain how those ideas have changed and developed (or not) as a result of the course. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Describe how your views can impact your community, our U.S. society, and the global community. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Describe how your views can affect how you might choose to be in your family, work, and social life from here on out. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Organization of Content/Spelling/ Grammar/Writing style (6 to 8 pages long) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) APA Style Format
  - a) Title page with Running head \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Abstract \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Correct citation of references and quotes within paper \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) Reference page (5 to 6 references) \_\_\_\_\_