

**INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY-WEB
PSYCHOLOGY 1302: W01
SPRING – 2026**

INSTRUCTOR :

Dr. James W. Downing

LH 302

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

Email: jdowning@sulross.edu

PREREQUISITE:

There is no prerequisite for this course.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

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

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

Memo to: Students in PSY 1302: W01, 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, & Boyd 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.

Reading List

The Wood, Wood, & Boyd 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 the field. 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 a wider range.

The list represents a rich storehouse from which you may draw out 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 log of the readings you have done for the course turned in at the end of each week in what I call a “Reading Log”. In the log, 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, Wood, & Boyd text please write a separate entry for each chapter in the text as you complete your reading log. Your first reading log post is due by Sunday, January 18, at midnight. Introduce yourself in the first reading log post.**

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 as a result 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 at least two (2) peer-reviewed journals (which can be electronic). 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 at the end of the syllabus for specifics on components of the paper. **The personal change paper will be due by midnight on Sunday, May 3.**

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 by Sunday, January 25, at midnight. Subsequent reaction reports are due on Sunday at midnight on February 8, 22, March 8, 22, April 5, & 19. The submission period for your reaction reports will close at midnight on the Sundays they are due.**

The **final requirement** is to be your personal reaction to the course as a whole. I would like this submitted to me in the portal I set up for it. You are at liberty, however, to let me know, "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. **The personal reaction to the course will be due by midnight on Sunday, May 3.**

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 he or she misses three class days.

Attendance and Course preparation:

Class attendance is governed by the SRSU policy stated in the schedule of classes. Students will be dropped with an "F" when you have accumulated six (6) or more absences OR the equivalent in a web-based course. *Class attendance in this course includes logging onto Black Board during the first week of class, monitoring your SRSU email and Black Board announcements on a daily basis, taking exams, posting, and completing other assignments on time, as well as communicating in a timely and clear manner with the professor regarding challenges experienced related to the course.*

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.

Course Schedule Template (Introduction to Psychology, Spring 2026)

Unit	Week	Dates (Mon-Fri)	Topic	Activities/ Assignments All Due Dates @ 12 PM CST
Start Here	Week 1	Jan 14 – Jan 16	Introduction, Course Overview, & Discussion	READ Syllabus & Handouts, (by Friday 1/16) SYLLABUS QUIZ and START HERE orientation to BLACK BOARD (by Sunday 1/18 <i>midnight</i>) READING LOG POST 1 <i>Introduce yourself</i> (by Sunday 1/18 <i>midnight</i>)
Unit 1	Week 2	Jan 19 – Jan 23 (short week due to Monday, Jan 19, MLK Day Holiday)	Personality Theory and Assessment I	READ Chapter 11 Personality Theory and Assessment (by Friday 1/23) READING LOG POST 2 Over Chapter 11 by Sunday 1/25 <i>midnight</i> REACTION REPORT 1 by Sunday 1/25 <i>midnight</i>
	Week 3	Jan 26 – Jan 30	Personality Theory and Assessment II	READ Chapter 11 Personality Theory and Assessment (by Friday 1/30) READING LOG POST 3 Over Chapter 11 by Sunday 2/1 <i>midnight</i>
	Week 4	Feb 2 – Feb 6	Psychological Disorders	READ Chapter 12 Psychological Disorders (by Friday 2/6) READING LOG POST 4 Over Chapter 12 by Sunday 2/8 <i>midnight</i> REACTION REPORT 2 by Sunday 2/8 <i>midnight</i>
Unit 2	Week 5	Feb 9 – Feb 13	Learning	READ Chapter 5 Learning (by Friday 2/13) READING LOG POST 5 Over Chapter 5 by Sunday 2/15 <i>midnight</i>

Unit	Week	Dates (Mon-Fri)	Topic	Activities/ Assignments All Due Dates @ 12 PM CST
	Week 6	Feb 16 – Feb 20	Memory	READ Chapter 6 Memory (by Friday 2/20) READING LOG POST 6 Over Chapter 6 by Sunday 2/22 <i>midnight</i> REACTION REPORT 3 by Sunday 2/22 <i>midnight</i>
Unit 3	Week 7	Feb 23 – Feb 27	Psychology as a Science	READ Chapter 1 & Appendix A-1, Statistical Methods (by Friday 2/27) READING LOG POST 7 Over Chapter 1 & Appendix A-1 by Sunday 3/1 <i>midnight</i>
	Week 8	Mar 2 – Mar 6	Human Development	READ Chapter 8 (by Friday 3/6) READING LOG POST 8 Over Chapter 8 by Sunday 3/8 <i>midnight</i> REACTION REPORT 4 by Sunday 3/8 <i>midnight</i>
	Week 9	Mar 9 – Mar 13	SPRING BREAK	A WELL-DESERVED VACATION FOR ALL!
Unit 4	Week 10	Mar 16 – Mar 20	Biology and Behavior	READ Chapter 2 (by Friday 3/20) READING LOG POST 9 Over Chapter 2 by Sunday 3/22 <i>midnight</i> REACTION REPORT 5 by Sunday 3/22 <i>midnight</i>
	Week 11	Mar 23 – Mar 27	Human Sexuality and Gender	READ Chapter 11 (by Friday 3/27) READING LOG POST 10 Over Chapter 11 by Sunday 3/29 <i>midnight</i>
	Week 12	Mar 30 – Apr 3	States of Consciousness	READ Chapter 4 (by Friday 4/3) READING LOG POST 11 Over Chapter 4 by Sunday 4/5 <i>midnight</i> REACTION REPORT 6 by Sunday 4/5 <i>midnight</i>

Unit	Week	Dates (Mon-Fri)	Topic	Activities/ Assignments All Due Dates @ 12 PM CST
	Week 13	Apr 6 – Apr 10	Health and Stress	READ Chapter 10 (by Friday 4/6) READING LOG POST 12 Over Chapter 10 by Sunday 4/12 <i>midnight</i>
	Week 14	Apr 13 – Apr 17	Social Psychology I	READ Chapter 14 (by Friday 4/17) READING LOG POST 13 Over Chapter 16 by Sunday 4/19 <i>midnight</i> REACTION REPORT 7 by Sunday 4/19 <i>midnight</i>
	Week 15	April 20 – Apr 24	Social Psychology II	READ Chapter 14 (by Friday 4/24) No Reading Log this Week!
Unit 5	Week 16	Apr 27– May 1	Course Wrap Up	CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM over all chapters on Black Board (90 minutes to complete) Open from 8 am (Monday 4/27) CLOSES midnight (Friday, 5/1) PERSONAL CHANGE PAPER by Sunday 5/3 <i>midnight</i> PERSONAL REACTION TO THE COURSE PAPER by Sunday 5/3 <i>midnight</i>

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

Student Learning Objective (SLO #1)

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

Student Learning Objective (SLO #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 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.

Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

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

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. 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. 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 as a result 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 at least two (2) peer-reviewed journals (which can be electronic). 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
PSY 1302-W01 Introduction to Psychology: Spring 2026

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) _____

Reading List for Introduction to Psychology

Personality

Adler, A. (1957). Understanding human nature. Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett.

Allport, G. W. (1955). Becoming: Basic considerations for a psychology of personality. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Bandura, A. (1977). Social learning theory. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Frankl, V. E. (1984). Man's search for meaning. New York: Washington Square Press.

Freud, S. (1965). New introductory lectures on psycho-analysis. New York: W. W. Norton.

Erikson, E. (1963). Childhood and society (2nd. ed.). New York: Norton.

Fromm, E. (1965). Escape from freedom. New York: Avon Books.

Horney, K. (1950). Neurosis and human growth: The struggle toward self-realization. New York: Norton.

Jung, C. (1961). Memories, dreams, and reflections (Rev. ed.). New York: Vintage Books.

Maslow, A. H. (1968). Toward a psychology of being (2nd. ed.). New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Rogers, C. (1961). On becoming a person. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Skinner, B.F. (1971). Beyond freedom and dignity. New York: Knopf.

Consciousness

Benson, H. (1975). The relaxation response. New York: William Morrow and Company.

Grof, S. (1985). Beyond the brain: Birth, death, and transcendence in psychotherapy. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Herer, J. (1993). Hemp & the marijuana conspiracy: The emperor wears no clothes. Van Nuys, CA: HEMP/Queen of Clubs Publishing.

McKay, M. (Speaker). (1982). Self hypnosis (Cassette Recording SR-C 5). Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.

Marks, J. (1979). The search for the “Manchurian Candidate.” New York: WW Norton & Company.

Weil, A. & Rosen, W. (1993). From chocolate to morphine: Everything you need to know about mind-altering drugs. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Social Psychology

Berkowitz, L. B. (1993). Aggression: Its causes, consequences, and control. New York: McGraw- Hill.

Miller, R. S. & Perlman, D. (2009). Intimate relationships (5th. ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Cialdini, R. B. (2009). Influence: Science and practice (5th. ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

Jones, J. (1997). Prejudice and discrimination (2nd. ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill

Milgram, S. (1974). Obedience to authority: An experimental view. New York: Harper & Row.

Sherif, M. (et al.) (1988). The Robbers Cave experiment: Intergroup conflict and cooperation. New York: Harper & Row.

Zimbardo, P. G. & Leippe, M. R. (1991). The psychology of attitude change and social influence.

New York: McGraw-Hill.

Things to Do to Help Improve Your Performance in Class

I, like most faculty, expect you to spend 2-3 hours outside of class studying for every hour spent in class each week. That means for this 3 semester credit hour course you should be studying between 6-9 hours outside of class each week.

Read about and use the techniques suggested on pages XX to XXII in the section of your text entitled, “How This Textbook Can Help You Study.” Be sure to read the material on the page just prior to chapter 1 entitled, “Studying Psychology: Some Tricks of the Trade.” The SQ3R method described there will help you learn the material in this course more fully and clearly.

Use the *Try It, Remember It, and Apply It* exercises in your text as you encounter them in each chapter.

Read and apply the ideas on page 3 of your text on study skills and critical thinking.

Study your text regularly. As you will see, spending 30 minutes a day studying for six days is much more useful than studying for a single three-hour period.

Many of you seem to learn best when you actively perform an activity. Unfortunately, there is not the time in class to demonstrate every concept that is introduced in the text. While you study, however, you can make up your own activities and do them with a study partner, a roommate, etc.

Bring up questions in class concerning concepts that you cannot understand.

Link the concepts that you learn with your own experience. Try to make the material come to life by thinking of people, events, etc., in your own life where you have seen the ideas you read about play themselves out.