

## **Sample Syllabi – Subject to Change**

### **Fundamentals of Psychology: Theory & Research**

**A three-week in-person immersion course for high school students**

**Psych 21860**

#### **Instructor**

Kate O'Doherty, Ph.D.

#### **Course Description**

This course introduces basic concepts and research in the study of human behavior. A breadth of topics will be included such as: sensation and perception, emotions, memory, development, and psychological disorders. Lectures, readings (both textbook and academic journal articles), discussions, and field trips will combine to give you an overview of the scientific study of psychology across areas of inquiry. Several topics throughout the course will also include hands-on psychological research lab demonstrations. For the major project in the course, students, working in small groups, will develop and execute their own experimental research projects.

#### **Course Goals**

- Gain a general understanding of theories and broad topic knowledge in various areas of Psychology
- Develop critical reading skills particularly for academic journal research articles
- Understand the difference between evidence and claims
- Learn how to formulate problem-focused research questions that speak to broad issues regarding human behavior
- Learn psychology research methods & gain hands-on experience with them
- Design and execute a research project on some aspect of human behavior

#### **General Course Structure & Location**

This class will be **in-person on the University of Chicago campus**. Morning sessions will take place from 9am-11:30am; Afternoon sessions will take place from 1pm-3pm.

All course materials and communication will be through the online course management system, Canvas. Graded assignments including response papers will also be completed via Canvas.

#### **Texts**

**Cacioppo, J., & Freberg, L. (2018). *Discovering psychology: The science of mind*. Cengage Learning. (\*2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> edition will be acceptable for this course.)**

Additional journal article readings will also be assigned. These readings are listed in the course schedule, and PDFs of the readings can be accessed electronically through Canvas.

### **Grading (class is worth 100 points)**

- 10 pts class participation (detailed below)
- 15 pts Field Trip writing assignments
- 30 pts Assessments
- 40 pts Research paper sections (Introduction, Methods, Results & Discussion)
- 5 pts Final research presentation (created as a group, detailed below)

### ***Class Participation (10 pts)***

During class, all students are required to participate by answering questions, engaging in class discussions, and working in small groups. Please arrive for all classes and meetings alert and ready to actively participate to earn your participation points (be sure to **get plenty of sleep!**) Participation grades will be negatively affected if students are consistently late, falling asleep in class, clearly engaged in other activities during lectures, etc. Also, if a student needs to miss a class meeting due to illness or other emergencies; please email the instructor in advance for an excused absence. The instructor notifies the summer session office any time a student does not show up for class

### ***Homework Assignments (15 pts)***

After each field trip you will be asked to write a 2-3 paragraph response for homework. Additional details will be given for each field trip in terms of thought questions and ideas for your response. These are typically due at the end of the day (**9:00pm CST**) and you can upload your response to Canvas. To submit these assignments, you should click on the Assignments link on Canvas.

### ***Content Assessments (30 pts)***

Twice during the course there will be an assessment covering all the reading and lecture content up until that point. These assessments will be primarily multiple choice and short answer questions.

### ***Research Project, Paper, and Presentation (45 pts total)***

In small groups (typically 3 -4 students per group), you will design and perform a small research study. This research project is an opportunity to gain experience conducting research on human behavior. Doing this project well will require forethought, planning and the full effort of all group members. Your groups will be meeting with the instructor and TA to discuss this project the first week of class.

Groups will pick a topic from the list (or an approved alternative topic) and develop their project in consultation with the instructor. Data collection for these research projects will take place online you **may not** collect data outside of what has been approved by the professor.

Final papers should be approximately 8-10 double-spaced pages in length with standard margins and fonts. Papers will be due in parts (Introduction, Methods, Results) as noted on the syllabus. The complete **final paper will be due on the final day of class** and should include the sections written previously as well as a Discussion section. Papers should be written in APA style.

Additionally, each group will make a **Presentation** of their findings to the class on **the last day of class**. Every member of the group should be an active participant in this presentation, both in its planning and execution.

## Course Schedule & Readings

### Week 1

Morning: Introduction & Methods (read: Chs. 1 & 2)

Afternoon: How to read + write psychology research papers

Morning: Biology & Brain (read: Ch. 4);

Afternoon: Introduce Research Project + topics picked by Friday (begin reading articles related to your topic)

Morning: Sensation & Perception (read Ch. 5);

Afternoon: Outing to Smart Museum of Art; Continue to read your research articles + begin brainstorming your research question

### Week 2:

Morning: Emotions & Motivation (Ch. 7)

- Extra Reading: Chiao, J. Y., Iidaka, T., Gordon, H. L., Nogawa, J., Bar, M., Aminoff, E., & Ambady, N. (2008). Cultural specificity in amygdala response to fear faces. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 20(12), 2167-2174.

Afternoon: Review for Assessment 1; Small group research meetings to finalize research question + begin brainstorming methods

Morning: Assessment 1; Learning (Ch. 8)

Afternoon: Memory (read Ch. 9)

Morning: Thinking & Language (read Ch. 10)

- Extra reading: Keysar, B., Hayakawa, S. L., & An, S. G. (2012). The foreign-language effect: Thinking in a foreign tongue reduces decision biases. *Psychological science*, 23(6), 661-668.

Afternoon: Small group Research methods meetings – finalize methods

FIELD TRIP 1: Mindworks: The Science of Thinking Museum

Morning: Development (read Ch. 11)

Afternoon: Conduct research studies

### Week 3:

Morning: Social (read: Ch. 13)

Afternoon: Results meetings: analyze data

FIELD TRIP 2: Museum of Science + Industry “You! The Experience” exhibit

Morning: Psychological Disorders + Therapy (read: Ch. 14 + 15)

Afternoon: guest speakers: Clinical psychologists (TBD)

Morning: Final review + Assessment 2

Afternoon: Off to finalize research projects

Final project presentations

SAMPLE