

**San José State University**  
**Psychology**  
**PSYCH 001, Intro Psych, Spring 2025**

**Course and Contact Information**

Instructor:	Christine Ma-Kellams
Email:	<a href="mailto:christine.ma-kellams@sjsu.edu">christine.ma-kellams@sjsu.edu</a>
Office Hours:	Tu 12-2 on Zoom
Class Days/Time:	Asynchronous/on Canvas
Classroom:	On Canvas
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	GE-D1

**Course Format: Online**

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

*Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on my faculty web page on <https://sjsu.instructure.com/>. You are responsible for regularly checking (3x week) with the messaging system through MySJSU at <http://my.sjsu> to learn of any updates.*

**Course Description**

*Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. The content focuses on the exploration of major psychological theories and concepts, methods, and research findings in psychology. Topics include the biological bases of behavior; perception, cognition and consciousness, learning, memory, emotion, motivation, development, personality, social psychology, psychological disorders and therapeutic approaches to treatment, and applied psychology.*

**Course Goals**

Why do good people sometimes make bad decisions? How different are men and women, really? What makes us fundamentally different from robots (or zombies)? This course tries to answer these questions and many others, providing a comprehensive overview of the scientific study of the most interesting topic in the world—you. It explores topics such as perception, consciousness, learning, memory, decision-making, religion, persuasion, love, and dreams. We will look at how we can know the mind of others (and ourselves), how they differ across people, how they are wired-up in the brain, what happens when they break down, and what happens when they function in extraordinary ways.

Class will include lectures, online class demos and small-group activities.

**GE Learning Outcomes (GELO) and the assignments related to them:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

## *GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)*

### *1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World*

-Understand the biological basis of behavior, including those related to reproduction, survival, sensation/perception, and neuroscience, which are all topics covered in lecture/exams.

### *2. Intellectual and Practical Skills*

-Exercise critical thinking and synthesis of theories/ideas, which will be tested on exams as well as measured on the papers and in-class activities.

### *3. Personal and Social Responsibility*

-Understand the principles and ethics behind research methodology, as well as how psychological research can be used to unpack problems like stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination, which will be covered in lecture/exams.

### *4. Integrative Learning*

-Read and report on psychological findings in an applied context (i.e., in a popular psychology book written by a psychologist for a lay audience)

## **Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

*Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following.*

*CLO 1: Identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation.*

-This is addressed and will be tested based on the following lecture topics: Reproduction, Survival, Memory, Emotion & Motivation, Consciousness, Decision-Making, Cognitive Development, Individual Differences, and Social Cognition. In these lectures, we will discuss processes including but not limited to socialization, learning, perception vs. sensation, development, aggression, prosociality, evolutionary psychology, cultural differences, and implicit vs. explicit attitudes. It is primarily covered the book chapters 5, 6, 8-10, 13.

*CLO 2: Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.*

-This is primarily covered and will be tested based on the lectures: Consciousness, Psychopathology, and Social Cognition. In these lectures, we will discuss issues including but not limited to the history of psychology, including the role of culture in shaping psychological theories, group differences in IQ and the explanations for them, historical perspectives and cultural variation in psychopathology. It is also primarily covered in the book chapters 1, 5, and 13.

*CLO 3: Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them.*

-This is primarily covered and will be tested based on the lectures: Reproduction, Consciousness, Social Cognition, and the in-class demonstration on Measuring Your Subconscious. In these lectures, we will discuss issues like evolutionary forces and natural selection, gender differences, situational and cultural moderators of gender differences, stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, cognitive and social development, and attitudes. It is also primarily covered in the book chapters 9, 10, and 13.

*CLO 4: Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.*

-This is primarily covered and will be tested based on the lectures, specially in the following topics: Psychological Science, Memory, Learning, Decision Making, Individual Differences, Social Cognition, as well as the in-class demonstration on The Curse of Knowledge and The Endowment Effect. In these lectures and demonstrations, we will discuss issues like research methods, inferences, generalizability, biases and fallacies, heuristics, personality, and a variety of modern day issues like police brutality, abuse, racial achievement gaps,

communication, consumer behavior, and the use of eyewitness testimony in the criminal justice system, to name a few. It is also primarily covered in book chapters 1, 5, 6, 9, 10.

*CLO 5: Recognize the interactions of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals*

-This is primarily covered and will be tested based on the lectures: Reproduction, Survival, Memory, Learning, Emotion & Motivation, Consciousness, Sleep & Dreams, Cognitive Development, Psychopathology. In these lectures, we will discuss issues like historical and cultural shifts in mating and aggression, forensic psychology, learning strategies, emotion regulation, implicit attitudes, the content and explanations for dreams, and group differences in psychopathology. It is also primarily covered in book chapters 5-11, 13, 14, 15.

## **Textbook & Readings**

Schacter, D., Gilbert, D., & Wegner, D. (2017). *Psychology* (4th edition\*). New York, NY: Worth Publishers.

\*Previous editions are also fine to use.

## **Course Requirements and Assignments**

### *Activities*

Assigned activities are an important part of this class and meant as a space for you to apply the theories and findings from the psychology to the real world.

### *Attendance*

All lectures are video recorded and posted on Canvas. They're essential for doing well in this class. Please don't fall behind.

### *Course Readings*

Readings should be done before each class. Useful discussions follow only when everyone has completed the readings thoroughly and thoughtfully.

Online assignments/demos/activities: We will do a variety of hands-on activities online that will demonstrate the topics covered in lecture, including: a mating game, a conditioning activity, measuring your subconscious, demonstrating the endowment effect and the curse of knowledge.

Exams: All midterm exams are noncumulative; however, the final exam is cumulative. Prior to each exam, there will be a review session; please prepare ahead of time and ask questions. Exam material will come from lectures, in-class activities, and assigned readings. All exams are open book, open note, contain 40 multiple choice questions, and timed (75 minutes).

Research participation: You are required to complete 4 hours of psychology research experiments OR complete the Alternative to Research Participation (outlined below). At least 1 hour must be completed by mid-semester.

• To participate in research studies, please go through the Psychology Department's SONA system. There studies can include online surveys and/or laboratory experiments.

\*Alternative to Research Participation: You have the option of reading a published psychology paper in a peer-reviewed journal in lieu of participating in a research study and writing a 1 page summary of the hypothesis, methods, results and conclusions. You can opt for this alternative for any or all of the 4 research participation hours.

Per departmental guidelines:

*You have a total of 4 hours to complete (Research participation will count towards your course grade.)*

*You will be awarded only a fraction of the total credit hours associated with the study:*

*Should you elect not to continue your participation in a study.*

*In the event that your completion of a study was done in an unreasonably short period of time (e.g. 5 minutes for a 60 minutes online survey).*

*Research participation will be treated as a course assignment worth 6% of the final course grade. To obtain the full 6%, you will need to complete 4 hours of research participation (1.5% per hour).*

**Final Paper:** Your final paper will entail you writing an essay about a popular book written by a psychologist on a psychological topic. To help you stay on track for your Final Paper, you will be asked to turn in

a) A proposed abstract summarizing your paper topic (a 1/2 page explanation of the book you chose and reference(s)) prior to turning your completed project

b) A final draft (4-5 pages—1500 words minimum— summarizing the 3 major ideas and a minimum of 1 psychological study in support of each idea, along with references in APA style).

c) An option to rewrite your paper based on feedback you received on the final draft.

\*\*\*\*ALL written assignments need to use 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins.

## Grading Information

### Grading

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Activities/Assignments:	
Participation in activities	10 pts
Research participation	12 pts
Exams:	
Midterm #1	40 pts
Midterm #2	40 pts
Midterm #3	40 pts
Final Exam	40 pts
Research Project:	
Final Paper Topic + references	10 pts
Final Paper	20 pts

## Determination of Grades

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>960 to 1000</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>930 to 959</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>900 to 929</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>860 to 899</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>830 to 829</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>800 to 829</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>760 to 799</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>730 to 759</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>700 to 729</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>660 to 699</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>630 to 659</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>600 to 629</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

## **Classroom Protocol**

### *Late assignments*

An assignment turned in after the due date (and time) will receive a 10% penalty per day late, up until a week after the deadline. Note the deadlines in the class syllabus and plan accordingly.

### *Academic Honesty*

You are held to the highest standard of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are not acceptable. You may never use the ideas or work of another person without proper citation (i.e. noting the name and source according to APA style). The work you turn in for all assignments should always be your own. I am interested in your original ideas, as well as your ability to properly cite others' ideas. Keep in mind that plagiarism does not necessarily have to be intentional to be serious. When in doubt, cite!

### *Contact*

I check my email on a daily basis Monday-Friday and should respond to most queries within 24 hours. Please feel free to approach me before/after class, or make an appointment for office hours.

### *Accessibility*

Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations should talk with me by the end of the second week of the term. University Policies (Required)

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>. **Make sure to visit this page, review and be familiar with these university policies and resources.**

In the following pages, you will find an outline of the topics and readings we will be covering. Please note that the syllabus may be updated during the semester to reflect changes in course readings, shifts in lecture topics, etc. You will be notified each time a change takes place.

Month	Week of:	LECTURE TOPIC	Assignment/Reading
JAN	23	Psychological science	Ch. 1-2
	28	Reproduction Assortive Mating	Ch. 13
FEB	4	Survival Neuroscience	Ch. 3; Final paper topic & summary due
	11	Sensation & Perception Taste	Ch. 4
	18	Memory Learning	Ch. 7
	25	Emotion & Motivation Getting Conditioned	Ch. 8
MAR	4	Exam week	Midterm #1
	11	Consciousness Measuring the Subconscious	Ch. 5
	18	Sleep & Dreams The Endowment Effect	Ch. 9
	25	Decision Making Psychopathology	Ch. 10
APRI L	1	Spring Break	Ch. 15
	8	Exam Week	Midterm #2 & Final paper due
	15	Cognitive Development Individual Differences	Ch. 11
	22	Social Cognition The Curse of Knowledge	
	29	Exam Week	Midterm #3
MAY	6	Wrap Up Review	Ch. 12 Research participation due
		Final exam due	