

**Psychology 405 - 01**
**Contemporary Theories in Psychology**
**Fall 2019**

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### Course Description

This course will focus on two interrelated sets of issues: (a) a critical examination of selected major theories and systems in twentieth century psychology, and (b) the development of new theory and methods of inquiry that have evolved from the critiques of these theories. In the process of examining these issues we will discuss the nature of science and psychology's place in science, and such concepts as theory, explanation, reductionism, determinism, intentionality and agency.

To emphasize theory is not to disparage research but to examine the presumed goal of all scientific activity, namely the development of theoretical statements which have as their aim either explanation (that is, they are 'true' statements about the world) or a pragmatic function (they allow the user to do things in the world not possible without the theory). Further, we will examine the questions that have been asked about the relationship between data and theory in science generally and in psychology in particular.

The course will then attempt to understand the relationship between explanations that work at different levels. Is a biological (physiological/neurological) explanation preferred over a psychological one? Is a cognitive or a behavioral explanation a 'true' explanation? Are 'explanations' preferred over 'reasons' in psychology? Is data more important than theory, or is theory required so that we can 'see' the data? All of these questions take place in a social and historical context that will be discussed as the course proceeds.

What then of particular theoretical claims in psychology? We will examine some foundational topics to evaluate the nature of knowledge claims about these topics and the different ways of evaluating these claims.

### Course Learning Outcomes

The Department of Psychology is committed to student knowledge and skill development. The table below lists the key learning outcomes for this course, the program-learning outcomes they facilitate (see [psyc.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/program-learning-outcomes](http://psyc.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/program-learning-outcomes)), and the expected level of achievement.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Methods	PLO(s)	Level(s)
Recognize, describe, and convey the underlying foundational	Term tests, mini-papers	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	A

frameworks of psychological theories			
Assess and critically evaluate information, ideas, and assumptions comprehensively and from a variety of perspectives	Term tests, mini-papers	1, 4, 5, 7	A
Locate, interpret, evaluate, and communicate psychological information and findings	Term tests, mini-papers	1, 2, 4, 5	A
Critically evaluate article reports of studies and be able to identify in complex arguments the way in which psychological theory is constructed out of its basic building blocks	Term tests, mini-papers	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	A
Identify and discuss fundamentals of philosophy of science as these apply to psychology	Term tests, mini-papers	1, 3, 4, 5, 7	A
Identify and discuss fundamentals of philosophy of mind as these apply to psychology	Term test, mini-papers	1, 3, 4, 5, 7	A
Describe, compare and contrast, and synthesize psychological theories, ideas, and research findings	Term tests, mini-papers	1, 2, 4, 5	A

Notes. PLOs = Program-Learning Outcomes: 1 = demonstrate knowledge of psychological sciences, 2 = think critically and solve problems, 3 = conduct research and analyze data, 4 = communicate effectively, 5 = demonstrate information literacy, 6 = understand and implement ethical principles, 7 = apply psychological knowledge and skills. Level of PLO achievement facilitated by this course: I = introductory, C = competency, A = advanced.

### Prerequisites

PSYC 200 and 201 – Principles of psychology, or equivalent, and one senior half course in psychology.

### Required Text

Sacha, B. & Looren de Jong, H (2013). *Theoretical Issues in Psychology*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Sage. Text is available in the University Bookstore.

### Assessment Methods

Course Requirements: 2 Mini-Papers (30%), 2 Term-Tests (34%) and a Final Exam (36%).

I. Two Mini-papers: due as outlined below:

1. Oct. 11
2. Nov. 18

Your papers will address the questions outlined on D2L. Both mini-papers are worth 15% each for a total of 30% of your final grade. In grading your papers I will be looking for the following: (a) clarity of language use and presentation, writing style and overall format and (b) the content of the argument or case you make, its relationship to the literature you cite and the general strength of your case. 'Strength' can mean both logical structure and rhetorical force; this will depend in part on how you are answering a question. In general, (a) and (b) here are, metaphorically, like 'artistic impression' and 'technical merit' in figure skating competitions (a borrowed metaphor from Dr. Marini in Education).

You can be late with one of the papers (3 days maximum) without asking me or requiring permission. More than one late will require approved documentation or I will deduct marks for lateness (10% per day, including weekends).

**Please note that I will not, under any circumstances, accept papers that are sent to me electronically. It is difficult and tedious to grade material on a computer screen hence I will only accept hard copies of your papers.**

II. Two term-tests: These tests will consist of short answer questions based on the readings and lecture material (17% each for a total of 34%).

1. Oct. 2
2. Oct. 30

III. Final Exam: Scheduled by the registrar. This test will be cumulative, consisting of short answer questions based on readings and lecture material (value is 36%).

Note: The use of class notes or the textbook, computers, phones, iPads, or calculators is prohibited during the exams in this course.

### **Department of Psychology Criteria for Letter Grades**

Psychology professors use the following criteria when assigning letter grades:

**A+ grade: *Exceptional Performance*.** An A+ grade indicates near perfect performance on multiple choice and short answer exams. For research papers/essays/course projects/presentations, an A+ grade is awarded for exceptional work deserving of special recognition and is therefore not a common grade.

**A, A- Range: *Excellent Performance*.** Superior understanding of course material. Written work is very strong in terms of critical and original thinking, content, organization, and the expression of ideas, and demonstrates student's thorough knowledge of subject matter.

**B Range: *Good Performance*.** Above average understanding of course material. Written work shows evidence of critical thinking and attention to organization and editing but could be improved in form and/or content.

**C Range: *Satisfactory Performance*.** Adequate understanding of course material. Knowledge of basic concepts and terminology is demonstrated. Written work is satisfactory and meets essential requirements but could be improved significantly in form and content. Note: All prerequisites for courses offered by the Faculty of Arts must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

**D range: *Marginally meets standards*.** Minimal understanding of subject matter. Written work is marginally acceptable and meets basic requirements but requires substantial improvements in form and content. Student has not mastered course material at a level sufficient for advancement into more senior courses in the same or related subjects.

F grade: *Course standards not met.* Inadequate understanding of subject matter. Written work does not meet basic requirements. Student has not demonstrated knowledge of course material at a level sufficient for course credit.

### Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

### Tentative Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic	Chapter
F Sep 6	<i>University Lectures begin.</i> Course outline/Introduction	
M Sep 9	Science: why, and how? Some Basic Concepts in Scientific Method	1
W Sep 11	Science: why, and how? Some Basic Concepts in Scientific Method	1
R Sep 12	<i>Last day to drop a class without a penalty</i>	
F Sep 13	<i>Last day to add or swap a course</i> Science: why, and how? Some Basic Concepts in Scientific Method	1
M Sep 16	Kinds of Explanations: Laws, Interpretations and Functions	2
W Sep 18	Kinds of Explanations: Laws, Interpretations and Functions	2
F Sep 20	<i>Fee payment deadline for Fall Term full and half courses.</i> Kinds of Explanations: Laws, Interpretations and Functions	2
M Sep 23	Kinds of Explanations: Laws, Interpretations and Functions	2
W Sep 25	Philosophy of Science (1): Logical Positivism and its Failure	3
F Sep 27	Philosophy of Science (1): Logical Positivism and its Failure	3
M Sep 30	Philosophy of Science (1): Logical Positivism and its Failure	3
<b>W Oct 2</b>	<b>Exam 1</b>	<b>1-3</b>
F Oct 4	Philosophy of Science (2): Criticism and Alternatives to Positivism	4
M Oct 7	Philosophy of Science (2): Criticism and Alternatives to Positivism	4
W Oct 9	Philosophy of Science (2): Criticism and Alternatives to Positivism	4
F Oct 11	Philosophy of Science (2): Criticism and Alternatives to Positivism	4
M Oct 14	Thanksgiving Day, University closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.	
W Oct 16	Sociology and Psychology of Science	5
F Oct 18	Sociology and Psychology of Science	5
M Oct 21	Sociology and Psychology of Science	5
W Oct 23	Introducing Philosophy of Mind, Brain and Cognition	6

F Oct 25	Introducing Philosophy of Mind, Brain and Cognition	6
M Oct 28	Introducing Philosophy of Mind, Brain and Cognition	6
<b>W Oct 30</b>	<b>Exam 2</b>	<b>4-6</b>
F Nov 1	Modern Approaches to Mind (1): The Language-based view: Functionalism and the Computational Theory of Mind	7
M Nov 4	Modern Approaches to Mind (1): The Language-based view: Functionalism and the Computational Theory of Mind	7
W Nov 6	Modern Approaches to Mind (1): The Language-based view: Functionalism and the Computational Theory of Mind	7
F Nov 8	Modern Approaches to Mind (1): The Language-based view: Functionalism and the Computational Theory of Mind	7
Nov 10-16	<i>Term Break No Classes</i>	
M Nov 11	<i>Remembrance Day (Observed). University Closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.</i>	
M Nov 18	Modern Approaches to Mind (2): The Brain-based view: Neurophilosophy, Connectionism and Dynamicism	8
W Nov 20	Modern Approaches to Mind (2): The Brain-based view: Neurophilosophy, Connectionism and Dynamicism	8
F Nov 22	Modern Approaches to Mind (2): The Brain-based view: Neurophilosophy, Connectionism and Dynamicism	8
M Nov 25	The Extended Mind: Biology, Body, and Environment	9
W Nov 27	The Extended Mind: Biology, Body, and Environment	9
F Nov 29	The Extended Mind: Biology, Body, and Environment	9
M Dec 2	Consciousness and Free Will	10
W Dec 4	Consciousness and Free Will	10
F Dec 6	<i>Fall Term Lectures End. Last day to withdraw with permission from Fall Term half courses.</i>	
	Consciousness and Free Will	10
Dec 9-19	<i>Fall Final Exam Period</i>	

### Reappraisal of Graded Term Work <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, test, etc.) has been unfairly graded, may have the work reappraised as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor **within ten business days** of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall take the matter to the head of the department offering the course **within 2 business days of receiving the decision from the instructor**, who will arrange for a reappraisal of the work **within the next ten business days**. The reappraisal will only be considered if the student provides a detailed rationale that outlines where and for what reason an error is suspected. Students in faculties without a departmental structure should take the matter to the dean, or designate, of the faculty offering the course. The result of that reappraisal will be given to the student in writing along with information about appealing the reappraisal.

*The reappraisal of graded term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered or to remain the same. There is no limit to the number of pieces of graded work that a student may request be reappraised, however a single piece of work may only be reappraised once.*

**Reappraisal of Final Grade** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

In the reappraisal of a final grade, the only element that will be considered is the grading of the final assessment that makes up the final mark (e.g., final examination, final project, final paper). An exception may occur when the Instructor of Record evaluates a piece of graded term work at the end of the term; that grade may also be considered in a reappraisal of final grade.

A student seeking a reappraisal of a final grade should first attempt to review the final assessment with the department or faculty offering the course. After which, the student shall obtain a Reappraisal of Final Grade form from [ucalgary.ca/registrar](http://ucalgary.ca/registrar) (under Student Forms). The student must indicate exactly what error was made in marking the final assessment and/or in computing the final grade. The reappraisal will only be considered if the student provides a detailed rationale that outlines where and for what reason an error is suspected.

Students requesting a reappraisal of a final grade must submit their request by the following dates:

Fall Term – March 1

Winter Term – June 30

Spring Intersession – August 15

Summer Term – October 15

Supplemental Examinations: 30 calendar days from the date the examination was written

For information relating to Law, Veterinary Medicine and the Cumming School of Medicine (MD) courses, please refer to the faculty section.

The reappraisal form shall be submitted to Enrolment Services who will forward it to the department head or dean of the faculty offering the course. Reappraisals of final grades are dealt with by the head of the academic unit in consultation with members of academic staff. Normally, the department/faculty will respond to a reappraisal request within thirty calendar days of its initiation. After the reappraisal is completed, the department shall return the form to the Registrar's Office who shall inform the student in writing of the decision.

Students should be aware that the grade being reappraised may be raised, lowered or remain the same. A student may request a reappraisal of final for a maximum of two courses in one academic year (September 1 – August 31).

**Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct**

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present

a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

### **Academic Accommodations**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](https://ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy). Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy). Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the instructor.

### **Seating During Exams**

Instructors and exam invigilators are free to ask students to move seats before an exam begins or even during an exam. Students must comply with this request and refusal to do so may warrant a charge of academic misconduct.

### **Absence From A Test/Exam**

Makeup tests/exams are **NOT** an option without the approval of the instructor. A student may be asked to provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request for a make-up exam <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/n-1.html>. . Students who miss a test/exam have up to **48 hours** to contact the instructor to ask for a makeup test/exam. It's the instructor's discretion if they will allow a make-up exam. **Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam.** At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Once approved by the instructor a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam during exam make-up hours provided by the department <http://psychology.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/exam-and-course-information#mues>.

If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>.

### **Travel During Exams**

Consistent with University regulations, students are expected to be available to write scheduled exams at any time during the official December and April examination periods. Requests to write a make-up exam because of conflicting travel plans (e.g., flight bookings) will NOT be considered by the department. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements. **If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam** <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>. **Students with an exceptional extenuating circumstance (e.g., a family emergency) should contact the Department of Psychology** ([psyugrd@ucalgary.ca](mailto:psyugrd@ucalgary.ca)).

### **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act**

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

### **Acknowledgments and Respect for Diversity**

Our classrooms view diversity of identity as a strength and resource. Your experiences and different perspectives are encouraged and add to a rich learning environment that fosters critical thought through respectful discussion and inclusion. The Department of Psychology would also like to acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in southern Alberta. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

### **Wellness and Mental Health Resources**

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through the SU Wellness Centre (Room 370, MacEwan Student Centre, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy website (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

### **Evacuation Assembly Point**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>  
Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

### **Student Organizations**

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 130 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

**Student Union VP Academic:** Phone: 403-220-3911 [suypaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suypaca@ucalgary.ca)

**Student Union Faculty Rep.:** [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca)

### **Student Ombudsman's Office**

The Office of the Student Ombudsmen provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. The office can be reached at 403-220-6420 or [ombuds@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca)  
(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>)

### **Safewalk**



The safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus. This service is free and available 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year.  
Call 403-220-5333.

**Important Dates**

The last day to drop this course with no “W” notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund is Thursday, September 12, 2019.** Last day add/swap a course is **Friday, September 13, 2019.** The last day to withdraw from this course is **Friday, December 6, 2019.**