

PSYO 111 Section 102

Introduction to Psychology: Basic Processes
(3 Credits)

Course content online
Online class: Tuesdays, 5pm



Instructor: Dr. William Spencer Murch
Online Office Hours: by Appointment
Email: spencer@psych.ubc.ca

Hello, I'm Spencer! I am a cognitive psychologist from Vancouver. When I'm not teaching, I work as a postdoctoral fellow at Concordia University. My research looks at addictive behaviours like gambling and video gaming.

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Please contact us when
you have questions.
We're here to help!

Land Acknowledgment

This course is offered online, and I understand that our learning community is coming together from all over the world. I would like to respectfully acknowledge the [Syilx Okanagan Nation](#) and their peoples, in whose traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory UBC Okanagan is situated.

If you are in Kelowna – as I am – then you also enjoy the privileges of living, working, and playing in Syilx Okanagan territory. I would like to encourage you to reflect on the history of this region and the self-reliant economic, social, and environmental systems that were developed and maintained here for thousands of years prior to colonization.

Regardless of where you are, I would also like to encourage you to learn more about contributions made by the traditional owners and caretakers of the [land or territory](#) where you find yourself. As you reflect on our collective human history, I ask you to please renew your personal commitment to treating others with dignity, honesty, and compassion.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce you to psychology: the study of the mind, and how it works.

We will start by investigating the structures of the human brain. Then, we will talk about how our minds make sense of inputs coming from our five senses. After that, we will talk about how we learn and develop habits. Finally, we will talk about memory, and what it means to have consciousness.

We will also study the history of our field, how our research methods have changed over time, and how we can use modern scientific techniques to learn more about human minds.

Throughout this course, please remember:

1. Psychology belongs to all of us: if you want to be a psychologist, you can be a psychologist.
2. The history of psychology is still being written, and understanding research methods is crucial to understanding the mind.
3. The brain is an essential part of the human mind. By understanding how brains work, we can make better predictions about how humans behave.

The primary goals of this course are to:

1. Provide you with a foundation of knowledge that prepares you to take upper-year psychology courses, and use psychology in everyday life.
2. Provide you with hands-on experience with psychological research. You can do this by either participating in research through the Sona Psychology Department research pool, or by completing two written summaries of research articles. See "[Research Participation](#)" for more information.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of terminology used in the field of psychology as it pertains to the course topics covered (assessed in our [Unit Quizzes](#) and [Exams](#)).
2. Describe and evaluate the research methods used in psychological research, including the principles of ethical research (assessed in our [Written Assignment](#) and [Exams](#)).
3. Apply the psychological principles discussed to a variety of scenarios and contexts encountered in everyday life (assessed in our [Unit Quizzes](#) and [Exams](#)).
4. Develop an understanding of what psychological research entails (assessed in your [Written Assignment](#) and [Research Participation](#) activities).

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Considerations for Online Learning

If you are connecting to this course from another country, please remember that some UBC courses cover topics that are censored or considered illegal in some countries. These include (but are not limited to): human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexual, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. **If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction.** Local authorities might try to limit your access to course material, or may take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign matters.

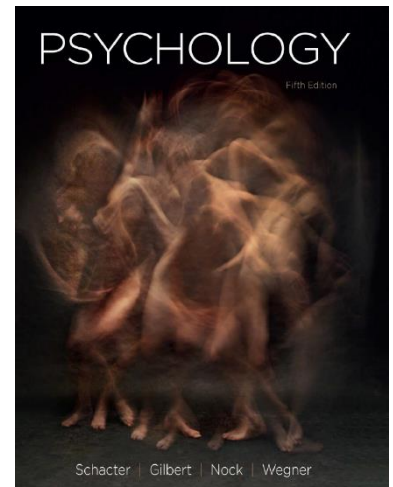
I recognize that students have legitimate reasons to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks until you are back on campus, or reach out to your academic advisor to find alternate options. For further information and support, please [click here](#).

Textbooks and Other Materials

Our textbook is the 5th Edition of “**PSYCHOLOGY**” by **Schacter, Gilbert, Nock, and Wegner**. I strongly encourage you to use the 5th edition of this textbook because there are substantial differences between the 4th and 5th editions. These are mostly in Chapters 1 (History) and 4 (Sensation and Perception). If you decide to study the course material using a different textbook, or an earlier version of this textbook, I cannot guarantee that the material you study will be tested on my exams.

How to get the textbook:

1. You can purchase a [digital copy of the textbook](#) through the UBCO Bookstore or Canvas. It costs **\$66.25**.
2. You can purchase a physical (loose-leaf) copy of the textbook at the UBCO Bookstore. It costs **\$146.65**.
3. You can try to find one at a lower cost using online retailers and resellers. I cannot help you find a cheaper copy of the textbook online.
4. There is one copy of the 5th Edition of “Psychology”, available for rental at the [library](#).



Course Material

Video Lessons

Every week, I will ask you to watch a handful of mini-lectures in the form of several short video lessons (15-20 minutes each). This is the main lecture component of the course. If you have questions about this material, I encourage you to attend the [Live Q&A](#) sessions that I hold each week.

At the end of each week's lessons, I will ask you to complete a short Unit Quiz. See “[Unit Quizzes](#)” below for additional details.

Live Q&A

Every Tuesday at 5pm Pacific Time, I will be live on Zoom to answer any questions the class has about that week's video lessons or assigned readings. The best strategy for this course is to watch the week's Video Lessons *before* coming to that week's Live Q&A session. This will give you a chance to practice the material you learned in the Video Lessons.

These Q&A sessions are **optional**, but attending them will give you a good chance to practice the material while it is still fresh in your mind.

Please note: The midterms will overlap with our regularly scheduled Q&A sessions. On midterm days, our Q&A sessions will start after the midterm has finished.

Course Assessments

Assessment	% of Final Grade	% of Final Grade
Unit Quizzes	10%	10%
Midterm Exam #1	20%	27%
Midterm Exam #2	20%	27%
Optional Written Assignment	20%	(not submitted)
Final Exam	26%	32%
Research Participation	4%	4%

Unit Quizzes (10%)

As you finish the assigned video lessons each week, you will find a unit quiz with a few multiple-choice questions based on the material. Each quiz is worth 1% of your final grade, but we only count your top 10 scores. This means that you can skip or miss one of the unit quizzes without hurting your grade.

The quizzes will only be available for one week before and after the lecture in which the material is discussed. For example, if we talk about Sensation on February 8th, its Unit Quiz will be available from February 1st to February 15th. While they are active, you can retake these quizzes as many times as you want. It is possible to get 100% on this portion of the course. I cannot accept quizzes that are completed after the deadline has passed.

Midterms and Final Exam (66% or 86% in total)

The midterms and final exams will consist of multiple choice, true-or-false, and short answer questions. These questions will be based on the lecture material and assigned readings. The best strategy for these tests is to have a strong grasp of the material in *both* the readings and lectures.

The midterms are **not cumulative**; midterm 2 includes only material covered *after* midterm 1.

The final exam is **cumulative**: all the course content will be tested. However, you can expect to see relatively more questions about the material covered after midterm 2.

The examinations in this course are all “open-book”. **You are allowed to use any of the course materials, including your notes, during the exams.** It is important to note, however, that you will likely not have enough time to look up the majority of the answers, so preparation prior to the examination is beneficial. You should prepare for these exams as if you had to do them under supervised conditions, so studying for them will be necessary if you wish to succeed. **You are not allowed to discuss questions and answers with your classmates or anyone else.** If you violate this rule, you have engaged in Academic Misconduct and will be subject to the consequences articulated in the [Academic Integrity section](#).

(OPTIONAL) Written Assignment (20%)

This assignment is OPTIONAL. You can choose to submit this written assignment if you want your scores on the midterms and final to contribute less to your final mark. This is a good option if you feel that you struggle with multiple choice test formats, or if you are not yet satisfied with your grades in other areas of the course. **Please note:** If you submit this optional assignment, it will count towards your final grade regardless of whether your total grade increases or decreases.

Format: 1,000 words at maximum. Please use paragraph format; no bullet points. Late assignments: -10% per day.

Description: Making new discoveries as a psychologist usually requires us to follow-up on existing research. In this short assignment, you will select and read one of the research links provided below. You will then write a brief (approximately 2 paragraphs) summary of the experiment (50% of the assignment grade). In your summary, make sure to answer these questions:

- ◆ What is the question being investigated? What was the hypothesis?
- ◆ What method(s) was used to test the hypothesis?
- ◆ What result did the authors discover? What did they conclude?

Next, you will pretend to be a researcher who is proposing an experiment that expands-on or follows-up on the results of the study you summarized. Write a brief (approximately 2 paragraph) summary of the imaginary experiment that you would conduct (50% of the assignment grade):

- ◆ What is the objective of your follow-up research?
- ◆ What is your hypothesis? (Make sure your hypothesis is *falsifiable*)
- ◆ What is one possible result of this research, and what would it lead you to conclude?

Study Options will be uploaded to Canvas and announced before the Reading Break

Research Participation (4%)

Students earn Sona credit from participating in research activity. This can be either through direct participation in research through the Sona online volunteer subject pool (Option 1), by completing summaries of primary research articles (Option 2), or by a combination of the two types of activities.

Research Participation (Option 1)

As a participant in one of numerous Psychology Department Subject Pool experiments posted at <http://ubco.sona-systems.com/>, you will obtain 0.5% credit for each 0.5 hour of participation at UBCO. Hence, participation requiring a 1-hour time commitment provides a credit of 1%, 1.5 hours provides a credit of 1.5%, and 2 hours provides a credit of 2.0%, etc.

Important requirements. You may participate in more than one experiment in order to accrue credits. It is important to sign up for experiments early in the semester in order to increase the odds that a timeslot is available. If you wait until late in the semester, all timeslots may be taken.

IMPORTANT: Due to concerns related to COVID-19, only online studies will be hosted on Sona, with the exception of some in-person studies that have received special permission to be conducted.

Logging on to the system. Sona is only open for those students who are registered in a psychology course offering Sona credit. Please only use the request account option if you have never used the Sona system before. If you have used the Sona system before, please use the most recent login information you remember to log in.

Missed appointments & penalties. Missed appointments (i.e., failure to cancel the appointment at least 3 hours prior to the session) will be tracked. The consequence will be that you will not receive credit for participation in the experiment and will lose the credit value of the study from possible marks associated with participation in research.

Please email psyc.ubco.research@ubc.ca with any questions or concerns that you may have regarding the Sona system, including unassigned bonus credits. Your professor does NOT have access to this information.

Research Summary Assignment (Option 2)

As an alternative to participating in a Psychology Subject Pool experiment, you may obtain subject pool credit by completing library-writing projects to a satisfactory level. Each library-writing project is worth a total of two credits.

Important Requirements.

1. This project consists of reading and summarizing (in written form) a recent, peer-reviewed, primary research article.

- A “recent” article has been published within the past 12 months.
- A “peer reviewed” article is one that has been reviewed by other scholars before it is accepted – for example, it **cannot** be a news item, an article from a popular magazine, a notice, or a letter to the editor.

- A “primary” research article describes an experiment or study where data are collected by the authors. In other words, the article you choose to review **cannot** be a book review, literature review, or summary article.

2. You must choose an article published by one of the following agencies:

- The American Psychological Society - *Psychological Science*, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, or *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.
- The American Psychological Association - www.apa.org/journals/by_title.html has a full listing.
- The Canadian Psychological Association - *Canadian Psychology*, *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, or *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology*.
- The Psychonomic Society - *Behavior Research Methods, Cognitive, Affective, & Behavioral Neuroscience*, *Learning & Behavior*, *Memory & Cognition*, *Perception & Psychophysics*, or *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*.

3. Other Assignment Guidelines

The summary should be about 300-500 words in length. The source must be cited and referenced in accordance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). The review will be graded on a pass – fail basis (2% or 0%). At least **14 days before the end of classes** each term, submit the following to the course instructor:

- the article summary
- a copy of the article
- a cover page that specifies your name, student number, email address, and word count of the summary.
- the course title and number

Submitting the assignment 14 days in advance is necessary to ensure that you have an opportunity to make corrections, if required. If you do not check your email frequently, provide a phone number on the cover page.

Course Policies

Accessibility

In accordance with the BC Human Rights Code and [UBC Policy LR7](#), I am committed to making sure that every student has a fair chance at success in this course. The [Disability Resource Centre](#) (DRC) facilitates a wide range of accommodations for students with disabilities and ongoing medical conditions. If something is creating a barrier between you and our course content, I encourage you to [register with the DRC](#) so that we can explore ways to make the course more accessible for you. Please note that the DRC requires students to make any accommodation requests at least 7 days before any test, and 7 days before the start of the formal exam period in April.

For more information, contact Earllene Roberts – Diversity Advisor for the Disability Resource Centre, University Centre building room #214. Phone: [250-807-9263](tel:250-807-9263) Email: earllene.roberts@ubc.ca

Copyright Disclaimer

Diagrams and figures included in lecture presentations adhere to [Copyright Guidelines for UBC Faculty, Staff and Students](#) and [UBC Fair Dealing Requirements for Faculty and Staff](#). Some of these figures and images are subject to copyright and will not be posted to Canvas. All material uploaded to Canvas are used with permission of the publisher; are in the public domain; are licensed by Creative Commons; meet the permitted terms of use of UBC's library license agreements for electronic items; and/or adhere to the UBC Fair Dealing Requirements for Faculty and Staff. Access to the Canvas course site is limited to students currently registered in this course. **Under no circumstance are students permitted to provide any other person with means to access this material.** Anyone violating these restrictions may be subject to legal action. Permission to electronically record any course materials must be granted by the instructor. Distribution of this material to a third party is forbidden.

Missing Exams and Assignments

Sometimes, an acute illness or serious life event make us unable to sit an exam or submit an assignment on time. UBC has introduced a compassionate policy for navigating these events. If you have an illness or serious life event that will prevent you from completing an exam or assignment on time, [please fill out the form found on this webpage](#) and email it to me (Spencer Murch) as soon as possible. This declaration does not exempt you from any exam or assignment. I will contact you to arrange a make-up exam or assignment.

Missing a Final Exam

Except in the case of examination clashes and hardships (three or more formal examinations scheduled within a 24-hour period) or unforeseen events, students will be permitted to apply for out-of-time final examinations only if they are:

1. Representing the University, the province, or the country in a competition or performance; serving in the Canadian military.

2. Observing a religious rite.
3. Working to support themselves or their family.
4. Caring for a family member.

Unforeseen events include (but may not be limited to) the following: ill health or other personal challenges that arise during a term and changes in the requirements of an ongoing job.

Further information on Academic Concession can be found under Policies and Regulation in the [Okanagan Academic Calendar](#).

Grading

Faculties, departments, and schools reserve the right to [scale grades](#) in order to maintain equity among sections and conformity to University, faculty, department, or school norms. Students should therefore note that an unofficial grade given by an instructor might be changed by the faculty, department, or school. Grades are not official until they appear on a student's academic record.

Percent Grade	Letter Grade
90 – 100	A+
85 – 89	A
80 – 84	A-
76 – 79	B+
72 – 75	B
68 – 71	B-
64 – 67	C+
60 – 63	C
55 – 59	C-
50 – 54	D
0 – 49	F

Reviewing Exams

Although some portion of your exam scores (i.e., multiple choice questions) should be available immediately after you finish the tests, I am not able to make the questions available for review until everyone has had a chance to do the test. Once everyone's grades are in, two things will happen:

1. I will open the exam in Canvas so that you can see how your answers were graded.
2. I will upload a short video in which I explain the answers to any questions that were exceptionally tricky.

If you still have a lot of questions after reviewing your test using these methods, please email a TA to set up a one-on-one meeting.

Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct

All UBC students are expected to behave as honest and responsible members of an academic community. While I neither want nor expect cheating or plagiarism to occur, I am prepared to take appropriate actions to ensure that all students receive the grades they have earned. Whenever you turn in an assignment or exam in this course, you can expect that I will use the best-available tools and procedures to discourage and discover [academic misconduct](#).

All suspected cases of academic misconduct will be investigated. When the university determines that academic misconduct has occurred, the work in question is typically granted zero credit (0%). Pursuant to the Section 61 of the [University Act](#), UBC's president has the right to impose additional penalties including a failing grade for the course, and suspension from the university.

Students are responsible for informing themselves of the applicable standards for academic honesty. All of the following activities count as academic misconduct:

- ◆ Plagiarism, defined as any time a student submits work done by another person.
- ◆ Collusion, defined as working with others to give or receive help on exams or assignments.
- ◆ Submitting the same assignment to multiple classes ("self-plagiarism").
- ◆ Asking someone else to complete an exam on your behalf
- ◆ Completing an exam on someone else's behalf.
- ◆ Searching for exam answers on "study guide" websites.
- ◆ Publishing exam answer keys to "study guide" websites.

I expect that every graded assessment in this course will be completed *independently*. If you are unsure about whether a particular action constitutes academic misconduct, you must contact an instructor or teaching assistant as soon as possible.

Helpful Resources

UBC Okanagan Equity and Inclusion Office

UBC Okanagan is a place where every student, staff and faculty member should be able to study and work in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. UBC prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of the following grounds: age, ancestry, colour, family status, marital status, physical or mental disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or unrelated criminal conviction. If you require assistance related to an issue of equity, discrimination, or harassment, or to get involved in human rights work on campus, please contact the Equity and Inclusion Office.

In Person: [UNC room #216](#)

Phone: [250-807-9291](tel:250-807-9291)

Email: equity.ubco@ubc.ca

Online: <https://equity.ok.ubc.ca/>

UBC Health & Wellness

At UBC Okanagan health services to students are provided by Health and Wellness. Nurses, physicians, and counsellors provide health care and counselling related to physical health, emotional/mental health, and sexual/reproductive health concerns. As well, health promotion, education and research activities are provided to the campus community. If you require assistance with your health, please contact Health and Wellness for more information or to book an appointment.

In Person: [UNC room #337](#)

Phone: [250-807-9270](tel:250-807-9270)

Email: healthwellness.okanagan@ubc.ca

Online: <https://students.ok.ubc.ca/health-wellness/>

UBC Student Learning Hub

Your go-to resource for free math, science, writing, and language learning support. The Hub welcomes undergraduate students from all disciplines and year levels to access a range of supports that include tutoring in math, sciences, languages, and writing, as well as help with study skills and learning strategies.

In Person: [LIB room #237](#)

Phone: [250-807-9185](tel:250-807-9185)

Online: <https://students.ok.ubc.ca/student-learning-hub/>

Office of the Ombudsperson for Students

The Office of the Ombudsperson for Students offers independent, impartial, and confidential support to students in navigating UBC policies, processes, and resources, as well as guidance in resolving concerns related to fairness.

Email: ombuds.office@ubc.ca

Online: <https://ombudsoffice.ubc.ca/>

SAFEWALK

Don't want to walk alone at night? Not too sure how to get somewhere on campus? For more information, contact SAFEWALK.

Phone: [250-807-8076](tel:250-807-8076)

Online: www.security.ok.ubc.ca

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO)

A safe and confidential place for UBC students, staff and faculty who have experienced sexual violence regardless of when or where it took place. Just want to talk? SVPRO is here to listen and help you explore your options. They can help you find a safe place to stay, explain your reporting options (UBC or police), accompany you to the hospital, or support you with academic

accommodations. You have the right to choose what happens next. SVPRO supports your decision, whatever you decide.

Phone: [250-807-9640](tel:250-807-9640)

Online: <https://svpro.ok.ubc.ca/>

Independent Investigations Office (IIO)

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault or some other form of sexual misconduct by a UBC community member and you want the Independent Investigations Office (IIO) at UBC to investigate, please contact them. Investigations are conducted in a trauma-informed, confidential, and respectful manner in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

You can report your experience directly to the IIO.

Email: director.of.investigations@ubc.ca

Phone: [604-827-2060](tel:604-827-2060)

Online: <https://io.ubc.ca/>

Course Schedule

Week of...	Assigned Readings	Assigned Video Lessons	Exams / Due
Jan. 11		First Day of Class 1. Course Introduction and Syllabus	
Jan. 18	Ch. 2	Research Methods in Psychology 1. What is Science? 2. Methods of Observation 3. Properties of Data 4. Causation 5. Research Ethics	
Jan. 25	Ch. 1 section: "Psychology's Philosophical Roots" "The Late 1800s: Towards a Science of the Mind" Ch. 3 section: "Structure of the Brain"	The Brain Part 1: Gross Anatomy 1. History Lesson: "The Dawn of Psychology" 2. Major Divisions of the Brain 3. Subcortical Structures and the Endocrine System 4. The Cerebral Cortex	
Feb. 1	Ch. 3 section: "The Organization of the Nervous System" "Neurons: The Origin of Behaviour" "The Electrochemical Actions of Neurons"	The Brain Part 2: Neurons 1. The Nervous System 2. Neurons and their Structures 3. The Action Potential 4. Neurotransmission	
Feb. 8	Ch. 3 section: "Genes, Epigenetics, and the Environment" "Investigating the Brain" Ch. 1 section: "The Late 1900s: The Cognitive Revolution" "The Early 2000s: New Frontiers"	The Brain Part 3: Neurodiversity 1. Evolution and Neuroplasticity 2. Brain Injuries and Neuroimaging 3. History Lesson: Cognitive Science and Neuroscience	Midterm 1 Covers all material Jan 11 – Feb 1. Feb 8, 5:00pm Pacific Time
Feb. 15	Ch. 4	Sensation 1. Eyesight 2. Hearing 3. Touch 4. Taste and Smell	
Feb. 22	Reading Break (no assigned lessons or readings)		

Mar. 1	Ch. 4 Ch. 1 Section: "Gestalt Psychology" Ch. 9 Sections: "Broca's Area and Wernicke's Area of the Brain", "Concepts, Categories, and the Brain"	Perception 1. Perception and Illusions 2. History Lesson: Gestalt Psychology 3. Features and Attention 4. Visual Perception 5. Perceiving Sounds 6. Pain Perception 7. Perceiving Tastes and Smells	
Mar. 8	Ch. 7 Ch. 1 section: "Behaviorism: The Mind Does Not Matter"	Learning Part 1: Fundamentals 1. Classical Conditioning 2. History Lesson: Behaviourism and Conditioning 3. Operant Conditioning	
Mar. 15	Ch. 7	Learning Part 2: Special Topics 1. Observational Learning 2. Implicit Learning 3. Developing Habits 4. Drugs of Abuse: Addiction and Overdose	Midterm 2 Feb 8 – Mar 8 Mar 15, 5:00pm Pacific Time
Mar. 22	Ch. 6	Memory Part 1: Fundamentals 1. Memory Encoding 2. Memory Storage 3. Memory Retrieval	
Mar. 29	Ch. 6	Memory Part 2: Special Topics 1. Types of Long-Term Memory 2. Memory Biases 3. Collective Memory and Extended Cognition 4. Dementia	
Apr. 5	Ch. 5 Ch. 1 section: "Psychoanalysis: The Mind Does Not Know Itself"	Consciousness 1. History Lesson: Freud & the Unconscious 2. Modern Theories of Consciousness 3. The Nature of Consciousness 4. Sleep 5. Consciousness-altering Drugs	Written Assignment Due April 5, 11:59pm Pacific Time
Final Exam (date will be set by the University Registrar)			