

PSYC1111: Self, Mind & Society

(Formerly known as Introduction to Psychology as a Social Science)

Fall 2025

Tuesday/Thursday 1:30- 2:45

McGuinn 121

Prof: Andrea Heberlein (she/her, andrea.heberlein@bc.edu)

McGuinn 306

Office hours: Th 3-4:30pm; Fr 10:15-11:15 (sign up link on Canvas. Note signups are 10-min blocks; sign up for 2 if you have a lot of questions.) Or email to set up an alternate time.

TAs:

Emily Broderick (she/they, broderem@bc.edu) Taylor Stone (she/her, stonetc@bc.edu)
M 10am-12pm, McGuinn 356 (no appt needed) T 12-1pm on Zoom, signup link on Canvas

Jacob Glassman (he/him, glassmja@bc.edu) Thomas Savage (he/him, savagetb@bc.edu)
M 2:30-4:30 pm, McGuinn 527, signup link on Canvas (undergraduate TA/admin and managing Canvas)

How is it possible to study things like thoughts and feelings scientifically? Should you trust your intuitions or question them? Are feeling *helpful* for decisions, or *harmful*? Why are people from different cultural backgrounds so different in some ways, and so similar in others? How can two people from the same cultural background have such different beliefs about important topics, like political stances and morality? How do we influence one another? Why do some people thrive in stressful environments, whereas others end up traumatized? How can we improve our own mental health and that of others?

Our investigation of questions like those above will give you the chance to practice a number of skills. In this core course, I aim to prioritize skills that will be useful to you in the course of your life, whether or not you pursue further study in Psychology. You'll also lay a solid foundation for upper-level coursework in Psychology, if that's a path you're interested in. By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- **Describe how the field of Psychology generates knowledge:** You will be prepared to summarize what questions the field of psychology asks, how these questions are formulated and what methods are used to test them, and what answers from these methods look like. You'll have a deeper understanding of how results are interpreted, and how they build back into theories. We will discuss some tools and approaches from social, cultural, developmental, personality, and clinical psychology.
- **Recognize misrepresentations of psychological research:** Our media landscape (traditional media as well as social media) is full of summaries of psychological and other social scientific research. By the end of this class, you will have more tools to evaluate whether a news article or social media summary of a research result or treatment recommendation is an accurate or inaccurate summary. You'll have more skills to track down the original research, and with it, to identify how a media summary misrepresented research findings.

- **Apply psychological descriptions of culture to real-world scenarios:** You will be more aware of your own cultural background(s) and assumptions, and recognize the importance of culture both in everyday interactions and as relevant to social justice.
- **Connect psychological phenomena to real-world circumstances:** You will come to understand your friends' minds—and your own—more deeply, or at least from a new perspective. Moreover, you'll leave with some tools you can use to shift your relationship to stress and more information on how to find resources to support mental health if/when you need them.

This course satisfies the Social Science core requirement. No background in psychology is required for this course.

Students who have taken this course in recent semesters have said:

- *"I honestly think that everyone should be required to take this course. Everything we learned was super applicable to life in general and helping us to understand ourselves and others, which will be important for all of us throughout the rest of our lives."*
- *"We dive into topics that are easy to relate to in real life and can be useful to know."*

The Boston College Department of Psychology and Neuroscience is – and I, personally, am—dedicated to fostering a learning community that represents and builds on the rich diversity of human experiences, backgrounds, cultures, histories, ideas, and ways of living. My intention is that our class meetings and online interactions will take place in a supportive, welcoming environment for **all** students. In this course, we explicitly commit to fostering an inclusive, anti-oppressive environment where each person takes responsibility for their language, actions, and interactions. We may feel *uncomfortable* as we learn new information and confront our internal assumptions and biases, but will seek to work against language, actions, interactions, and ideologies that *hurt* people, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It is critical that we listen to each other about how our words and actions are affecting one another. The skills that we will build in this context are, like many other classroom skills, applicable to a wide range of real-world situations. If you would like to bring anything to my attention that would enhance our work towards these goals, at any point in the class, I would be grateful to hear from you. There will also be opportunities to provide feedback anonymously mid-semester and at the end of the course.

Textbook: King, Laura A. *The Science of Psychology: An Appreciative View* (6th edition). McGraw Hill.

(6th edition is required. Achieve is **not required for completing this course, you just need the text in any format)**

Available at the BC Bookstore in multiple formats. The text is also available as an eText here for \$58/180 days, considerably less than the (new) print edition:

<https://www.mheducation.com/highered/product/the-science-of-psychology-an-appreciative-view-king.html>; use code **ENVISION25 for \$5 off.**

If you want to use it on a mobile device, you can download the (free) ReadAnywhere app.

Requirements

1. There will be **6 online quizzes**. Your lowest quiz will be dropped; each of the remaining 5 quiz will count for 6% of your semester grade, for a total of 30% of your grade. Quizzes are assumed to be open-book and are based on both lecture/class content and reading. That said, you should take them on your own, and you will be asked to sign a statement that you did so. You will have 30 min to complete each quiz, starting from when you begin the quiz, unless you have an accommodation for extended time. You must complete each quiz by the deadline listed on the syllabus; quiz post dates and due dates are listed along with which chapters/lectures are covered on each quiz.
See below for info on the "grace pass" option to take *one* quiz, or turn in *one* assignment, late.
2. There will be **2 exams: one mid-term and one non-cumulative final**, each worth 15% of your grade. These will be closed-book, on paper; you may bring a single sheet of paper with notes, terms, or anything else written on it. The midterm will be during class time (so please plan ahead if you need to book an extended-time exam with the Connors Family Learning Center), and the final exam will be during the scheduled BC final exam time (same planning need).
3. **Participation** will be worth 15% of your grade. Participation options include:
 - Submitting answers during class Poll Everywhere polls. These will be a mix of multiple choice (to check your comprehension) and open response (for you to think through concepts and link them to other content from your lives), and you will receive 1 credit for each poll in which you participate. There will be at least 24 of these (i.e. approximately one/lecture).
 - Answering discussion prompts on Canvas (there will be 6 through the semester).
 - Attending **office hours**: Attending office hours of any of the teaching staff, whether during the scheduled office hours or by appointment, counts for up to 2 participation points (once/visit; you can sign up as many times as you want, you'll just get credit for the first two times).

Adding all of these up: You'll have more than 30 possible times/options to participate in some way. **You will receive full participation credit if you participate actively (respond to a poll, answer an online discussion prompt, or attend office hours) 24 times.**

4. **Article summary (ungraded)**: You'll turn in a worksheet (handwritten) that summarizes a primary journal article by answering a series of questions. You'll have most of a class period to work on this, and can work on it in groups, but each individual must turn in their own assignment. This is required but will be graded on completion (5% of your grade).
5. **Article summary critique**: You'll be given a summary of the same article that you summarized, but the summary will contain multiple errors (e.g. of the type that ChatGPT often includes). Your assignment will be to evaluate and critique the provided summary, following a clear rubric that will be posted on Canvas. This summary critique will be worth 10% of your grade.
6. **Video assignment**: In groups of 2-3 people, you'll create a short (~3min) video that explains a concept from the class and illustrates it in a real-world way. This can be either in the form of an explainer with graphics, or in the form of a skit or sketch (with accompanying explanation). A clear rubric will be posted on Canvas mid-semester. Videos will be worth 10% of your grade.

7. Research participation requirement: Students in this course must complete 2 hours of research participation or an equivalent. The research participation option can also be satisfied by attending workshops on note-taking and study skills, or on reading journal articles, listed on Sona at multiple points through the semester. Those who do not complete 3 hours of Sona or the equivalent will receive an Incomplete ("I") grade. Note that signing up for a study and failing to show up will result in *negative* credit (i.e. you'll need to do extra). The requirement for this semester is explained on the Psychology Department's website at this link: <https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/mcas/departments/psychology/undergraduate/research-opportunities.html>

Credit breakdown:

30% Online quizzes (5 x 6%)
 15% Midterm exam
 15% Final exam
 15% Participation
 5% Article summary (completion grade)
 10% Article summary critique
 10% Video assignment
 0%, required to pass: Sona participation or alternate assignment

Grade cut-offs:

A	≥ 93.0	B-	80.0 – 82.9	D	63.0 – 67.4
A-	90.0 – 92.9	C+	77.5 – 79.9	D-	60.0 – 62.9
B+	87.5 – 89.9	C	73.0 – 77.4	F	≤ 59
B	83.0 – 87.4	C-	70.0 – 72.9		
		D+	67.5 – 69.9		

Course policies

Readings (with one exception, linked on the day-by-day schedule) are chapters in King, The Science of Psychology, 6th ed. See above for e-text and discount options. Chapters 1 and 2 will be linked as pdfs on the day-by-day schedule; you can also email Prof H weekly to request scans.

Canvas: All class materials (downloadable pdfs of the lecture slides, details on the paper assignments, readings except main textbook chapters, online discussion board, links to sign up for office hours) will be on Canvas. Lecture recordings (Panoptos) will also be available on Canvas by request only (e.g. due to missed class for illness or athletic travel, language issues, etc.).

Office hours: See above, or contact any of us to set another time. I am happy to go over questions from the lecture or reading, to answer questions about assignments, or to discuss anything else related to the course and/or to psychological research. If your schedule conflicts with the posted office hours, please email or talk to us to set up a mutually convenient alternative. If you read this before the end of the day on Thursday 9/4, send Thomas a picture of a frog, and you'll get 1 extra point on the first quiz (or if you get full credit on that quiz, on the next one you don't earn full credit on).

Late policy: Quizzes and written assignments have due dates that are listed on the day-by-day schedule. **Please communicate with me** (Prof H.) if you will be unable to complete a quiz or turn in an assignment.

Each student will receive 1 "grace" pass: up to 24 hrs late assignment OR 24-hr extension on quiz, no explanation needed, but notify Prof H or a TA *no later than 1 hr past the due date/time*.

Note: athletic travel without special explanation from your AD/athletics staff does not excuse you from deadlines other than exams, as all assignments and quizzes can be completed outside of class. Internet failure does not excuse you from deadlines unless you can document that your power was out more than briefly. *Plan ahead*: if you are taking a quiz at the very last minute, and you get kicked offline, you can use your grace pass. Don't waste your pass early in the semester because you might need it later.

Grace passes *cannot* be used on either exam; exams can only be made up for BC-sanctioned absences (e.g. athletic travel or medical, personal, or family emergency). That said, if any of these applies to you, please email Prof H to schedule a make-up.

Examples of reasons to use a grace pass: You weren't feeling great and thought it would affect your performance; your computer died mid-quiz; you were traveling and lost track of time zones.

Excuses for lateness or other accommodations that do *not* require a grace pass: substantial mental or physical health issues, personal/family emergency, athletic travel for multiple days without internet access. For each of these, *let Prof H know asap* so that we can support you.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: Students at Boston College are expected to have high standards of integrity. Any student who cheats or plagiarizes on examinations or assignments may fail the course, and a letter of explanation will be placed in their files. Students who plagiarize are subject to dismissal from the College. Note that **substantial paraphrasing**, or knowingly using the words or thoughts of another individual (from conversation, web sources, or published or unpublished material) **without citation can also be considered plagiarism**. (This means that you need to work to put things into your own words. Substantial quoting, with appropriate citation, is not plagiarism but is lazy writing, and will be marked down.) Any work that has been confirmed to be plagiarized will receive a grade of 0. For information on Boston College's Integrity Policy, see:

<http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html>. If you are unsure of the appropriate way to give credit in a paper or about any other aspect of an assignment, please contact any member of the teaching staff

Policy on Technology Use in Classroom: Laptops may be used during class for note-taking and answering polls (polls can also be answered via cell phones). At least one TA will be in the back of the classroom during most lectures. If students are using laptops for distracting activities that are visible to people sitting behind them, Prof H will give two warnings. **If distracting use continues after 2 warnings**, we will switch to a more restrictive laptop policy such that laptops will only be permitted in the first 3 rows of the classroom or by permission (e.g. accommodations).

Policy on Appropriate Use of Course Materials: The materials distributed in this class and on Canvas, including the syllabus, exams, slides, handouts, study aides, and in-class presentations, may be protected by copyright and are provided solely for the educational use of students enrolled in this course. You are not permitted to re-distribute them for purposes unapproved by the instructor; in particular you are not permitted to post recordings, course materials, or notes from lectures and discussions on commercial websites (sharing notes with your fellow students in this class is fine). Unauthorized use of course materials will be considered academic misconduct.

Students with Documented Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Kathy Duggan, (617) 552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities, including temporary disabilities. I will be happy to arrange accommodations but cannot do so retroactively (e.g. after an exam has already taken place). We can

add accommodations for subsequent assignments, exams, and quizzes if you receive a diagnosis or documentation at any point in the semester.

Grade questions/grade changes/grade communication: If you have a question about a graded assignment or exam, please talk to Prof H. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, grade change requests must take place within one week of when the graded assignment was returned; that said, grade explanations can take place at any point in the course.

Finally: If you are feeling stressed, or having challenges managing your time, sleep, or choices around alcohol and/or food, the Office of Health Promotion (OHP) offers Individual and Group Health Coaching appointments with a trained Health Coach. Please reach out by going to the [OHP website](#) to schedule a virtual meeting with a staff member or Wellness Coach, or for health and wellness information.

Readings (with one exception) are chapters in King, The Science of Psychology, 6th ed.

day	date	class # and topic	read	quiz posted/due	assignment due	misc notes
T	26 Aug	1. Orientation/Syllabus/Introductions				
Th	28 Aug	2. What is Psychology?	1		Create your registered PollEverywhere account by this date (ungraded assignment)	
T	2 Sep	3. Methods in Psychology 1	2			<i>9/3 is the last day to add or drop online</i>
Th	4 Sep	4. Methods in Psychology 2	2			
T	9 Sep	5. Nature/Nurture: Evolution & Genes	Myers & DeWall Ch 4		Sign up for Sona by this date (ungraded assignment)	
Th	11 Sep	6. Nature/Nurture: Culture	Myers & DeWall Ch 4	QUIZ 1 posted; covers syllabus and classes 2-5		
T	16 Sep	7. Devel 1: Infancy and Childhood	9 (pp 290-310)	QUIZ 1 DUE		
Th	18 Sep	8. Devel 2: Adolescence and Adulthood	9 (pp 311-324)			
T	23 Sep	9. Thinking	8 (pp 250-263)			
Th	25 Sep	10. Language 1	8 (pp 275-285)	QUIZ 2 posted; covers classes 6-9		
T	30 Sep	11. Language 2		QUIZ 2 due		
Th	2 Oct	12. Article structure then work in class on article summaries				
T	7 Oct	13. Motivation & Achievement	10 (pp 326-341)		Article summary due	
Th	9 Oct	14. Emotion 1	10 (pp 342-351)			
T	14 Oct	FALL BREAK, NO CLASS				

day	date	class # and topic	read	quiz posted/due	assignment due	misc notes
Th	16 Oct	15. Emotion 2		QUIZ 3 posted; covers classes 10-14		
T	21 Oct	16. Personality	12	QUIZ 3 DUE		
Th	23 Oct	17. MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS				
T	28 Oct	18. Social Psych: Attitudes & Attribution	13 (pp 434-452)			
Th	30 Oct	19. Social Psych: Influence & Persuasion	13 (pp 453-462)	QUIZ 4 posted; covers classes 15-18	Summary critique due	
T	4 Nov	20. Social Psych: Prejudice & Stereotyping	13 (pp 462-473)	QUIZ 4 DUE		
Th	6 Nov	21. Industrial & Organizational Psych + 15 min in class on video planning	14			
T	11 Nov	22. Psychopathology 1	15		Video topic due on googleform by 11:59pm	
Th	13 Nov	23. Psychopathology 2	15	QUIZ 5 posted; covers classes 19-22		
T	18 Nov	24. Therapy	16	QUIZ 5 DUE		
Th	20 Nov	25. Stress, Coping & Health 1	17			
T	25 Nov	26. Stress, Coping & Health 2	17			
Th	27 Nov	THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS				
T	2 Dec	27. Happiness & Thriving	10 (pp 352-355)		Video due	
Th	4 Dec	28. Wrap-up and Summary (bonus: some videos produced by your classmates!)		QUIZ 6 posted; covers classes 23-27		<i>12/3 is the last day to withdraw</i>
T	9 Dec	READING DAY, NO CLASS (note this is a reading day. Generally assignments are not due on reading days but I didn't want to switch up the schedule and confuse people)		QUIZ 6 DUE		
Th	11 Dec	FINAL EXAM 12:30-2:30pm				

