

Welcome to Psychology 103!

This class will introduce you to the fun and exciting world of research in psychology. Oh, sure, it doesn't have the surface appeal of Physiological Psychology or Abnormal Psychology, but the critical thinking approach you'll learn here will serve you well throughout your life. Among other things, we'll learn to become informed consumers of research that we run into every day, and how to be skeptical without being cynical. So, sit back, relax and let's get going!

Since this is the beginning of the course, I suspect you have a number of questions. Following are some of the more common questions along with answers!

What is the point of this class?

According to the official course outline, the Student Learning Outcome for this course is:

“Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to differentiate and apply basic research methods in psychology, evaluate research using critical thinking and skeptical inquiry, utilize effectively research tools and resources, and communicate effectively using APA format.”

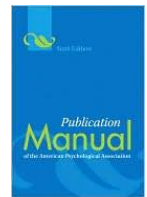
I hope that clears things up.

How much time should I expect to devote to this class?

As I'm sure most of you are aware, the general rule of thumb is that you should expect to spend 2-3 hours reading and studying outside of class for each hour you spend in class. For this class, expect to spend AT LEAST 6 hours PER WEEK, outside of class, to complete required readings and assignments.

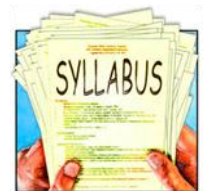
What textbooks are we going to use, Mr. Howe?

We will be using two books. The first is *Conducting Research in Psychology: Measuring the Weight of Smoke, 3rd Edition* by Pelham & Blanton, ISBN: 9780534532949. I would recommend bringing the textbook to each class session. The second book we'll be using is the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*, (ISBN: 9781433805615) also available from the COC bookstore. This book will be important when you write your research manuscripts, and all through your life...it's that good.

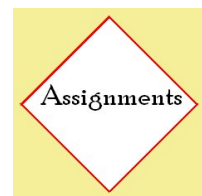


Mr. Howe, why did you give us a syllabus?

All teachers do it. They give you this document with lots of words and dates and rules and stuff. But what does this thing called a syllabus really mean? Is it the secret to life? The key to riches beyond your wildest imagination? Well, no...but it does tell you what's going to happen during your time in this class. The first part of the syllabus is the course schedule so that you know what work is due when. Please note that you (and I!) are expected to have read each chapter BEFORE we discuss it in class. That way we can all have at least some idea what we are talking about.



The syllabus is also a contract of sorts whereby I set out the course guidelines and you agree to abide by them. If both of us behave and follow those guidelines, nobody gets hurt. If you have any questions about the course or deadlines, consult the syllabus first. If you cannot find the information there, then ask me. Dates and policies are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. I will do my best to inform all students of any such changes.



Do you give regular assignments?

Oh golly yes. There will be at least one of some sort of assignment for each chapter. Assignments may take the form of homework and/or involve preparation for an in-class activity. You may be required to use the internet outside of class hours to complete assignments as well. The assignments might be handed out in class or they might be distributed on the internet using Blackboard. Regardless of how I distribute the assignments, you will be responsible for obtaining a copy of the assignment and handing it in on time. You are required to turn in your assignments when due. I will make every attempt to make the due dates clear to you as early in the semester as possible. *If any assignment is submitted late, no points will be given. There are no exceptions.* You may not submit homework assignments via e-mail or in place them in my campus mailbox unless explicit prior approval has been granted. All assignments are due no later than the start of class on the due date unless otherwise specified. Any assignment received after the start of class will receive no points.

How would you like us to answer homework questions?

Answers to questions should be in full sentences (I know - this is college, but you'd be surprised at what people turn in) and should address all parts of the question. Simply copying definitions from the book and/or providing 'yes' or 'no' answers will not suffice. One simple strategy when it comes to answering the questions is to assume that I (your professor) have no idea what the answers are and you are trying to explain it to me. That should help guide you if you are curious as to how much you should write. I will also grade down for poor spelling or grammar. *Please proofread your assignments before turning them in to make sure they are free of errors.*

Can I use crayon to complete my work?

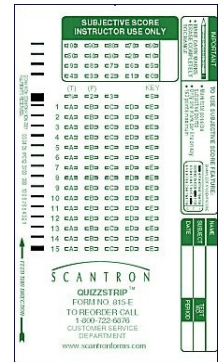
Unless otherwise noted, **all assignments must be typed. I will not accept handwritten papers.** If you do not have a computer or typewriter you can use the computers in the TLC lab on the Canyon Country campus in room 306, in the TLC lab in Bonelli Hall 209 on the Valencia campus, or in the ASG computer lab in STCN-124 on the Valencia campus. You will need to bring your own paper or purchase a debit card to print in these labs. Please feel free to see me if you experience any difficulties. Doing well on homework will likely enhance the chances of success in the rest of the class.

We love quizzes Mr. Howe! With how many will you bless us this semester?

I appreciate your enthusiasm! Because I like to satisfy the clientele, there will be up to 14 quizzes during the semester, one for each chapter. Each quiz will consist of up to 15 multiple-choice questions and will be based on the material covered in the lectures and assigned reading for that chapter. Quizzes may well be given before all the material is covered in class, so be sure to keep up with the reading. If you regularly show up to class and keep up with the reading assignments, you should do well.

Quizzes will be given in class so you will need to purchase 14 ScanTron form 815 forms.

They're really adorable...sort of like what would happen if you took a regular ScanTron form and washed it in hot water.



Hey Mr. Howe, what about exams?

There will be four unit exams in this class. Each exam will have some combination of multiple choice questions and a number of short answer/essay questions. Each exam (except the first) may contain questions on concepts from previous exams.

All exams will be given in the classroom. Please purchase four ScanTron forms, Form 882, available in the COC bookstore on the Valencia campus or in a spiffy vending machine on the Canyon Country campus. Please do not show up on any exam day and ask me for a ScanTron; I will not have one, nor will I have pencils.



Do we have to write a paper?

Indeed you do. During this course you will learn research methods as well as how to write a research paper. Hence, we will be writing a research manuscript using APA format. This will be based on your own research, so it should be fun! We will discuss the process of writing research papers in detail early in the course, as well as the details and timeline for your research project.

Hey, Mr. Howe, what is your make-up policy?

You may not make up any quiz, homework, class activity, or exam during the semester. You must take all exams and quizzes on the day they are given. Possible Exception: If you have an

emergency that would prevent you from taking an exam, you must notify me prior to the exam or as soon as humanly possible after, and you must provide outside documentation of the emergency in order for me to even consider arranging for a make-up. Examples of what I mean by an emergency include hospitalization, a severe auto accident on the way to campus, or documented alien abduction. If you are ill and need to get confirmation but don't feel like seeing your doctor, you can visit the COC health center and the nurses there can evaluate your illness and provide documentation. A vacation (pre-planned or spontaneous) does NOT qualify as an emergency. Assignments, class activities, and quizzes may not be made up under any circumstances.



It's so difficult for me to get here. Do I really need to attend class?

I know you probably hear this in every class from every teacher, but I'll repeat it here anyway: It is very important that

you attend each class session. I will most certainly present material and graded class activities that cannot be obtained from the book and for which you will be responsible on quizzes and exams. Of course I cannot kidnap you from work or come to your house and drag you to class, but I like to think that you would actually want to come to class (wishful thinking, I know). If you routinely experience difficulty getting to class either on time or at all, you might want to consider taking this class when your schedule better allows you.

I will take attendance at the beginning of each class period. If you are late, you must let me know you have arrived (please do so after class so as to not disrupt class) or you will be marked absent for the day. Each of you will begin the course with 0 points for attendance. Being present and on time will earn you two points per day. If you are late to class or leave early, you will earn only one point. If you are absent you will earn zero points. (You will be allowed two unexcused absences [4 points] during the semester.) As an important note, college policy states that if you miss more than two consecutive classes without notification, you may be dropped from the class. At the end of the semester, your attendance will count as up to 2% extra credit.

On an attendance-related note, please do not ask me for special arrangements if you are going on vacation or other trips during the session. I realize that sometimes family members plan vacations without consulting you, but kindly inform them of your schedule and make sure this does not happen. If you do take a vacation, you are still responsible for any work that is due and that work must be turned in on time. Remember, I don't accept late work.

The Dreaded Grading Policy

The grading system, which applies to the exams, homework, quizzes and the final grade, is as follows:

A	90% and above	What it=s all worth:	
B	80 - 89%	Exams	50%
C	70 - 79%	Quizzes	10%
D	60 - 69%	Assignments	10%
F	Below 60%	Research Project	30%
		Attendance - Extra Credit	up to 2%

I strongly recommend that you keep track of your class standing. As a helpful hint - keep all of your work (don't throw it out!). In any dispute about grades, I am right and you are wrong unless you can prove otherwise. Oh, and because I know you will ask, with the exception of attendance, I do not offer any extra credit assignments. Also, I do not drop any exam scores or any assignments from your grade. However, I will drop the two lowest quiz scores at the end of the term.

Mr. Howe, do you like class participation?



I hope this class will be fun as well as educational and I am anticipating that you will all participate in class discussions. Of course I know I am deluding myself, but look at it this way -- if you don't participate at least occasionally, the class will be monopolized by a few overzealous students that sit in the front row, answer every question and always have something to say. You will sit in the back of the room, roll your eyes, make rude comments about these people, and make me angry. So save yourself (and me) from this fate and chime

in with an answer or question or comment every once in a while. I know I'll feel better, and the sanity you will save may well be your own.

On the other hand, please note that I will not allow excessive talking in class, even if it is about the material we are covering. If you feel the need to have lengthy conversations with your classmates, do it before or after class.

What if I want to send you an e-mail?

Glad you asked! I get a large volume of e-mail, and students often forget to identify either themselves, what class they are in, or both. So, if you are going to e-mail me, please put your name AND, for this class, include at least "Psych 103" somewhere in the subject line. An example would be:

To: rick.howe@canyons.edu
 From: jsmith@yahoo.com
 Subject: Joe Smith - Psych 103



If you fail to identify yourself in this way I will ignore your e-mail.

On your end, please make sure that my e-mail address (rick.howe@canyons.edu) is allowed through any spam or junk mail filters you may be using. I have had students completely miss important e-mail from me because their e-mail system

believes I am not to be trusted. Regardless of my trustworthiness, if you do not receive information because your filter blocked my message, that will not be my fault, and will not be grounds for making up anything or any other compensation you may desire. Regarding promptness: If you send me an e-mail that requires a response, I will try my best to respond within 24 hours if I receive the message during the work week, but I make no guarantees about mail received later in the day on Friday or during a weekend. It is likely that any message received between Friday afternoon and Sunday night will not receive a reply until Monday morning.

What is your policy on technology in the classroom, Mr. Howe?



Cell Phones: Nobody (not even you!) likes it when class is interrupted by someone's cell phone going off in the middle of a lecture, quiz, or test. If your phone must be on, please use the vibrate option for the ringer. Otherwise, I would ask that you turn off your phone or make it silent while in class. And one other thing: Please do not text message during class. If I see you using your phone (and believe me, I *can* see you) for any purpose during class I will politely ask you to put the phone away. If you do it again, I will politely ask you to leave the classroom to complete your phone-related activity. If you absolutely cannot control the urge to fondle your phone or text your friends, perhaps you should not come to class. During exams your phone must be put away and turned off. If you are "on call" for a potential emergency call, you can put your phone on vibrate and place it at the instructor's station and I will notify you if a call comes in. If you take your phone or any other electronic device out during an exam, you will immediately receive a score of zero for the exam. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Laptop Computers: I gave everyone a chance, and unfortunately for all of you, a few students ruined it for everyone. Because a significant number of students could not stop checking e-mail and surfing porn during class, I no longer permit the use of laptop computers in class. Sorry.



iPods and other music players: I find it incredibly disrespectful if you use your music player during class. It sends the message that your music is more important than whatever we're doing in class. If that's the case, then you should leave and drop the class. You are not, under any circumstances, allowed to use a music player during an exam or quiz. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Am I allowed to cheat in your class, Mr. Howe?

Absolutely! - but only if you wish to receive a zero on that assignment, be reported to the administration, and possibly suspended from attending classes at COC. If this is not your wish, then here is my policy on cheating: **DON'T!!!** If you are caught cheating on an exam, quiz, or homework assignment, you will, at a minimum, receive a grade of 0 for that assignment. If you are not sure what constitutes cheating, ask me, I'll be happy to go over it with you. You may also wish to review your rights and responsibilities as a student by reading the appropriate section in the schedule of classes.



Is that all?

That's all the major stuff. As always, I reserve the right to change the schedule, syllabus, and course policies as necessary and will make every reasonable attempt to notify all students of these changes in a timely manner. If you have any questions about the course policies or schedule, do not hesitate to ask!