Welcome to the 100% online edition of Psychology 101: Introduction to Psychology at College of the Canyons. I am your instructor, Rebecca Shepherd, and I am looking forward to working with you during the 2017 Fall Semester in which you are enrolled.

Please read the *entire* welcome letter on the pages below before proceeding with the course. These pages will provide you with important information about required materials and required technology, the "virtual" attendance policy, and an overview of the course. Understanding more about how this particular online course is designed and of its requirements will help you get off to a strong start.

**Getting Started...**

Expect to hit the ground running, so to speak, as we will begin work very quickly. The class will be made available to students in Canvas by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on the first date of the Fall Semester in which you are enrolled. You will not see the class in Canvas until the first day of the Fall Semester in which you are enrolled, when it is made available to the class.

**Login instructions for Canvas:**

1. Open your web browser and go to the student access page for Canvas at:
   
   http://www.canyons.edu/offices/distancelearning/pages/canvasaccess.aspx

2. Click on the “Log in to Canvas” button.

3. Enter your username and password.
   
   a. Your username is your MyCanyons username.
   
   b. The initial password for everyone is “student”. If you already have used Canvas in one of your classes and changed your password, use that password.

4. Once logged in, you should see a link on the right hand side of the screen for this class. Click the link to enter the course.

**Important Registration Information:** You may be dropped from the class if you do not log into this course in Canvas by 11:59 p.m. (Pacific Time) on the second day of the Fall Semester. **Please note:** You are responsible, though, for dropping the class by the official college deadlines if you choose not to complete the course.

**Waitlisted Students:** Please send me an e-mail on the first day of class if you are still interested in adding. If I do not hear from you, then I will assume you are no longer interested in adding the class. While I do my best to add as many students as possible, there is no guarantee that I will be able to add anyone, even from the official waitlist.

If the class fills before the first day of class, I will not be able to issue add codes until after the first day the class has “met.” If spots become available to distribute add codes, I must offer them to students in the order they appear on the official waitlist. Given this, if this class is full with a waitlist at the time you register, I encourage you to find an alternate section of Psych 101 that is open to ensure there is a space available for you to take the course and start it on time. While I do my best to delay due dates for a couple of days to accommodate any late additions to the class, assignments still have specific due dates and will not be accepted late.
**Required Materials and Technology**

*What materials do I need for this class?*

**Psychology in Your Life 2nd edition, Paperback (College of the Canyons) W.W. Norton**
ISBN 978-0-393-64744-0

--The textbook shrink-wrapped with InQuizitive access code is available:
(1) At the COC Bookstore in person &/or online
(2) In Canvas by going through the W.W.Norton link in the class once the semester begins.

For this class, you will need to purchase a textbook along with an access code for the “InQuizitive” online resource. You must have access to both the textbook (either in printed format or in e-book format) and an access code for the online course materials, as there will be required assignments from both resources. The most cost effective way to purchase the required course materials is to purchase them NEW, since used copies of the text do not include the access code for InQuizitive. The required textbook and accompanying online materials were selected because they correspond to student learning outcomes developed by both COC and the American Psychological Association.

The required book for this class is *Psychology in Your Life 2nd edition, Paperback (College of the Canyons) W.W. Norton*. The COC Bookstore is carrying a discounted bundle of the textbook which includes the access code for online resources. The ISBN for this shrink-wrapped package is **978-0-393-64744-0**, which can be purchased in person or online through the bookstore at [http://coc.bncollege.com/](http://coc.bncollege.com/). Or you can purchase the e-book & corresponding online resources directly through W.W.Norton at a discounted price. It is highly recommended that you either purchase these materials from the COC Bookstore or directly from W.W.Norton, as purchasing a book from an outside vendor separately from the online access codes may end up costing you more money. A different textbook will not provide you with the required materials to be successful in this class.

**Having regular access to the textbook, accompanying online resources and to Canvas is required for this course.**

*What are the technology requirements for this course?*

If you are using a Windows PC, Canvas recommends using the latest version of Mozilla Firefox, while Mac users are recommended to use Safari Web Browser. If you have a Windows PC, Microsoft Internet Explorer 8 or 9 may also work for you, but they have been found to be less compatible with Canvas than Firefox. Additionally, as you get started, you will want to allow pop-ups from Canvas so you can open assessments and work effectively within the online environment. You can find more information about Canvas, including tutorials about canvas at the COC Distance Learning website at: [http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DistanceLearning/Pages/CanvasAccess.aspx](http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DistanceLearning/Pages/CanvasAccess.aspx). Then click on the “View Canvas Tutorials” button on the right side of the screen. Student Tech Support is also available for Canvas. More information about Student Tech Support is available at by clicking on the link above.
In order to participate in this class you must have access to a computer with reliable internet access and a valid e-mail address that you check regularly, and by regularly I mean daily or nearly so.

If your internet connection is dropped because of a faulty connection or you have other difficulties with your computer, it is your responsibility to troubleshoot the problem yourself. **Computer or network failures are not considered excuses for missing any assignment or quiz in this class, nor is missing important announcements because you didn’t check your e-mail.**

If you do not have a reliable computer and internet connection elsewhere, you can use the computers on the COC campus in The Learning Center (TLC) located in the library extension, room LTLC 126. {Please do not use the computers in the COC Student Center as the browsers have a higher security setting and you may not be able to access portions of the course successfully. } If you are not local to the COC campus, you might try a public library for internet access, although computers at such places may not be set up in such a way that they will work properly with Canvas and often allow users a very limited amount of time.

Toggling between screens, clicking “enter” or “submit” more than once, experiencing a disruption of your internet connection, or remaining logged in to Canvas for an extended period of time without any activity can contribute to a quiz being recorded as “attempted” by the system whether it was completed or not. Quizzes are not typically reset for students by the instructor under these conditions, so please don’t log into a quiz until you have read the assigned materials and are prepared to complete it within a relatively short period of time with only Canvas open &/or running.

But, because technical problems do occur on occasion in a class of this nature, I typically make at least a couple of extra credit assignments available during the class to allow students to make-up for a discussion post or quiz missed. Please complete these extra credit assignments while they are available to ensure you maximize your point total in the class.

**ABOUT WIRELESS NETWORK CONNECTIONS...:**
Many of you may be using technology including laptop computers, cell phones, smart watches & tablets, with wireless internet connections. In the past couple of semesters, wireless connections (including logging in with your cell phone) have proven unreliable when completing work in Canvas, often resulting in work not being submitted properly. If you decide to use a wireless connection on one of these devices, please proceed with caution, be sure that it is reliable and will not disconnect while you are completing your work.

**Are There Any Class Meetings?**
That is an excellent question. All work will be done online and there are no face-to-face classroom meetings. **However, you will be required to take exams online in The Learning Center (TLC) located in the library extension, room LTLC 126 on the college’s main campus if you live locally in the Santa Clarita, Antelope, or San Fernando Valleys.** Exams are proctored in the TLC to ensure they are completed without the aid of the textbook or outside notes to maintain the academic rigor of this transferable course. It also ensures that compatible browsers are used for exams, which decreases the number of technological issues experienced while taking each test.

**This means that, even though exams are completed online in Canvas, they are “closed-book”. NO outside resources of any kind (no textbook, notes, websites, etc.) can be used while completing each exam.** You must rely on your memory of your understanding of the material to complete each exam (much like you would when completing exams in a regular, lecture-based class).
Each of four exams will be available in the TLC on specific dates listed in the course syllabus. Please do not wait until the last minute to take each test! You will need to contact the TLC well in advance to set up an appointment online through the TLC website. The TLC requires students make an appointment a minimum of 48 hours in advance. Appointments fill quickly, so you will want to plan to make your appointment to take each exam well in advance of the 48 hour deadline. Attempting to schedule an appointment too close to the exam availability dates and/or popping into the TLC at the last minute without an appointment would be taking a great risk of missing an exam, as the TLC serves many students and computer terminals can be occupied for extended periods of time, especially in the afternoons and evenings. Exams must be completed by the submission deadline to be eligible for credit.

If you do not live within the local service area listed above, or if you will be out of the area during one of the examination dates, you will need to find an authorized, alternate educational facility, such as a local community college or university to take each exam. If this applies to you, please contact a proctoring facility, obtain their contact information and contact the TLC (661-362-3349; TLCTestProctor@canyons.edu) and me at least 7-10 working days prior to the exam submission deadline to get everything set up. Since there are a large number of students taking online classes at COC, TLC staff will need some time to verify the status of the facility, complete the necessary paperwork, and send out each exam. This means you will need to coordinate with the proctoring facility, the TLC Test Proctor, and me within the first week or two of the semester, to ensure there is enough time to set up the first exam at an alternate site.

You can complete each quiz from the comfort of wherever you are located, but quizzes must be completed by the submission deadline to be eligible for credit. There will not be enough time for you to attempt to look through the textbook to find the answer on each question. In order to complete the quiz within the time allotted time frame, you must rely on your memory of your understanding of the material to complete each quiz (much like you would when completing quizzes in a regular, lecture-based class).

I have done my best to spread the material out across the 15-week semester as much as possible, but we will be moving through the material quickly. You should plan to log into the class on a regular basis a minimum of 4-5 days per week. You are always welcome to work ahead in the discussion posts and you can complete quizzes on whichever days they are available in your folder. A little bit of planning may allow you to navigate around dates that may be problematic.

**Are You Ready for Online Coursework?**

As noted above, your work for this class will be completed using Canvas, an online course management system. Although not a requirement, it will be very helpful if you are familiar with using internet browser software (such as Firefox, Safari, etc.), with sending and receiving e-mail, and with attaching a file to an e-mail message. I encourage you to view the Canvas tutorials if you’ve never used Canvas before, so you feel more comfortable with the format of this online course management system as you start the class. You can access the tutorial at: [http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DistanceLearning/Pages/CanvasAccess.aspx](http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DistanceLearning/Pages/CanvasAccess.aspx).
**Will This Class be Easy?**

If you are already familiar with taking online courses, this class will likely feel comfortable. If this is the first time you have taken an online course, I'd like to point out the differences between the online environment and the traditional classroom. Although online classes have many advantages, including added flexibility, they are unique in several ways and, therefore, may not be for everyone. First, online classes require students to utilize good time management skills and possess a high level of self-motivation, since the instructor is not visible on a daily basis, and "out of sight" can mean "out of mind." Although I make every effort to keep you apprised of deadlines, I will not be visible to you and will not be reminding you of assignment deadlines. It will be your responsibility to log into the class daily to complete assignments, check for new announcements, and review submission deadlines listed in the course syllabus. Second, online courses require students to learn by reading course material and responding in writing on examinations and assignments. If you enjoy reading and feel that you communicate well in writing, then this format may be for you.

While the field of psychology is fascinating, it involves a number of complex terms and concepts that require time and energy to understand, online classes require as much time and effort as traditional face-to-face classes. To successfully complete this online course, you must read the required textbook, complete discussions, SmartBook assignments, quizzes and exams (exams are completed at a proctoring facility). There is a significant amount of effort: discussions, SmartBook assignments, &/or quizzes will occur weekly and an exam is scheduled each month. Each of four units will consist of an average of 4 chapters that you will need to read, practice, apply to real-life situations, and understand to perform well on quizzes, discussions and exams.

Because this is an online course, you are required to master the material outside of a classroom setting. During this 15-week semester, it will require approximately 8-10 hours per week of studying in order to complete the reading assignments and other work for this class. If you are highly motivated, then this is the course for you. This class promises to provide you with a good overview of the field of psychology, as well as the opportunity to interact with a wide variety of students from many different backgrounds.

If you have specific questions about this course, please contact me at rebecca.shepherd@canyons.edu.

If you have general questions about distance learning programs at College of the Canyons, you can visit the **COC Distance Learning website**.

Again, welcome to the class! I look forward to working with you during one of the 2017 Fall Semester!

Best Regards,

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