PSYC 1301.060 – Introduction to Psychology

Term: Fall 2026

Course Dates: Aug. 24th, 2026 – Dec. 12th, 2026

Instructor: Nick Bennie, MA, LPC-S

Office Location: HPR 210

Classroom: NA; Virtual

Class Days and Times: NA; Virtual

Email: nbennie@uttyler.edu

Office Hours: I try to be very responsive to email and am not always in my office on camps. Make sure to reach out to me via email, and I will get back to you within 24 hours (during the week).

Course Overview

A survey of empirically based knowledge of behavior and mentation of individuals.

Student Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, research methods, core empirical findings, and historic trends in psychology.
2. Explain (including advantages and disadvantages) and compare major theoretical perspectives of psychology (e.g., behavioral, biological, cognitive, evolutionary, humanistic, psychodynamic and socio-cultural);
3. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following general domains: biological bases of behavior and mental processes, sensation and perception, learning and memory, cognition, consciousness, personality, social processes, developmental changes in behavior and mental processes that occur across the lifespan, emotion, and motivation;
4. Draw the distinction between scientific and non-scientific methods of understanding and analysis.
5. Recognize and understand the impact of diversity on psychological research, theory and application, including (but not limited to): age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, socio-economic status, disability, and sexual orientation.
6. Understand and apply psychological principles to personal experience and social and organizational settings.
7. Demonstrate critical thinking skills and information competence as applied to psychological topics.

Required Textbook

This course will use the free, open-access textbook *Psychology, 2nd Edition* by OpenStax. You can access the textbook online at: https://openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e. A downloadable PDF version is also available at no cost. You are **not required to purchase a textbook** or access code for this course. All assigned readings will come from this OpenStax textbook.
NOTE: A student at UT-Tyler is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from a university-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Course Design

This course is fully online and asynchronous, meaning there are no course meetings, nor is there any one scheduled time that all students must do the same activity together. Within the week, students are required to complete the assigned work by **Friday at 11:59 pm (not Sunday)!** Active student participation is expected and required. Each week the class will start a new chapter. It is very important that you are reading or listening to each assigned chapter every week.

Please make sure you have logged into Canvas daily and reviewed the informational messages explaining the workings of this course. I will make course announcements as needed via Canvas to help you keep track of what assignments are due and inform you of any important updates within the course.

Graded Course Requirements Information

Chapter Quizzes: At the end of each chapter, students answer 20 multiple-choice questions in Canvas. Chapter quizzes are not timed.

Journal Reflections: Throughout this semester, I want you to be thinking about, and applying some of the principals that we learn and discuss in class to your daily lives. These journal reflections will be your perspective on what that application was like for you. Each journal entry will follow a week of applying a given concept, and will be 2 pages long.

Midterm Reflection Paper: You will write and submit a 3-page reflection paper on your perspective of your own development as a person, through the lens of the **nature vs. nurture** discussion. Who are you? What led to your development as the person that you are today? Do you believe that your genetic inheritance, or the environment in which you grew up in, played more of a role in your life?

Post-Course Assessment: This is a cumulative multiple-choice test that has 30 questions and covers all chapters. It is not timed but you are allowed only one single attempt to take the test. You may take the exam any time in the availability window.

*For all written assignments, please observe rules of grammar and spelling

Assignments and point values

Your final grade for the course will be based on the following:

Assignment	Number of Assignment	Points per assignment	Highest possible points in total
Chapter Quizzes	15	40 points	600 points
Journal Reflections	3	50 points	150 points
Midterm Reflection Paper	1	100 points	100 points
Post-Course Assessment	1	150 points	150 points
Highest possible points in this class: 1000 points			

Grading Scale

A = 900-1000 points
B = 800-899 points
C = 700-799 points
D = 600-699 points
F = 0-599 points

Grades will be available for you to view on Canvas and Revel throughout the semester to keep you informed of where you stand in the course. Students are expected to contact the instructor promptly if they are experiencing difficulties that will impede their progress in the course.

Late Work and Make-up exams

If you miss a graded course requirement for an excused reason (such as a doctor's documented illness, death/funeral, evacuation for a natural disaster, university-related activity, religious observance, etc.), I may accept your late work without any penalty. You will be required to provide an acceptable form of documentation for missing the deadline. That documentation must be submitted via email within 48 hours of missing the course requirement. Please keep in mind that all assignments and tests in the course are available for a window of time not less than 5 days, so due dates are firm if you do not have an acceptable form of documentation.

Attendance and participation policy

As this course is fully asynchronous, there are no scheduled class meetings. Your "attendance" will be determined by your timely engagement with weekly assignments, journals, and any other required activities on Canvas. Consistent participation is essential to your success in this course.
It is your responsibility to review all course materials and complete assignments by their deadlines. Summary PowerPoint slides and supplementary materials for each chapter will be available on Canvas. However, not all information from the course content will be included in these slides. To succeed, you are expected to carefully review the assigned readings and complete all activities as outlined in the weekly modules.
Professionalism and respectful communication with the instructor are expected at all times. Any disrespectful behavior or failure to adhere to course guidelines may result in consequences as outlined in the **UT Tyler Student Handbook**.
If you have questions or need clarification about course material, please feel free to reach out to me directly via email.

Calendar of Topics, Readings, and Due Dates

	Due Date	Readings	Assignments
1	August 28th	Chapter 1: Introduction to Psychology	Chapter 1 Quiz Register for SONA
2	September 4th	Chapter 2: Psychological Research	Chapter 2 Quiz
3	September 11thst	Chapter 3: Biopsychology	Chapter 3 Quiz
4	September 18th	Chapter 4: States of Consciousness Chapter 5: Sensation of Perception	Chapter 4 Quiz Chapter 5 Quiz
5	September 25th	Chapter 6: Learning	Chapter 6 Quiz Journal #1 Due
6	October 2nd	Chapters 7: Thinking and Intelligence	Chapter 7 Quiz
7	October 9th	Chapter 8: Memory	Chapter 8 Quiz
8	October 16th	Chapter 9: Lifespan Development	Chapter 9 Quiz Midterm Reflection Due
9	October 23th	Chapter 10: Emotion and Motivation	Chapter 10 Quiz
10	October 30st	Chapter 11: Personality	Chapter 11 Quiz Journal #2 Due
11	November 6th	Chapter 12: Social Psychology	Chapter 12 Quiz
12	November 13th	Chapter 14: Stress, Lifestyle, and Health	Chapter 14 Quiz
13	November 20st	Chapter 15: Psychological Disorders	Chapter 15 Quiz
Week 14 – November 23th – 27th – Fall Break – Enjoy!			
15	December 4th	Chapter 16: Therapies and Treatment	Chapter 16 Quiz Journal #3 Due
16	December 11th	Final Exam	Psychology Post-Course Assessment

University Policies & Student Resources

Withdrawing from Class – Students: you are allowed to withdraw (drop) from this course through the University's Withdrawal Portal. Texas law prohibits students who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Make sure to consider the impact withdrawing from this class has on your academic progress as well as the financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and financial aid for additional guidance. CAUTION #1: Withdrawing before census day does not mean you get a full refund. Please see the Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule. CAUTION #2: All international students must check with the Office of International Programs before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms.

Final Exam Policy: Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members are required to maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

Incomplete Grade Policy: If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in lieu of a grade only when all of the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all course work or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor; and (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average for a student. The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to complete all of the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has not been assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F, or to NC if the course was originally taken under the CR/NC grading basis.

Grade Appeal Policy: - UT Tyler's Grade Appeal policy requires the completion of a Grade Appeal form for this action to take place. The grade appeal begins with the instructor of your course. If you do not agree with the decision of the instructor, you may then move your appeal to the department chair/school director for that course. If you are still dissatisfied with the decision of the chair/director, you may move the appeal to the Dean of the College offering that course who has the final decision. Grade appeals must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade. The Grade Appeal form is found on the Registrar's Form Library.

Disability/Accessibility Services: The University of Texas at Tyler has a continuing commitment to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities who may need accommodation(s) in order to fully participate in this class are urged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources Office (SAR) as soon as possible to explore what arrangements need to be made to ensure access. If you have a disability, you are encouraged to visit the SAR Portal (https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler/) and complete the New Student Application. For more information, please visit the SAR webpage or call 903.566.7079.

Military Affiliated Students: UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with me if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make me aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. I am willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. Campus resources for military affiliated students are in the Military and Veterans Success Center . The MVSC can be reached at MVSC@uttyler.edu, or via phone at 903.565.5972.

Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct: The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the Student Conduct and Discipline policy in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

FERPA - UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in University Policy 5.2.3 . The course instructor will follow all requirements in protecting your confidential information.

COVID Guidance

Information for Classrooms and Laboratories: Students are ***strongly encouraged*** to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories). The UT Tyler community of Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its Honor Code and a sign of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, or a higher than normal temperature should stay at home and notify their faculty. Students needing additional accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email saroffice@uttyler.edu.

Recording of Class Sessions: Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in this course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in this course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes.

Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.

Absence for Official University Events or Activities: This course follows the practices related to approved absences as noted by the Student Manual of Operating Procedures (Sec. 1 -501).

Absence for Religious Holidays: Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious holiday are requested to inform the instructor by the second class meeting of the semester.

Campus Carry: We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php.

UT Tyler Resources for Students:

- • UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
- • UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
- • The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
- • UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

CEP Vision and Mission and Program Standards:

Vision: The College of Education and Psychology is nationally recognized and respected for its academic programs and opportunities. It is a center of academic excellence, scholarly inquiry, and public service. The College prepares leaders to meet the critical challenges of the 21st Century, to make significant contributions to local and global communities, and to work toward individual and cultural equity.

Mission: The mission of the College of Education and Psychology is to provide a positive environment that fosters the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The mission is individually and collectively realized through a community of scholars that contribute to knowledge through scholarly inquiry; organizes knowledge for application, understanding, and communication; and provides leadership and service. Additionally, the College is committed to affirming and promoting global perspectives, cultural diversity, and respect for individual differences as a means of enhancing learning, service, and scholarship.

UT Tyler Dept. of Psychology & Counseling Research Requirement (SONA)

The Department of Psychology and Counseling requires that all students taking 1000-, 2000-, and 3000-level psychology courses to complete a research requirement. (Note that the Research Methods course, PSYC 2331, is exempt from this policy). Some 4000-level courses offer research participation as a means to gain extra credit.

In order to fulfill this requirement or access extra credit opportunities, all students should register in Sona within the *first week of class*. The registration will take only a few minutes, and will include a brief survey to collect demographic data. This data will serve as a screening tool to determine potential survey eligibility.

Once you register in the system, there are two ways to fulfill the research requirement:

Options:

- • You may complete research credits by participating in psychology studies. One credit is earned for every 30 minutes of research participation. Most studies are worth one credit.
- • The number of credits required varies from one course to the next, and you must complete 6 credits for this course.
- • In lieu of the research participation, you may instead complete a 5-page research report on a topic that you are interested in psychology. This could mean looking more closely at a topic we've covered in class. Your paper must be written in APA style (7th edition) and includes a cover page and at least 5 scholarly resources. To ensure that your topic is appropriate, you must check it with me before you start to work on your paper.

Timeline:

If you choose to complete the research participation, at least 3 of the credits must be submitted on or before March 4th. Failure to do so will result in a **5% reduction** to your final course grade. The remaining 3 credits needed to fulfill the requirement must be submitted on or before the last day of the regular semester (i.e., before the start of finals week). Failure to submit the remaining credits by this date will result in an **additional 5% reduction** to your final grade.

If you choose, instead, to complete the research report, the final report must be submitted to your instructor no later than April 25th. Failure to do so will result in a **10% reduction** to your final course grade. If you are caught plagiarizing or engaging in other forms of academic dishonesty with regard to the research report, you will face university disciplinary measures in addition to the 10% reduction to your final grade.

Initial Registration and Account Setup:

The psychology pool administrator maintains the student credits in the department's online research participation system, which is called Sona Systems. Students are required to register with this online system to track and submit their credits.

How to Create an Account for the Research Sign-up System

Go to the following website: http://uttyler.sona-systems.com

Please follow these steps:

(1) On the right-hand side of the page, click the link that says, "Request Account."

(2) Type in your information. Your user ID can be anything you wish. However, note that **YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS MUST BE ACCURATE!!!!** You will also enter your telephone number and select the psychology course(s) that you enrolled in this semester.

(3) The system will use your email address to send you a password.

(4) Log into the system at the web address above with your username (that you created) and password (that the system will email to you). You may change your password upon logging in to the system for the first time.

(5) Click the link that says "Study Sign Up"

(6) Click the link of the study you wish to participate in (the number of credits the study is worth will be listed on the webpage).

(7) Click the link that says "Timeslots Available." Note that a specific study is available until the study is completed, after which you can no longer sign up for it. New studies are posted throughout the semester, but the timing of new study availability depends on the individual researchers in charge of those specific studies.

Start early!!!! Do NOT wait until the end of the semester to start your research participation. There will NOT be a large number of studies available toward the end of the semester because the researchers and their student assistants are trying to analyze the data from their semester projects before the semester ends. Check Sona each week throughout the semester in order to find new studies in which you can participate!!!!!

(8) Select a date and time that will work for you. Some studies are completely online, so you can complete that study immediately. Other studies require that you show up to one of the psychology research laboratories on campus. There are three psychology laboratories on campus, so please note which one you need to attend.

(9) The Sona system will send you an email reminder about your study sign-up (including information about the day, time, and location of the study) at 5:00 pm the night before the study is to take place.

(9) Repeat Steps 5 - 8 until you have completed all credits that are required for your course. Any credits you complete beyond those required for your course(s) can potentially be used for extra credit, at the discretion of your instructor.

Once you participate, the system will track the number of credit hours you have completed. This information is available by clicking the "My Schedule/Credits" link.

Types of Studies:

There are two basic types of studies. The first is a laboratory study, and you will meet with a researcher at a specific location on the UT-Tyler campus. The second type is an online study. With this type of study, you can complete it from any computer connected to the internet. Although the majority of studies are of the first type, a few online studies may be posted during the semester for your convenience. The type of study will be listed in the description of the project on the website.

Canceling an Appointment:

If you need to cancel an appointment for a timeslot you have signed up for, you can do this from the My Schedule / Credits page on the website. Select this link, and you will see all the studies you have signed up for, as well as those you have completed. Click "Cancel" on the appointment you need to cancel, and you will see a confirmation page. Note, however, that you should avoid canceling an appointment unless absolutely necessary. Aside from not receiving the credit from the study, you are also inconveniencing the student researchers who are waiting at the laboratory to greet you. If you do need to cancel, you may try to contact the researcher in charge of the study (listed on the website) to reschedule.

To assign credits to specific courses –in the event that you are in more than one course that requires participation and/or offers extra credit for participation – please do the following:

- • Click the "My Schedule/Credits" link.
- • Assign the credits for each study in which you have participated to a specific course. This may include volunteer hours for student counseling.
- • The system will allow you to assign any number of the total credits you have accumulated to any specific course. However, you only have your total number of accumulated credits to distribute to your course(s). For example, if you have two courses that require participation and you have 10 accumulated credits, you can allocate those 10 credits to one course, the other course, or divide them in some way between both courses.

Before the end of the semester, be sure that you "apply" the credits that you have accumulated to the course(s) that require research participation and/or that offer extra credit for participating in research or volunteering for counseling.

If you have any questions about Sona or the research participation requirement for your course, please talk with your course instructor. Or, you may contact the Sona System administrator, Dr. Stocks, directly at estocks@uttyler.edu.