

## **PSYC 443: Thinking and Problem Solving**

**Fall 2007 – 3credits**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00-12:15**

**Instructor: Dr. Sonja Geschmay Linn**

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### **Course Description**

This course is designed to combine theoretical and practical applications of cognitive psychology. Specifically, this course will examine a variety of processes involved in thinking and problem solving including attention, perception, memory and decision making. We will look at our own thinking and problem solving and explore ways of incorporating optimistic thinking with different populations. Students will be encouraged to think critically about their own thinking and examine views of themselves. Students will be expected to take an active part in the learning process and participate in class discussions.

### **Required Reading**

- ◆ ROBINSON-RIEGLER, G. & ROBINSON-RIEGLER, B. (2004). APPLYING THE SCIENCE OF THE MIND: COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY. BOSTON, MA: PEARSON EDUCATION, INC.
  
- ◆ COURSE PACKET

### **Class Topics & Reading Assignments**

Th 8/30	Course Introduction	RRRR: Ch. 1
Tu 9/4	Research & Age, Gender, Cross-Cultural Differences	RRRR: Ch. 2
Th, 9/6	Attention and Perception	RRRR: Chs.3, 4
Tu, 9/11	Stereotypes	
Th, 9/13	NO CLASS	
Tu, 9/18	<u>MBTI Administration</u> & Recognition	RRRR: Ch. 5
Th, 9/20	Memory	RRRR: Chs. 6, 7
Tu, 9/25	Memory	RRRR: Ch. 9
Th, 9/27	Emotional Influences on Cognition	RRRR: Ch. 8
Tu, 10/2	Stress and Cognition <b>Part I Project TV Due</b>	Sapolsky: Chs. 1, 10

Th, 10/4	Coping	
Tu, 10/9	Critical Thinking	Chaffee: pps. 81-89
Th, 10/11	MBTI Interpretation <b>Part II Project TV Due</b>	
Tu, 10/16	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
Th, 10/18	Problem Solving & Goal Setting	RRRR: Ch. 12
Tu, 10/23	Paper 3 and Presentation Preparation	
Th, 10/25	Cognitive Therapy & Cognitive Distortions	
Tu, 10/30	Learned Optimism	Seligman: Chs. 3, 5
Th, 11/1	Learned Optimism & Depression <b>Paper 1 Due</b>	Seligman: Ch. 12 Sapolsky: Ch. 14
Tu, 11/6	Judging, Reasoning, Moral Reasoning	
Th, 11/8	Decision Making	RRRR: Ch 13
Tu, 11/13	Decision Making	Chaffee: Pps. 473-482
Th, 11/15	Ethics	
Tu, 11/20	Career Decision Making	Brown: Ch. 3
Th, 11/22	HAPPY THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS	
Tu, 11/27	Career Decision Making <b>Paper 2 Due</b>	Brown: Ch. 6
Th, 11/29	Presentations	
Tu, 12/4	Presentations	
Th, 12/6	Presentations	
Tu, 12/18	<b>Final Exam: 11:00a.m – 1:00p.m.</b>	

### Assignments, Exams & Grading Standards

**Reaction Papers:** Periodically students will be assigned to write a one page, double spaced, paper discussing ways in which terms, theories, ideas, or discussions are relevant to their views of themselves. Papers should reflect thoughtful analysis of class content and its application to students' lives. 5% of final grade.

**Project TV:** Students will be assigned partners and together the partners will agree to watch the same 1 hour television program. One hour later, each partner will independently write down what s/he remembers about watching that program, as specifically as possible. For example, if the partners agree to watch Oprah (an hour program) which ends at 5:00, at 6:00 each partner will record what is remembered about the program. A typed summary will be submitted in class by each student. Additional instructions will be given for Part II of this project; Part I and Part II are worth 5% of final grade.

**Paper 1:** Using your MBTI results, write a 4-5 page paper explaining who you are according to your type. Discuss your results on each of the dimensions as well as your overall type. Indicate what you agree and disagree with, and cite examples from your life. Identify strengths and weaknesses of your type. This paper is worth 10% of final grade.

**Paper 2:** In a 3 page (double spaced) paper, describe a recent decision you have recently made or are currently struggling to make. Explain the process(es) used in your decision making, describing at least 5 concepts discussed in the text or from class. This paper is worth 10% of final grade.

**Paper 3 and Presentation:** In small groups, students will choose a specific population of interest in need of intervention (e.g., low income single mothers, adolescent females with eating disorders, 1<sup>st</sup> time juvenile offenders) and will discuss applications of Seligman, Sapolsky, and cognitive therapy in working with this population. In a 5 -7 page paper, with a minimum of 4 scholarly references, students will:

- Describe the population including a clear description and definition of the population and related problems (e.g., prevalence, related psychological issues involved, relevant research, etc...). Only professional and scholarly journals and books will be acceptable references. Proper citations are required.
- Describe specific concepts from Seligman, Sapolsky, and cognitive therapy that can be applied when working with this population to **both** further the understanding of the problems of this population **and** to be useful in interventions. Thoroughly explain the concepts you are applying and provide examples and/or proposed interventions that utilize these concepts.
- Fifteen minute presentations will include a summary of the population description and recommended applications of Seligman, Sapolsky and cognitive therapy. In addition, students can invite the class to participate in a discussion about his/her paper and viewpoints. The paper is worth 15% of final grade and the presentation is worth 5% of final grade. **Papers are due on presentation date.**

**All assignments require students to submit hard-copy forms at the start of the class for which they are due. Assignments should be turned in typed, double spaced, using a 12-point font, with 1-inch top, bottom, and side margins, and stapled. All assignments should be well-written; grades will be lowered for grammatical and typing errors.**

**Exams:** Exams will be multiple choice and short answer and will cover material presented in the text and in class discussions. Each exam is worth 25% of the final grade.

### **Student Responsibilities**

"The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the

Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>."

Students are expected to arrive on-time for every class, having completed that day's reading assignment noted on the syllabus.

Cheating on any assignment or exam will result in the following disciplinary actions:

(1) "XF" (a "cheating F") will be the grade earned for the *course*, and (2) possible expulsion from the UMCP's B.A. Program in Criminology & Criminal Justice at the Shady Grove Center, effective the following semester. All cases of academic misconduct will be referred to the Student Honor Council at UMCP. Examples of conduct meriting such disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) cheating on an exam, either with or without the assistance of another student or students, (2) submitting as your own work a paper that is either wholly or partially plagiarized, such as purchasing a paper from an internet site or superficially rewriting the work of others without proper citation, or (3) collaborating with fellow students on assignments or take-home exams for which you were instructed to work alone.

Missing a class to participate in a religious observance or to seek medical care constitutes an excused absence. Please inform me in advance, if possible, if you will need to miss a class for such reasons. It remains your responsibility to check with fellow students for missed class notes.

If a student misses an exam, s/he must produce a documented, valid reason for doing so as soon as possible. Make up exams will only be scheduled for extraordinary reasons.

Should a student need accommodation in the classroom or for assignments/exams due to a verified, documented learning or physical disability, please inform me of your situation immediately, so that proper UMCP documentation and accommodation procedures are followed.