

University of British Columbia  
**PSYCHOLOGY 217-006**  
**Thinking Clearly About Psychology**  
 Fall 2007  
 (3 credits)

<b>Course Weeks</b>	September 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2007 –November 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2007
<b>Course Dates</b>	Tuesday and Thursdays 11:00-12:30pm
<b>Room</b>	Buchanan A100
<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. Andrea Perrino
<b>E-Mail</b>	aperrino@psych.ubc.ca
<b>Office Hours</b>	Tuesdays 3:30-4:30
<b>Office Location</b>	Kenny 2524
<b>Messages</b>	Main Psychology Office UBC: 604-822-2755

<b>Teaching Assistant</b>	Sam Doesburg
<b>E-Mail</b>	sam@psych.ubc.ca
<b>Office Location</b>	Kenny (lab) 3014
<b>Office Hour</b>	Thursday 2-3:00

**1. Course Description:** The purpose of the course is to introduce students to the methods and reasoning behind psychological information and research. We will discuss what a psychologist does and why; how psychologists decide on a research plan, how to choose a method, how to evaluate information and data, and then draw conclusions regarding why we behave the way we do. We will practice evaluative thinking, and attempt to apply the material to everyday situations where we encounter “data”, so that when we encounter psychological information and issues, we can assess it from various directions and be well informed.

**2. Prerequisites:** Enrolment in this course is restricted to students who have successfully completed Psych 100, or its equivalent.

**3. Format of the course:** The format of the course will be lectures with active (lively!) in-class discussion, and in-class demonstrations.

**4. Textbooks (Required):**

Stanovich, K. E. (2007). *How to Think Straight About Psychology*. (8th Edition). Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

Pelham, B.W., & Blanton, H. (2007). *Conducting Research in Psychology: Measuring the weight of smoke* (3rd Edition). Belmont CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

**5. Course Requirements and Grading:**

1. Exams:

- a) In-class Midterm (40%): 1:20 hour, multiple choice and short answer
- b) Final Exam (50%) : 2 hour, generally non-cumulative, multiple choice and short answer; time and location scheduled by registrar.

2. Assignments:

- one-page "thought driven" assignments, 5 in total (10%)

### 6. Bonus Credit Possibility

Not only will you learn about we do research in psychology, but you can be a part of it as well! To enrich your learning of the material and obtain a possible 2% bonus to your final grade, you can either:

a) participate in the Human Subject Pool of the Psychology Department, and take part in the experiments conducted in our department. Go to <http://hsp.psych.ubc.ca>. to see the experiments and sign up. Other information can be found at <http://www.psych.ubc.ca/resguide.htm>.

b) you can write some paper reviews of 500 words each. Details and essay requirements may be found at: <http://www.psych.ubc.ca/resguide.htm>, in the document titled, "Subject Pool Information for Participants," under the heading, "Library Option," (p.3).

*More details.....*

#### **Paper Assignments:**

Short assignments will be e-mailed to the class list (to a total of five), and will likely be sent on a Thursday for review and discussion at the following class on the Tuesday. The content may include answering a question, bringing newspaper or magazine clippings, or asking friends some questions and summarizing what you find. Each paper will be no longer than 1-typed page. If referencing is required, please be sure to properly APA reference throughout. If you are not sure how to reference in this manner please see <http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/about/instruct/apastyle.html> and <http://www.apastyle.org/> for information.

#### **Exams:**

*What to expect:*

You are responsible for all material in the textbooks, and information provided in the lectures (which will differ as well as reflect content in the text). All is "fair game".

Exams will be presented in multiple-choice (indicating answers on both the exam and a scan-tron answer sheet), and short answer format. You **MUST USE A PENCIL** for the scan-tron sheets as pen will not be scored by the machine. Thus, do bring 2-3 pencils and an eraser. No pink, red, baby-blue, or green pens permitted for the short answer.

Plan to be on time. No individual may begin to write an exam once any one person has already completed the exam.

*What to avoid:*

The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Disability Resource Centre (Access and Diversity). The University also accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance- in the first week of class, if you will require any special requirements as such. Also note that current mental (depression, stress or anxiety, etc), or physical disabilities or injuries will not be diagnosed by your instructor, nor can these be accommodated without the registration with the Disability Resource Centre. Furthermore, *students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, vacations, work scheduling, or other similar commitments, WILL NOT be accommodated (in exams or assignment deadlines).*

As for missed exams or late papers – consider that a 0% will be assigned unless you have both a) contacted the instructor before the exam time and date or paper submission date, had a discussion **AND** been given clear permission b) valid, clear medical documentation on letterhead. Each will be considered

on a case-by-case basis. If any make-up exam are to be scheduled, they will be within days (not weeks later) and it may conflict with other commitments. Note that the makeups can be oral or essay format.

*What to consider:*

Midterm exams can be reviewed with your TA, for 2 weeks following the grade posting (on the window of my office). If there is any dispute, note that both instructors reserve the right to remark the entire exam and the grade that was originally assigned can either change to an increase or decrease or remain the same. Review of multiple choice questions would be for learning purposes only (and not alteration).

It is a university regulation that if you wish to view your final exam it can only take place with special written request from the Dean's Office. During this viewing, discussion of grades is not permitted, but for learning purposes only. If you believe that an error has been made in the marking of your final examination, you may make an official request from the Registrar's Office (within 4 weeks of the announcement of the final grades). The examination remains the property of the university.

## 7. Class conduct, considerations:

*Attendance and class participation* – Come; you will do much better than if you miss class. Believe me. The purpose of the lectures will be to amplify, explain, demonstrate, and expand on the material in the texts, as well as divulge in unique material. Be on time and avoid coming and going unless “biologically necessary”.

*Communication* – be on time for the start of lecture to ensure that you receive any necessary information regarding changes to the course content or scheduling. Otherwise, obtain this information by asking a fellow classmate.

Considering the use of e-mail: firstly, we would be happy to see you “in person” at office hours for many of the questions you may have! I prefer to see my students to explain content or clarify material, versus electronic communication. Your e-mail content should be reserved for only urgent matters, and expect at least 24 hours before a response can be expected. Do keep your address current with the University as the assignments will be sent via this manner as will other “blanket” e-mail messages with regards to scheduling changes or important info.

*Electronics* – turn off, put away electronics (e.g., phones, headsets, cameras). Laptop computers are welcomed for note taking purposes (please avoid displaying other potentially distracting material). Also, no electronics will be permitted in any exam (e.g., phone, dictionary).

*Food and Scents*– If you would like to bring food to class, simply be considerate of others (and the instructor) by refraining from bringing very odorous food or noisy wrapping. Furthermore, please refrain from wearing scents to class as many people (including your instructor) have severe allergies to airborne scents.

## 8. Psychology Department's Policy on Grade Distributions and Scaling

In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology courses are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions. According to departmental norms, the mean grade in a 300-level class is 70 for a good class, 68 for an average class, and 66 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 13). The corresponding figures for 100- and 200-level Psychology courses are 67, 65, and 63, with a standard deviation of 14. **Scaling** is likely to be used in order to comply with these norms; grades may be scaled up or down as necessary by the professor or department. Grades are not official until they appear on a student's academic record.

## 9. Academic Dishonesty

Short version: Don't try it, don't do it. The consequences are more grave than you may think: you will fail the course, and/or will be expelled from University, and unable to attend any other post-secondary institution in the future.

Long version: Psychology Department's Position on Academic Misconduct

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them. In the first place, the Department has implemented software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple-choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students' responses. In addition, the Department subscribes to *TurnItIn*—a service designed to detect and deter plagiarism. All materials (term papers, lab reports, etc.) that students submit for grading will be scanned and compared to over 5 billion pages of content located on the Internet or in TurnItIn's own proprietary databases. The results of these comparisons are compiled into customized "Originality Reports" containing several, sensitive measures of plagiarism; instructors receive copies of these reports for every student in their class.

In all cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript.

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently by individuals. Do **not** use Google/Yahoo/MSN Search/etc. to find articles for assignments in this course. **Do** use any of the indexes and databases listed under Indexes and Databases, Subject Resources, OneSearch or Metasearch on the Library's website at <http://www.library.ubc.ca>. (Not sure which index to use? Click HELP on the library homepage at [www.library.ubc.ca](http://www.library.ubc.ca) or try Subject Resources.)

If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is even a borderline case of academic misconduct, please consult your instructor. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>).

Do note that during exams, the instructor and invigilators reserve the right to move students in their seating arrangement with no explanation provided.

## 10. Finally....

Further information about academic regulations, course withdrawal dates and credits can be found in the University Calendar. If you run into trouble and need information about studying, preparing for exams, note-taking or time-management, free workshops and advice are available from the Student Resources Center.

Psychology 217—Research Methods  
 Fall 2007 Term  
Tentative Schedule of Topics, Assigned Readings and Papers

**\*Note\*:** This list is meant for general reference, as a guide. It will likely undergo changes and adjustments given presently unforeseen circumstances. *Please be aware that changes and announcements that are pertinent to you will be provided in the beginning of the lectures only.*

Week of..	Topic
September 4	Course Introduction Psychology as a Science (Stanovich, Chapt. 1)
September 11	History of Psychology ..“a wee primer” (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 1) The Scientific Approach (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 2)
September 18	Falsifiability (Stanovich, Chapt. 2) Operational Definitions (Stanovich, Chapt. 3)
September 25	Case Studies (Stanovich, Chapt. 4) Correlation, Causation & Controls (Stanovich, Chapt. 5 & 6)
October 2	The “Artificiality” Criticism (Stanovich, Chapt. 7) Converging Evidence (Stanovich, Chapt. 8)
October 9	Multiple Causation (Stanovich, Chapt. 9) Probability & Reasoning Fallacies (Stanovich, Chapt. 10)
October 16	<b>Midterm Exam</b>
October 18	The Role of Chance (Stanovich, Chapt. 11)
October 23	Validity & Reliability (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 3) Threats to Validity (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 5)
October 30	Non-experimental Research (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 6) Experimental Research (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 7)
November 6	Quasi-experimental Research (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 8) Scientific Research & the Media
November 13	Research Design (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 9)
November 20	Basic Statistics (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 10)
November 27	Talking the talk, walk the walk (Pelham & Blanton, Chapt. 11; Stanovich, Chpt12)
	<b>Final Exam Date – determined by registrar</b>

