

PSYCHOLOGY 217: SECTION 7: 2007

Thinking Clearly About Psychology

PROFESSOR

John P.J. Pinel

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TEACHING ASSISTANT

The teaching assistant for this course is Lara Aknin, a social psychology graduate student. She will be responsible for marking all examinations, and she will hold an office hour each week—times will be announced in class. However, if no students show up at an office hour in the first half hour, she may leave--so arrive before then or contact her and ask her to wait for you. Lara's office is room 1001 on the bottom floor of the Kenny Building, and her e-mail address is laknin@psych.ubc.ca.

TEXTBOOKS

How to Think Straight about Psychology (7th edition) by K.E. Stanovich
Methods in Behavioral Research (9th edition) by Paul C. Cozby

LECTURES AND ASSIGNED CHAPTERS

Attendance at lectures is essential for students wishing to do well in the course. Examinations will cover both text and lecture material. You are responsible for all assigned text chapters and all lecture material. Most of the assigned chapters are short, but you will need to read about 2 per week to complete them.

GRADES

Your final grade in this course will be weighted in the following manner:

Fall Midterm	40%
Final Exam	60%

TOPICS and ASSIGNED READINGS**TOPICS**

Course Introduction

A Day in the Life of a Behavioural Scientist

How Do We Know What We Know?

Brief History of Psychology: Methods that Didn't Work

Principles of Clear Thinking: Essence of Scientific Thinking

Clear Thinking: Importance of Falsifiability and Operational Definitions

The Seductive, Mind-Clouding Embrace of Testimonials and Case Studies

Correlation, Causation, and Control: The Toaster Method of Birth Control

How Science Works: Converging Operations

A Common Weakness of Human Thinking: Probabilistic Reasoning

How Scientific Publishing Works

Tutorial

READINGS

Stanovich: Chap 1

Stanovich: Chaps 2 & 3

Stanovich: Chap 4

Stanovich: Chaps 5 & 6

Stanovich: Chaps 7, 8, & 9

Stanovich: Chaps 10 & 11

Stanovich: Chap 12

Midterm Examination

Introduction to Research and Ethical Issues

Cozby: Chaps 1 & 3

Variables and Measurement

Cozby: Chaps 4 & 5

Kinds of Research

Cozby: Chaps 6 & 7

Designing and Doing Experiments

Cozby: Chaps 8 & 9

Complex Experimental Designs and Interaction Effects

Cozby: Chaps 10 & 11

Role of Statistics in Scientific Thinking

Cozby: Chaps 12 & 13

Research in Action: How Much Do We Need to Sleep

Research in Action: The Drug Problem

Tutorial

Final Examination

EXAMINATIONS

There will be two examinations: a midterm examination and a final examination. The midterm examination will be written in class on Tuesday, October 16; the final examination will be written during the examination period at the time and place designated by the Registrar. You must be available to write your final exam at any scheduled time during the official exam period.

The final examination will not be cumulative in the sense that it will focus on only those lectures covered after the midterm examination. However, there will be a major essay on the final examination that will require integration of the entire course.

The midterm examination will be 80 minutes in duration. The final examination will be 120 minutes in duration. Both examinations will be composed of multiple-choice questions, fill-in-blanks questions, and essay questions.

If you encounter what you believe to be a faulty question on an exam, answer it to the best of your ability under the circumstances, and write a brief explanation of “the suspected problem” on the front of your examination. Occasionally, bonus marks are awarded to those who spot subtle ambiguities or errors in the questions. Note that the instruction on the multiple-choice questions is always to “select the single best response.”

Details about each examination (number and types of questions) will be presented at the beginning of the last lecture before each examination. After the final lecture before each exam, there will be an optional tutorial class during the scheduled class period. These tutorials provide students with an opportunity to ask questions about the course material--if you have no questions, there is no need for you to attend. There will be no discussion of the examinations during these tutorial classes.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

The Department of Psychology has adopted the following target grade distribution in 200 level courses. The Department reserves the right to adjust final grades in this course if the distribution deviates substantially from the target.

Class Performance	% Mean	% SD	% A	% A+B	% Fail
Good	67	14	18	47	11
Average	65	14	14	42	14
Weak	63	14	11	36	18

PARTICIPATION BONUS MARKS

Students have the opportunity to earn up to two bonus marks (2%) by participating as subjects in psychology experiments. Those students who are registered in psychology courses that offer bonus marks for participation should go to the following web address: <http://hsp.psych.ubc.ca> There, students initially request a HSP user account using the self-creation tool. Then, they can log in to browse available time slots, sign up for particular experiments, and confirm their accumulated bonus marks.

REPORTING OF GRADES

Once the midterm examination has been marked, the grades will be posted with student numbers (no names) on the bulletin board in the atrium of the main floor of the Kenny Building (2136 West Mall), which houses the Psychology Department.

You are encouraged to review your midterm examination results with your teaching assistant. Requests for the adjustment of a grade on the midterm exam must be made within 4 weeks of the posting of the grades. Most requests for adjustment of grades can be settled directly with your teaching assistant. In cases of a dispute that cannot be satisfactorily resolved in this fashion, Dr. Pinel will render a final decision.

It is a university regulation that students may not view their final examinations without special written permission from the Dean's Office(see page 46 of the UBC Calendar)--during this viewing, discussion of grades is strictly forbidden. If you believe that an error has been made in the marking of your final examination, you may officially request from the Registrar's Office (within 4 weeks of the announcement of the final grades) that your examination be remarked. See the UBC calendar.

MISSED EXAMINATIONS

If you miss an examination due to illness, contact Dr. Pinel as soon as possible, preferably before the examination, by phone or in person. Also, report your illness to the Dean's Office. When you are well, make an appointment to see Dr. Pinel. Bring to this appointment a letter from your doctor or the Dean's Office on letterhead.