Psych 131 B: Academic Learning Skills
Academic Success Center
Iowa State University

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Course Overview
Psychology 131 is designed to facilitate students’ development of academic skills, behaviors, and attitudes. Content in this course will help students immediately, but also prepare students for further success throughout their college career.

Learning Outcomes for the Course
Five domains form the core learning outcomes for Psych 131. Through active participation in this course and completion of required assignments, students will:

I. Goal Setting and Motivation
   1. Identify specific factors influencing personal motivation and success
   2. Articulate how to self-monitor learning and how to adjust study behaviors accordingly
   3. Learn strategies for creating short-term and long-term goals

II. Time Management and Planning
   1. Identify specific details of how time is currently spent
   2. Articulate priorities impacting use of time
   3. Learn specific time management strategies to achieve goals

III. Learning Strategies
   1. Identify and understand learning preferences
   2. Articulate how personal preferences effect others when learning individually or in groups; increase value of working with students who have diverse backgrounds and experiences
   3. Develop strategies for academic success based on learning preferences, including: thinking, note taking, testing, and reading

IV. Environment
   1. Identify campus resources for academic and co-curricular success
   2. Articulate rights and responsibilities as a member of an academic community
   3. Learn how to analyze and adjust study circumstances to improve attention and concentration

V. Relationships
   1. Identify appropriate/inappropriate ways of interacting with peer students and university faculty and staff
   2. Articulate the values for a personal support system
   3. Demonstrate the ability to balance multiple perspectives from individuals who share different cultural, ethnic, religious, socio economic backgrounds or gender or orientation identities.
**Course Readings**


This text has been selected to supplement the in-class learning experiences, and to serve as a reference for learning strategies and academic success through the remainder of your college career.

**Additional readings** that may be assigned are available through the Parks Library e-Reserve. To access these readings:

1. Go to: [http://www.lib.iastate.edu/](http://www.lib.iastate.edu/)
2. In the “Classes and Tours” Menu, select “Classes A-Z.”
3. Go to “Psychology 131” and select “Reserve.”
4. Not all readings on e-Reserve are required.

Readings are assigned for most classes. In order for you to participate and engage in classroom dialogue, you will need to complete the readings **prior** to each class session. The course readings serve as our foundational material and we will refer to them often in assignments, discussions, and class activities.

**Class Participation**

To be successful, this class relies heavily on all students actively participating. This classroom is a place where you should feel comfortable taking risks, stepping outside of your comfort zone, and engaging critically with the material. There will be a variety of methods used to encourage both active and passive class participation to meet our different learning styles and backgrounds.

**Attendance Policy**

Psych 131 will be most effective for you and your classmates if you attend class every session and participate in class exercises. For this reason, **attendance is mandatory.** Unexcused absences are not acceptable. Tardiness is also not tolerated. Any missed class period will result in a loss of 15 participation points towards your final grade. **Missing more than THREE class sessions will result in a failing grade for the course.**

If you are absent when an assignment is presented, discussed, or due, you are still responsible for its timely completion. If you are absent when an assignment is due and do not attempt to get it in on time, your assignment grade will be adjusted accordingly.

**Course Grading Policies**

This is a satisfactory-fail course. In order to pass the class, you must:

- Accumulate a minimum of 80% of the total points possible. (See description below.)
- Complete every assignment. You cannot receive a passing course grade if any assignment is not turned in.
- Fulfill all other requirements as set by the instructor, which includes mandatory attendance.

The final course grade is based on earning up to 500 points on the following:

- Journal Entries (80 points total, 10 points each)
- Pre-Test LASSI (10 points)
- Post-Test LASSI (10 points)
- Goals Paper (100 points)
- Time Management Exercise (100 points)
- Class Presentation (100 points)
- Learning Outcomes & Goal Attainment Paper (100 points)
Class Participation (100 points) is based on:
  o Attending class
  o Completion of readings/activities required prior to class
  o Contributing to peer students’ learning
  o Respecting peer students and the class environment

Assignment Grading Policy
A hard copy of assignments should be turned in at the BEGINNING of the class period on the
day that it is due. If you are gone when an assignment is due (e.g., you are sick), you must e-mail
me a copy of your assignment before class order to receive full credit. If an assignment is not
turned on time, it must be turned in by the following class session, at which time 50% of the
points will be deducted. After that no points will be awarded for an assignment.

General Expectations of Written Assignments
All written work must be typed. Papers must meet the minimum length requirements. Papers
must have one-inch margins, be double-spaced, and use 12-point Times New Roman font.
Include only the following information single-spaced at the top of your first page: your name,
title of assignment, course number and section. Proofreading is required. Staple your papers in
the upper-left-hand corner before coming to class.

Accommodations
Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability
should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Disability
Resources Office at 515-294-6624 or TTY 515-294-6635 in Room 1076 of the Student Services
Building to submit your documentation and coordinate necessary and reasonable
accommodations.

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to abide by the academic conduct policies, documented online at:
http://www.dso.iastate.edu/ja/academic/misconduct.html
Students should hold themselves and peer students to high standards of integrity. Any violation
of the academic conduct policy will result in an automatic failing grade for this course.

Classroom Respect
Psych 131 is a course designed to help you develop your academic attitude and behaviors.
Therefore, there are high expectations for appropriate classroom behaviors, which include:
  ♦ Students cannot use any electronic devices unless the use is directly applicable to the
    immediate learning experience;
  ♦ Students should expect to be held accountable by their instructor and peers for their
    participation in class.
  ♦ Students should respect the classroom. Leave the space better than you found it.
  ♦ Students should respect others’ opinions and willingly engage in discourse over conflicts.
Assignments

Journal Entries (80 points ~ 10 points per entry)
As a part of this course, you will write 8 journal entries in which you will reflect on three questions:

1. How have things been going for you academically since the last journal entry?
2. How have things been going for you personally since the last journal entry?
3. How have you applied course materials to your life since the last journal entry?

Each entry should be at least ¾ of a double-spaced typewritten page. The purpose of this assignment is not to give you more things to do, but rather to provide you with a structured time to reflect on how the semester is going for you. In the first entry, instead of reflecting on the above questions, I would instead like you to tell me a little about yourself: What are your talents, hobbies, aspirations? Where are you from? What is your family like? Why did you choose Iowa State? How long have you been at ISU? What are you studying? Why are you taking this course and what do you hope to get out of it?

LASSI Pre-Test (10 points) and Post-Test (10 points)
You will receive instructions on these assignments the first day in class.

Personal Goals Paper (100 points)
Write a (minimum) 3-page university quality paper describing seven goals you want to accomplish by the end of this semester. Along with each goal, you should address 1) why the goal is important, 2) how you plan to achieve the goal, 3) potential obstacles to reaching the goal, and 4) ways you might work to overcome those obstacles.

Time Management Exercise (100 points)
On the class period listed on the course schedule, you will need to bring your syllabus for each class you are taking. You will also need to bring any schedules you have for other planned activities, such as work, sports, or clubs. In addition, you will need to bring a planner, calendar, or some other scheduling device.

During the designated class period, you will indicate the amount of time you expect to spend in the next week on various activities including sleeping, eating meals, studying, etc. You will then track how your time is spent for seven consecutive days and report the differences between your expected time allocations and your actual time allocations. This report will take the form of a thorough time management worksheet and a reflection paper.

Utilize the following questions when writing your reflection paper (minimum two pages):

- How did your time estimates compare with your actual time spent in various activities?
- Was this a typical or atypical week for you? How and why?
- What gets less time than it should? What gets more time than it should?
- What are your main distractions?
- What was the biggest shock after looking at your time schedule?
- If you multitask, which task suffers?
- What (if any) changes do you plan to make as a result of this exercise?

Group Presentation (100 points)
This project will provide you with the opportunity to learn specific details about one of the many resources available to students across campus. Student groups will investigate a campus resource office and then prepare a visual/oral presentation for the class explaining what they learned about the campus resource.

Learning Outcomes & Goal Attainment Paper (100 points)
Write a reflection paper that includes the following components:

1. Reflection on Personal Goals (minimum 1 page) – First, select the one goal (from your Personal Goals Paper) that you believe you made the most progress toward. What helped you achieve this goal? What would you like to do to ensure that you will continue to make progress in this area? Second, select the one goal that you believe you made the least progress toward. What held you back from achieving this goal? Was it a realistic goal to begin with? What can you modify in order to make more progress toward this goal (if it is indeed still a goal for you)?

2. Reflection on Learning Outcomes (minimum 2 pages) - Provide a narrative that reflects on the progress you have made this semester on each of the five learning outcome categories (page 1 of this syllabus) and how you expect to apply the knowledge or skills gained during your academic career. Provide specific examples of how your time in this course facilitated your achievement of the learning outcomes.
### Topic and Assignment Schedule

Any necessary changes to this schedule will be shared in-class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Active Learning Assignments¹</th>
<th>Course Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/11</td>
<td>Overview of Psych 131</td>
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<td>High School v. College</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1/13</td>
<td>Goal Setting / Motivation</td>
<td>Nist, Ch 8</td>
<td>LASSI Pre-Test</td>
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<td>Journal Entry</td>
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<td>1/18</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1/20</td>
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<td>Nist, Ch 7</td>
<td>Personal Goals Paper</td>
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<td>Bring TM materials</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1/25</td>
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<td>Nist, Ch 10</td>
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<td>Nist, Ch 12</td>
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<td>Nist, Ch 16 &amp; 17</td>
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<td>Nist, Ch 21 &amp; 22</td>
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<td>Research and Presentations</td>
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<td>Ethics &amp; Decision Making</td>
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<td>Learning Outcomes &amp; Goal</td>
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¹ Active Learning Assignments are due in preparation for class on the date listed. Additional Active Learning Assignments may be assigned in future class sessions.