

SYLLABUS PSYCHOLOGY # 325, PSYCHOLOGY OF MODERN LIFE- 9/06

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TEXT: Psychology: The Science of Behavior, Schlinger, Polling, and others

Course Description: Psychology is defined as a science of behavior. The impact of a science of behavior is looked at in detail in Psychology 325. The emphasis is on how learning and a science of behavior impact all areas of our modern life. For example, this look at the science impact on the world could include education (including this course), individuals in a family, people associated with business, ourself, our personal systems of behavior including religion, and all other behaviors.

Below is a list of some topics we will be covering early in this course. Later, once some basic materials are covered, and as time permits, some selection of topics will be given to the students in this course. This possible selection of topics will be discussed later in this class. Additional units will be assigned upon completion of the following list. I do not give a full term day-by-day schedule, as I believe it is more academically sound to get feedback on how students are learning the material before progressing to the next Chapter or section. Hopefully, many, if not all students are coming close to mastering the material before we progress. We will always announce in class what the assignment is for next class, so be sure to know what is next before you leave class.

1. WHERE IS PSYCHOLOGY/LEARNING/SCIENCE AT IN YOUR LIFE?

We start on day one with two surveys; one survey is about psychology related to the general areas of life; the second survey, deals with views of extraordinary claims. We will look at these views later in the semester, to see how a semester's study of science, learning, and psychology content has influenced your views or opinions about these daily life issues. Hopefully these surveys allow you to look at where psychology is at work in your life.

2. UNIT ON EDUCATION AND THE COURSE PROCEDURES:

The first assignments in the course will be on education. I try to build my class procedures around what we know about learning. I summarize these learning principles with a memory aid (a mnemonic device) LEARN IT BEST. An early assignment in this course is to study and to be tested on the Procedure Manual. This Procedure Manual is set up in sections using the mnemonic LEARN IT BEST. See the PROCEDURE MANUAL for all that you want to know about the course procedure. It gives much of the information that a class syllabus gives. The first test in the course is on the Procedure Manual.

3. UNIT ON EDUCATION – PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

Website article on mnemonic device (LEARN IT BEST).

4. UNIT ON EDUCATION –

We will read an article written by Jack Michael that looks environmentally at college teaching. We use a study guide that aids in the learning of this article. The study guide is on my website. We will look at the topic of “intermittent grading” sometime later this term.

5. TEXT-

The History of Psychology Unit (see Chapter #1 in text) will be covered later. After the unit on Education we will look at a science of behavior (S.B. units) and Chapter 2 Science and Psychology. This is a unit on the role of science and its relationship to all areas of daily life.

Assignments that follow will be from the 2 sources listed below (i.e., the text and the S.B. Unit), website material, and handouts.

Table of Content for Science of Behavior Unit on the Website

HOW TO DECIDE BEFORE A SCIENCE?

Topic - Unit #

Introduction and Table of Contents 1

Honesty in Inquiry 2

Observation as a Base of all Science 3

What Questions, Not Why Questions 4

REVIEW TEST 5

Theory 6

Objective Definitions in Science 7

Doubt, Debunking, Questioning, or Skepticism 8

Empiricism - Look and See 9

Control of Variables 10

Inquiry, Not Authoritative Proclamation 11

Determinism/Lawfulness/Functional Relationship 12

Experimental Method 13

REVIEW TEST 14

Behavior, the Subject Matter 15

Experimental Data/Correlational Data 16

Functional Relations, the Goal of Science 17

Occam's Razor or Law of Parsimony - a Useful Guide 18

Replication, a Must (a self correction factor) 19

Evaluative Techniques Based on Objective Measurement 20

REVIEW TEST 21

A Morality Principle in Science (different
from no morals) 22

System Important 23

Comparative Studies Valued 24

Irrelevant Questions in Science 25

Empty Organism (the value of questions) 26

Nature is Found By Science 27

Cumulative Progress 28

Explanation of Common Sense (nothing common in
common sense) 29

(?) Is the Question Answered? 30

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