

Advanced Physiological Psychology  
PSY 542

**Course Time:** W 6:00 – 8:45  
**Course Delivery Method:** Web Enhanced  
**Office:** UC 221  
**Office Hours:** by appointment via zoom

**Course Credit:** 3 SCH  
**Faculty:** Dr. Angela M. Sikorski  
**Contact:** [angela.sikorski@tamut.edu](mailto:angela.sikorski@tamut.edu); 903-223-3018  
**Prerequisites:** Graduate status; PSYC 2317

**Course Description:** This course examines the relationship between the brain and behavior. Students will study the anatomy of the central nervous system at a macroscopic and microscopic level, as well as the processes by which the nervous system interacts with the environment.

**Required Materials:**

Kolb, Whishaw & Teskey (2019). An introduction to brain and behavior, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Worth Publishers

Weekly readings posted in Blackboard

**Student-Learning Outcomes:** At the end of the course students will 1) distinguish the major divisions of the central nervous system, 2) construct the anatomy of a neuron, 3) evaluate the processes involved in neural communication, 4) examine how the brain receives and interprets sensory information, 4) examine how the brain produces movement, 5) evaluate the brain's involvement in cognitive processes and psychological disorders.

**Student Expectations:** Students are expected to have read all required material prior to the class during which the material is to be discussed. Ideally, this class will be more of a seminar during which we discuss and explore the topic together. If you can come to class with basic knowledge we can spend our time discussing the more difficult, interesting, and thought-provoking content.

**Course Evaluation:** Student learning outcomes will be assessed through exams and assignments. Only in the case of a documented emergency or with my prior approval will make-up work be permitted. (A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F=below 60%).

Your performance in this course is based on the following:	Percent of final grade:
Five non-cumulative exams	50
Research paper	20
Discussion leader	20
Participation	10

- Exams:** Five non-cumulative exams cover material from the text, readings and class discussion. There are two parts to each exam: a take-home essay part and an online multiple-choice part. You will have one week to complete each part. Note that when you begin the multiple-choice part it is timed and must be completed in a single sitting. You will submit the essay part in Blackboard via a turnitin.com submission link.
- Term Paper:** Students will write a 15 page (excluding title, abstract and references) term paper over the course of the semester. The paper will be written in APA style and format and must include a minimum of 15 peer-reviewed professional sources. At least 10 of these sources must be empirical.
- Discussion Leader:** Each student will facilitate one class discussion on the journal article assigned for that week. Presentations should be about 10 – 15 minutes in length with a 10 – 15 min discussion. Presentations must address:

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1. Background: Introduce the “why” and connect the purpose of the paper to the other readings assigned for that week.
2. Hypothesis (if applicable): A brief statement of the hypothesis that the study tests and any alternatives considered by the authors
3. Method (if applicable): Describe the method; you may provide an illustration if it gets the point across
4. Results (if applicable): Summarize the results of the study. Include figures and/tables
5. Interpretation (if applicable): How the results support or fail to support the hypothesis
6. Evaluation: Your own critical (but not necessary negative) evaluation of the study/paper, in particular whether there are any confounds in the method, any faulty or unclear assumptions, alternative explanations of the results, mistaken reasoning, etc.
7. Discussion: Open up the discussion to the class, providing explicit questions to get people talking.

**Course Calendar**

\*Schedule is tentative and instructor reserves the right to change it as needed.

Date:	Topics:	Reading Assignments:	Work Due:
8/26	Introduction and syllabus review		
9/2	Intro to Brain & Behavior; Methodologies	Ch. 1 & 7	
9/9	Structure of the Brain at the macro level / sheep brain dissections	Ch. 2	
9/16	Structure of the Brain at the micro level	Ch. 3	
9/23	Neural communication	Ch. 4 & 5	Exam 1
9/30	Pharmacology	Ch. 6	
10/7	Brain development & experience	Ch. 8	
10/14	The visual system	Ch. 9	Exam 2
10/21	The auditory system	Ch. 10	
10/28	The motor system	Ch. 11	
11/4	Emotion & motivation	Ch. 12	Exam 3
11/11	Sleep	Ch. 13	
11/18	Learning & memory	Ch. 14	
11/25	Cognition	Ch. 15	Exam 4
12/2	The misbehaving brain - zoom	Ch. 16	
12/9			Exam 5

**Library/Media Resource Assessment:** None.

**Course Etiquette:** Students are expected to attend and participate in the class activities. You may bring your electronic devices for use to enhance your class participation, but it is not appropriate to use them for social purposes during class. Please turn off telephones or put them on vibrate. Students are expected to extend courtesy and respect to others as you would like to receive for yourself.

**Online Class Participation:** Students are responsible for beginning their participation on the FIRST CLASS DAY by logging on and completing assignments according to the COURSE CALENDAR. Failure to submit online assignments between the first day of classes and the University census date (according to the University schedule) will result in an ADMINISTRATIVE DROP from the course.

**Discussion Board Standards:** n/a

**Disability Accommodations:** Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and undocumented use of materials from any source constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of 'F' in the course and/or disciplinary actions. For additional information, see the university catalog.

**A&M-Texarkana Email Address:** Upon application to Texas A&M University-Texarkana an individual will be assigned an A&M-Texarkana email account. This email account will be used to deliver official university correspondence. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via the university email account and is expected to check the official A&M-Texarkana email account on a frequent and consistent basis. Faculty and students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework.

**Drop Policy:** To drop this course after the census date, a student must complete a [\*Drop/Withdrawal Request Form\*](#), located on the University Registrar's webpage or obtained in the Registrar's Office. The student must submit the signed and completed form to the instructor of each course indicated on the form to be dropped for his/her signature. The signature is not an "approval" to drop, but rather confirmation that the student has discussed the drop/withdrawal with the faculty member. The form must be submitted to the Registrar's office for processing in person, email [Registrar@tamut.edu](mailto:Registrar@tamut.edu), mail (7101 University Ave., Texarkana, TX 75503) or fax (903-223-3140). Drop/withdraw forms missing any of the required information will not be accepted by the Registrar's Office for processing. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the form is completed properly before submission. If a student stops participating in class (attending and submitting assignments) but does not complete and submit the drop/withdrawal form, a final grade based on work completed as outlined in the syllabus will be assigned.

**Students with federal loans and/or grants:**

Students who have federal loans and grants must be aware that participation is monitored in online courses. In the event a student withdraws from a course the student will be required to refund all federal funds prorated from the last date of participation. A student's last access to Blackboard would not suffice as participation. The required weekly activity could include a comment to a blog, a discussion board posting, a journal entry, a quiz or exam, a submitted assignment, or other measurable and tracked activity.

**Student Technical Assistance:**

Solutions to common problems and FAQ's for your web-enhanced and online courses are found on the [Online Student Training](#) page on our website.

If you cannot find your resolution there, you can submit a support request by contacting the IT HelpDesk:

Email: [helpdesk@tamut.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamut.edu)

Phone: 903-334-6603

Submit a [Support Request Ticket](#)

Additional student help for Blackboard can be found here:

[Blackboard Help for Students](#)

- **Technical Requirements:**

The following are the minimum computer requirements for online learning:

- A computer capable of handling streaming video. A mid-range multi-core CPU should be adequate.
- A sound card.
- A high speed internet connection preferably directly connected to the computer via a hard-wired Ethernet connection rather than wirelessly connected.
- Virus and adware protection software.
- Microsoft Word, minimum version 2007 or above.
- [Mozilla Firefox](#) browser available free.
- The most recent versions of Java, Flash, QuickTime, Adobe Reader, and Shockwave.  
You can check this in the Firefox browser by visiting: [Firefox Plugin Check Tool](#)

Please note: some instructors may require the use of a headset with microphone and/or a webcam. If so, the cost of these items is not included in your course fees and will need to be acquired at your own expense.

**Blackboard Mobile for iOS and Android Devices**

Android and iOS devices are currently supported using the Blackboard Mobile App, available for free from your App Store or scan the code below:

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The Blackboard Mobile App provides limited access to courses, including the ability to read and contribute to discussions, check grades and announcements, access content, read and comment on blogs, reflect in journals, link to your personal Dropbox, and receive push notifications when courses are updated. Limited course features may also be available via your mobile device's browser; however, your mobile device does not replace your personal computer and should not be used as a substitute for one. High stakes assignments, tests, etc. should be completed on your personal computer, and not on your mobile device.

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Discussion Leader Rubric

	Excellent	Competent	Needs Work
Content	<input type="checkbox"/> Shows rich understanding of paper <input type="checkbox"/> Explains and connects concepts well <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of study is thoughtful and thorough <input type="checkbox"/> Thorough, organized and clear <input type="checkbox"/> Presented in own voice <input type="checkbox"/> Addressed all requirements in instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic or superficial understanding of paper <input type="checkbox"/> Presents summary of points, without synthesis of concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation is lacking <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly thorough, organized and clear <input type="checkbox"/> Uses own voice mostly, but also recites material from paper <input type="checkbox"/> Missing one or two requirements in instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not understand paper <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot summarize main points <input type="checkbox"/> No evaluation or explanation of concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Not thorough, disorganized or unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly recites material from paper <input type="checkbox"/> Missing many or all requirements in instructions
Delivery	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent use of visual aides; text is minimal and slides are driven by images and figures <input type="checkbox"/> Does not read off slides <input type="checkbox"/> Very engaging <input type="checkbox"/> Very clear and easy to understand <input type="checkbox"/> Uses examples or anecdotes effectively <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient use of time; right at time recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Good use of visual aides; slides are driven more by text than images and figures <input type="checkbox"/> Reads off slides at times <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly clear and easy to understand; sometimes gets lost or off topic <input type="checkbox"/> Uses examples or anecdotes fairly well <input type="checkbox"/> Use of time is good; slightly under or over time recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> No visual aides prepared <input type="checkbox"/> Reads predominantly from slides <input type="checkbox"/> Not engaging; seems bored or uninterested <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks clarity <input type="checkbox"/> Otherwise unprepared <input type="checkbox"/> Does not use examples or anecdotes, or when they do they are ineffective or irrelevant <input type="checkbox"/> Poor use of time; significantly under or over time recommendation
Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Inspires interest in topic <input type="checkbox"/> Generates a lot of group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Has prepared questions that are thought provoking and engaging <input type="checkbox"/> Answers questions with understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not inspire much interest <input type="checkbox"/> Generates some group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Prepared questions are acceptable but not engaging <input type="checkbox"/> Has some difficulty answering questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not inspire interest/negative attitude toward topic <input type="checkbox"/> Does not generate discussion or does not lead discussion at all <input type="checkbox"/> Has not prepared questions <input type="checkbox"/> Has great difficulty or does not answer questions.

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	% of Grade	A	B	C	D	F
<b>Introduction:</b>	10	The thesis is specific and very clearly articulated. The topic and its subtopics to be reviewed are identified and organized in a logical fashion.	There is a clearly articulated general thesis statement. The topic and subtopics to be reviewed are identified and organized.	There is a general thesis statement. The topic and its subtopics are conveyed, but the organization is clear in parts or only partially described. There is some organization of ideas.	The thesis is vague. There is some semblance of the topic and subtopics to be covered but the organization is poor.	There is no thesis. It is difficult to decipher the paper's topic. There is little cohesion or organization of ideas.
<b>Body/Research:</b>	35	All sources clearly relate to the topic. All of the research is based on strong peer-reviewed sources. The research is presented accurately and comprehensively. The organization and integration of material is very strong, and there are clear transitions that link subtopics. The brain-behavior relationship is clearly established (i.e., specific brain regions, neurotransmitters, genes, etc. are fully discussed)	Most sources relate to the topic. Most of the research is based on strong peer-reviewed sources. The research is presented accurately and comprehensively. The organization and integration of material is logical. There are good transitions linking subtopics. The brain-behavior relationship is established (i.e., specific brain regions, neurotransmitters, genes, etc. are discussed adequately)	Several sources relate to the topic. More than half the research is based on peer-reviewed sources. The research is presented accurately and comprehensively. The organization and integration of material is mostly logical. Transitions linking subtopics may be weak lacking. The brain-behavior relationship is identified (i.e., specific brain regions, neurotransmitters, genes, etc. are identified)	Some sources relate to the topic. Some of the research is based on peer-reviewed sources. The research is presented accurately and comprehensively. The organization and integration of material needs improvement. There are few transitions to link subtopics. The brain-behavior relationship is not well established (i.e., specific brain regions, neurotransmitters, genes, etc. are not fully discussed)	Few sources relate to the topic. Little of the research is based on peer-reviewed sources. The research is presented accurately and comprehensively. The organization and integration of material is poor. Transitions to link subtopics are not used. The brain-behavior relationship is not established (i.e., specific brain regions, neurotransmitters, genes, etc. are poorly discussed, or not discussed at all)
<b>Conclusion/Summary:</b>	10	The conclusion is clearly stated and its connections to the research is clear, relevant and insightful.	The conclusion is clearly stated and its connections to the research is mostly clear, relevant and insightful.	The conclusion is stated but it is only loosely connected to the research, may be unclear or lacking adequate insight.	The conclusion is stated but is not connected to the research, or is lacking in clarity and insight.	There is not a clear conclusion. The summary is mostly unrelated to the research, incorrect or illogical. There is a lack of insight.
<b>Sources:</b> (15 scholarly sources are required, 10 of which must be empirical journal articles).	10	The number and quality of sources meets the specified requirements.	The number and quality of sources is just below what is required.	The number and quality of sources needs improvement.	The number and quality of sources is poor.	The number and or quality of sources is severely lacking.
<b>Length:</b> (15 pgs excluding title, abstract and references)	20	10 pages	8-9 pages	7 pages	6 pages	5 or fewer pages
<b>APA Format &amp; Style:</b> (Paper must include a title page, abstract and reference page in addition to the body)	10	There are no errors in APA format and style. The paper contains all required sections.	There are minor errors in APA format and style. The paper contains all required sections.	There are some errors in APA format and style or the paper is missing a required section.	There are many errors in APA format and style and the paper is missing a required section.	There are significant errors in APA format and style and the paper is missing required sections.
<b>Mechanics, Grammar &amp; Punctuation:</b>	5	There are no mechanical, grammatical or punctuation errors.	There are a few mechanical, grammatical or punctuation errors.	There are some mechanical, grammatical or punctuation errors	There are many mechanical, grammatical or punctuation errors	There are significant mechanical, grammatical or punctuation errors