

**Westfield State University**  
**Psychology 0101 - Introductory Psychology (Online)**

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*Note: Students must log onto the Plato Course Website and post their bio to the “Student Lounge” (see below point 5i) to confirm their enrollment in the course no later than Friday of Week #1. (See the “Week 1” folder in Plato for more instructions on what to do in week 1 of the course).*

### **Course Objectives & Requirements**

The goal of this course is to enable students to learn the vocabulary, concepts, theories and methodologies relevant to psychology; understand how selected factors influence individual and group behavior and/or to understand why people form societies and/or the role of institutions in society; become knowledgeable about contemporary social issues and possible solutions; and become aware of differing viewpoints regarding current and historical issues within psychology.

In support of these objectives students will be introduced to research techniques in a context that requires the student to use the information appropriately; will be required to utilize relevant concepts and methodologies and to read from primary and secondary sources; to highlight factors contributing to individual and group differences; and complete writing assignments which will evaluate students’ understanding of the subject and involve library skills and other discipline-appropriate vehicles.

**Teaching Philosophy:** During this course I will be training you how to think critically as a social science researcher and gain a better understanding of how psychological research is conducted, an essential tool in preparing the psychology major for courses in research methods and statistics, as well as upper level coursework. For the non-psyc major you’ll gain an understanding of seminal research on human behavior & development. It is my sincere hope that you will be better equipped to evaluate the many psychological claims that you encounter in the future, that you’ll have a better idea of what makes us all “tick”, and that you might apply some of what of we will cover this semester to make your own lives more fulfilling.

### **Expected Student Learning Outcomes:**

This introductory psychology course is designed around the American Psychological Association’s ten established and recommended learning goals for psychology majors. A detailed outline of undergraduate learning goals and outcomes are displayed on preface pages xviii-xxi of the Ciccarelli & White text that accompanies this course. For more details on the APA learning goals and assessment guidelines, please see <http://www.apa.org/>

### **Required Texts:**

1. **Psychology: An Exploration. 2015. (3rd ed) by Ciccarelli & White**, bundled with MyPsychLab access - ISBN 0-13-407879-9 (Note: this text also has a much cheaper e-text option if you purchase through the publisher which is Pearson. That would be fine to get, just make sure you also buy the MyPsychLab access). Here is a link to the book at the publisher's website so you can get a look at it and the options available to you: <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/educator/product/Psychology-An-Exploration-Plus-MyPsychLab-with-Pearson-eText-Access-Card-Package/9780134078793.page>

2. **Forty Studies that Changed Psychology. 2013. (7th ed) by Hock** - ISBN 0-205-91839-5. Here is the link to the publisher for more info (there is also an e-text option for this text): <http://www.mypearsonstore.com/bookstore/forty-studies-that-changed-psychology-9780205918393>

\*The campus bookstore will have these or you can order online, but please be aware of what you are ordering online. Make sure you order the correct edition and the Ciccarelli & White text must be bought with MyPsychLab access which is not automatic. We will be using MyPsychLab in this class.

**Always get a receipt and be aware of return policies on books.**

*Note: If you choose to purchase the e-book for this course through an outside source that is fine too but be careful... Make sure you are buying the correct book and correct edition, there are other books by Ciccarelli & White. If you are purchasing through an outside source other than the WSU bookstore make sure you're clear on return policies, some online sites do not allow you to return books. You'll also need access to the online resources for the course, this comes automatically with your text from the bookstore, but if you buy your text from an online source it will not have the MyPsychLab access, you would have to go to the Pearson website to purchase access separately.*

### **Course Policies:**

1. The Plato course website contains the syllabus, instructor announcements, discussion board, instructor lectures by chapter, videos, additional readings, and exams. Students are expected to consult Plato several times each week for updated information and announcements, check on what is to be completed for the week, as well as to contribute to the weekly discussion threads and comment on others' posts. The readings on Plato will keep you up to date on important themes in the course and are considered part of the essential readings for the course.
2. This course is designed into a week-by-week organization of course content, with each week focusing on what you need to know and do for that week. This is a textbook course, meaning you have to read the text for the content information. I will also post the lecture slides to be used in following along with the readings. In addition to lecture material you may also be asked to view a video link (via a web address, YouTube, etc.) which compliments lecture material, for this purpose you'll need to have the Adobe Flash Player installed – if you regularly watch videos on your computer, you probably already have this installed. If not, visit <http://www.adobe.com/products/flashplayer/> and install it. I suggest you set your screen resolution to the highest possible for your computer. You will need to have your sound turned on to hear the lecture.
3. **Academic Integrity:** In accordance with Westfield State University policies, academic dishonesty/plagiarism and cheating are unacceptable and will be dealt with as specified by University regulations as stated in the Student Bulletin/Handbook. I've posted some handouts on plagiarism (what is it, how to avoid it, etc.) & academic honesty on Plato, you are expected to be familiar with these.
  - a. Students in web-based courses are encouraged to discuss and share information related to course material in the Discussion Board, Student Lounge and "Ask Dr. W" boards. However, once an exam or exam is posted it is forbidden to discuss exam content with anyone, whether a member of this class or not. Any questions or problems associated with the exams/exams should be addressed only to the instructor through an email. Do NOT post Exam/Exam related questions to the

Discussion Board, Student Lounge, or “Ask Dr. W” boards. Students are allowed to use their books and notes during exams but are not allowed to collaborate with one another during exams. The penalty for students who discuss course material or who collaborate with one another once an exam opens is failure of the course.

- b. With on-line courses I have the unique ability to track when you are online, where you go while online, and how long you spend in each area online. Knowing this and in keeping with academic honesty policies, resist the urge to tell me you were online or did an assignment or took an exam and the “computer didn’t track it” or “lost it.” Always double check to make sure your assignments is submitted correctly. User error on your part is not an excuse for not getting something in on time. This is the nature of online courses and requires careful attention by you.
  - c. **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE** – resist the urge to look up information online and cut and paste it into your discussion...not a good idea. Also, taking an original source and changing a few words does not make it your own. Your ideas need to be ALL yours and I am known for checking to make sure that this is happening. If you want to paraphrase something you read the best way to do this is to read it, then set aside the document and put what you read into your own words, then cite the source that you pulled the information from.
  - d. If you are caught plagiarizing or sharing exam information you will most definitely fail the assignment/exam and be reported to the dean of students, as this is standard WSU policy. There is potential for your failing of the course should the dean see it necessary.
- 4. Your Responsibility:** You are responsible for your own learning and performance in this course. You are responsible for knowing what to do in terms of course assignments and when to do them. A complete schedule of course events is provided in this syllabus, so there is no excuse for not knowing when an assignment is due or when an exam is scheduled. You must manage your time effectively. If you put off coursework until the end of the week and run out of time, that is your problem. Furthermore, there is no excuse for failing to take a course exam. This course is accessible from any computer with internet access. **If your home computer malfunctions you can still access the course from another computer and it is your obligation to find another way to access the course and/or to take the exams.** Most public libraries have public computing facilities with internet access. I suggest you plan in advance to be sure you have ready access to a backup computer if you run into trouble – waiting until the last minute and having problems will not be accepted as an excuse. Finally, you must study and learn the course material. Examinations are administered online and you are permitted to use your notes and textbook when taking the exam. However, in general, you may not be able to answer exam questions by looking up specific answers in the book. The exams will consist of many questions that will test your understanding of course concepts, not simply your ability to look up terms in the text. I can almost guarantee that if you wait until the last minute and try to take an exam the night before it closes at 7am the next day that you will do poorly. The most effective strategy is to make study of the course material part of your daily routine. Pay careful attention to when exams are scheduled. **Please note that once you open an exam, if you click anywhere outside of the exam for any reason, such as opening another browser window, you will be locked out of the exam and will be unable to complete the exam.**
- 5. Communication:** In online course the main form of communication is online. It is expected that I will be able to reach you by email. When you log into Blackboard (Plato), please be sure that the email address you regularly use is included with your other information. One thing that is different about a web-based course relative to a traditional course is that you can’t raise your hand and ask a question of the instructor. The way we deal with questions about course content is through the “Ask Dr. W” and “Student

Lounge” options detailed below. There are guidelines I expect all students to follow in communicating with me and other students within the class:

- a. **“Ask Dr. W”** - is the online forum where you can ask me questions and your peers in the course will also be able to benefit from seeing your questions and my answers. If you have a question or comment about something you have read or studied, you should post your question or comment to the “Ask Dr. W” board or the Student Lounge. All students should read the “Ask Dr. W” board often. If you have the answer to someone’s question or would like to comment further on something, you can post your replies there. Do not email me directly with questions about course content. Post these on the “Ask Dr. W” board for everyone to see. If you have an issue that needs my personal and private attention, contact me following the procedure outlined below. I will do my best to answer your questions within a 24 hour period.
- b. **Student Lounge** – is the forum for you the student to interact with and communicate with other students, not the professor. This is a good place for arranging study sessions with other students or sharing tips, resources, etc. I will not be a part of this resource, nor will I respond to anything posted here (with the exception of your posted bios – see below) and nothing here is graded. This is simply a place for you and your peers to converse.
  - i. **In the first week of class you will be required to post your bio in the Student Lounge for me and your classmates to become familiar with who you are. I’d like you to tell me a bit about yourself (i.e., where you’re from, your major, if you’re involved in anything on campus, etc.) AND give me three adjectives that best describe you and tell me why (you can see my bio posted in the student lounge as an example). This activity will also be my way of confirming your enrollment in the course, so you must do this.**
- c. **Email Dr. Williams** - for questions or concerns that you have about the course or your performance for which you prefer to keep private (between you and me) it is best to use my email [swilliams@westfield.ma.edu](mailto:swilliams@westfield.ma.edu) this way I can readily respond to your inquiries and concerns and this will remain private. Please understand though that if you have a general question about an assignment, an exam, the course, etc. it may be best to use the “Ask Dr. W” forum. I often get students asking the same questions, so this will limit the amount of times I have to answer the same questions and will benefit other students who may be thinking the same thing you are.
- d. **Phone** – My voicemail is active 24/7, but if you call during late pm hours or the weekend I probably won’t get your message until the next weekday.
- e. **In-Person** – This course is 100% web-based. I do not meet with students in my web-course face-to-face. The reason for that rule is fairness to all. There may be people enrolled in the course from all over the world. It is not fair if some people have more access to the instructor than others.
- f. **Discussion Boards** –On a weekly basis in this course I will be posting discussion questions for you to respond to and respond to your classmates’ comments/posts (see the Discussion Board section of the syllabus under “Performance Evaluation”). These discussion posts are graded and should be conducted in a respectful manner. Respect for the opinions of others is an essential characteristic for a learning community. Although it is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in this course, you are expected to behave and to express your viewpoints in a manner that is courteous and respectful. Please adhere to the same rules and expectations when you communicate online. I encourage you all to share your opinions when asked and to integrate what you’re learning in the

course into your responses, as well as to comment on what your peers are writing, but we want everyone in the course to feel comfortable sharing. If ever a problem arises or you have a grievance with another student I recommend first trying to go straight to that student and resolve the issue. If this cannot be achieved then you can bring the matter to me by emailing me directly. The discussion board AND student lounge are not areas for grievances with one another or for “ripping” on your peers.

- g. **Virtual Office Hours** – We will be Plato or email for online office hours. I will be online during certain periods of time (see the hours at the top of the syllabus) to answer questions. This is a great time to communicate with me live and multiple students can join in the virtual office hours. Please understand that just like with a face-to-face course, I will not be available to you 24/7. I do have a life outside of teaching believe it or not! ☺ I am always available in real-time during virtual office hours and outside of those office hours you can email me or send me a question using “Ask Dr. W” and I will do my best to respond to your questions/concerns within 24 hours.
  - h. **Netiquette** – It is important to understand how to communicate effectively online, please take 5 minutes to check out this link: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html> for some essentials if you are new to online learning or need to be refreshed as to how to best communicate online.
6. **About Web-Based Courses:** Web-based courses are different from traditional courses; they offer certain advantages to students over the traditional course, but they also carry some costs relative to a traditional course. One great advantage of a web-based course is that you can access the course anytime and anyplace as long as you have internet access. This provides you with incredible flexibility and opens up educational opportunities to people who would otherwise have difficulty accessing education through traditional channels. However, a web-based course also places greater demands on the individual student. First, you need some familiarity with computers and the internet. A computer novice, or someone with little online experience, will have difficulty negotiating a web-based course. Second, you are responsible for much more of your learning in the course. It is your responsibility to keep up with course requirements and to prepare for, and take, examinations on time. Finally, students who thrive on face-to-face interaction or who value the interpersonal nature of a traditional classroom may find web-based courses less satisfying.
7. **Your Responsibility** – You are responsible for your own learning and performance in this course.

### **Performance Evaluation Overview:**

You will be evaluated in this course on the basis of the following 3 elements:

1. **Exams:** there will be an exam roughly every other week (see schedule) covering 2 chapters for a total of 7 exams over the course. Exams will be posted no later than noon on Thursday of the week in which they are assigned and you will have until 11:59pm Sunday (of that same week) to complete the exam. Once you click into the exam you MUST complete it in ONE SITTING. YOU HAVE 50 MINUTES TO COMPLETE AN EXAM ONCE YOU CLICK INTO IT. If you are bumped out of the system for any reason while taking an exam you’ll be able to log back in and resume your exam where you left off but the timer continues. While taking the exam you will not be able to go back and forth between questions, the questions will appear one at a time and once you submit your answer for a question the exam will move forward. When your time limit is reached the exam will automatically close at whatever point you’re at. Always double

check to make sure your exams are submitted correctly. At the end of an exam you will receive feedback on your score and submitted answers versus correct answers. After the due date & time have expired you will not be allowed to take the exam. Your lowest exam score will be dropped.

2. Quizzes: You will have a quiz at the end of each week, covering one chapter. Quizzes are a gauge of how you are doing and what you need to brush up on before the exams come and they are a good representation of what you can expect on the exams. Quizzes will follow the same format as exams (see above). Quizzes will be due by Friday 11:59pm each week. Once you click into a quiz you MUST complete it in ONE SITTING. YOU WILL HAVE ONLY 15 MINUTES TO COMPLETE A QUIZ ONCE YOU CLICK INTO IT. All of the same rules as above apply to taking quizzes. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.
3. Discussion Board: Your participation in this course is vital to the lively discussions that can ensue just from the challenging and poignant topics we will be covering! In this manner I gauge your participation in the course through your weekly responses to questions I pose on the course discussion board, as well as your responses/comments on other students' posts. Discussion postings are my way of also gauging your writing, so careful attention should be given to your responses (grammar, sentence structure, content, etc.) You will be asked to respond to a question I pose regarding the weekly readings in *Forty Studies That Changed Psychology* by Roger Hock. This book compiles forty of the most influential and important studies in the history of psychology all into one book with easy to read readings. You'll notice that readings are numbered 1-40 and all list the original author of the study, title of the article, journal it first appeared in and date it was originally published. So, Hock is not the author of the studies, he simply compiled them all into a book and wrote some comments, updates, and narratives about the articles at the end of each reading to help you understand the importance of the article and the original author's contribution to the field.
  - a. Instructions will be given for the discussion question(s) each week in your weekly links menu tabs on left bar of Plato and will be labeled by week (e.g., "Week 1 Discussion Question.") OR you can go into the *Discussions* tab on the left, but that will show you all discussions for every week (which may be confusing).
  - b. You are to first respond to the discussion question by creating a new "thread" or discussion and writing your original response to the question. You'll need to do this early in the week, **no later than Wed of each week**. Next, you will follow-up throughout the week by commenting on THREE other classmates' threads by clicking into their threads and posting replies. Your responses should be thoughtful, incorporating what you're learning in the text and via lectures (I expect integration of the concepts/key terms you are learning), as well as your opinion when asked. You'll need to do this **by Sat of each week**.
  - c. A rubric for how discussion posts and replies will be graded is provided in the "Start Here" folder on the left-hand menu of the course Plato site. Take time to look over the rubric and make sure you understand what the desired characteristics of your responses are and how exactly your responses will be evaluated. Pay attention to the due date of each discussion post, the system will automatically track and date-stamp when you post a response and when you respond to other students' posts.

**Grading Breakdown:****Exams** = 5 exams x 30pts each = 120 pts possible (28% of grade)\*Each exam will have 30 questions worth 1pt each and your lowest exam score will be dropped**Final Exam** = 45 questions x 1pt ea = 45pts possible (11% of grade)**Weekly Quizzes** = 13 quizzes x 10 pts each = 120 pts possible (28% of grade)\*Each quiz will have 10 questions worth 1pt each and your lowest quiz score will be dropped**Discussion Board** = 13 weeks of discussion board postings and responses to others' postings x 10pts/ea week = 140 pts possible (33% of grade)

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**Total points possible = 425****The final grades will be calculated according to the following percentage scale:**

97-100	A+	77-79	C+
93-96	A	73-76	C
90-92	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-66	D
80-82	B-	62-below	F

At any point in the course you can determine your grade by dividing the number of points you have earned by the number of points possible to that date. Of course, you can also talk to me about your grade and current class standing at any point during the course.

**Navigating Plato...how to use it effectively:**

1. Technical Assistance/Troubleshooting - If you need technical help with anything in Plato once you are in the Plato platform you can always click on the "help desk" button on the left sidebar for technical assistance. For help logging in or trouble getting access to Plato you can go to the WSU website [www.wsu.ma.edu](http://www.wsu.ma.edu) and click Plato/Online Learning at the top of the screen and then click on Plato Help on left of the Online Learning page. Alternatively, if something goes wrong you can always post a question in the student lounge where another student may be able to help you or may have encountered the same problem and fixed it, or you can post a question in "Ask Dr. W" (but this may not be the fastest option, as it could take up to 24 hrs before I respond).
2. Keeping Track of Weekly Assignments – for this course you will be using the week by week left-hand menu in Plato. When you open each week you will find a 'To Do' checklist for the week which will tell you exactly what you should read for the week, what the assignments are for the week, if there is an exam and the chapter lecture Power points for that week. The checklist is the first place you should go to when you click on each week. It is important that you complete the checklist items for each week in the order that they appear.