

SCIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY

Columbia University - Department of Psychology
PSYC1001(Section 002) - FALL 2026

COURSE INFORMATION

Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:10AM – 11:25AM

Location: Uris 301

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Dr. Natalie H. Brito

Office Hours: by appointment Mondays 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Email: natalie.brito@columbia.edu

Office: Uris Hall 820

TEACHING ASSISTANTS (TAs)

Your teaching assistants play an important role in supporting you throughout the semester - we strongly encourage you to meet with them. TAs will host weekly office hours, respond to course-related emails, and evaluate assignments. You are welcome to attend any office hour that fits your schedule. A preliminary office hour schedule is provided below; please check CourseWorks for the most current information on times and locations before attending. TA bios can be found at the end of this syllabus.

TAs

Office Hours

Office Hours Location

Student Last Name

Your Assigned TA

TA Email

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Science of Psychology offers an overview of how psychologists study the mind and behavior across a wide range of topics. Students will learn about sensation and perception, learning and memory, language, emotion, development, personality, and social behavior. The course highlights psychology as a dynamic science, connecting key theories with classic findings and current research. PSYC1001 provides essential preparation for advanced courses.

PREREQUISITES

None

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through class lectures, assignments, and exams, students will be able to: (a) identify and summarize psychology's major concepts, (b) explore and think critically about biological, psychological, and social-cultural influences on human behavior, and (c) identify the application of psychological concepts to practical, everyday experiences.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Schacter, D., Gilbert, D., & Nock, M. (2022). *Psychology* (6th Edition)

Paperback: ISBN 9781319340483

eBook: ISBN 9781319468934

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Additional supplemental materials, including primary research articles and engaging readings that connect scientific findings to real-world issues, may be provided by the instructor on the course website.

COURSE WEBSITE

The most up-to-date information, including changes to the syllabus or to class schedule, announcements, lecture slides, and additional materials are contained on CourseWorks.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADES

- **ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION (5% OF FINAL GRADE)**
 - Much of the learning will take place through lectures and discussion of readings. Therefore, it is imperative that all students attend and participate in each class. Participation will be noted using Poll Everywhere and additional guidelines will be posted on CourseWorks. **Note:** *Class will start promptly at 10:10, please plan accordingly.*
- **READING RESPONSES (15% OF FINAL GRADE)**
 - These short writing assignments (400-500 words) will be assigned at several points throughout the semester. Assignments are completed individually and will be graded on a pass/fail basis. The purpose of these responses is to help you demonstrate your understanding of core course concepts and to practice applying psychological ideas beyond the classroom. Additional guidelines will be posted on CourseWorks.
- **MIDTERM EXAMS (50% OF FINAL GRADE)**
 - There will be 3 non-cumulative, in-class exams – the lowest exam grade will be dropped. Exam questions will be multiple-choice, and material included on the exams will come from class lectures and the assigned readings.
- **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (10% OF FINAL GRADE)**
 - For this assignment, you will choose **one** of the following two options to complete at any point during the semester. Both options are designed to give you first-hand exposure to how psychological science is conducted and shared beyond the classroom. Additional guidelines will be posted on CourseWorks.
 - **Research Study Participation:** One way to learn about psychology is by taking part in psychological research. In this option, you will participate in an experimental study via the SONA platform and report on which studies you participated in.
 - **Research Talk Attendance:** Another way to engage with psychology is by attending a talk in which a researcher presents their current work. In this option, you will

attend a psychology-related talk and write a reflection on the presentation. I will provide a list of relevant talks to attend throughout the semester. You may also propose an alternative talk by emailing me in advance for approval.

○ **FINAL EXAM (20% OF FINAL GRADE)**

- The final exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and will cover material from the entire course, although the last section of the semester will be emphasized.

LETTER GRADE ASSIGNMENTS

99-100%: A+	87-89.9%: B+	77-79.9%: C+	67-69.99%: D+	<60%: F
94-98.9%: A	84-86.9%: B	74-76.9%: C	64-66.9%: D	
90.93.9%: A-	80-83.9%: B-	70-73.9%: C-	60-63.9%: D-	

PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a core expectation in this course. As Columbia students, you are bound by the Honor code, which affirms a commitment to completing your work honestly and independently, without plagiarism, unauthorized materials, or improper assistance. Upholding fairness and integrity in both your own work and the work of others is essential to maintaining our academic community. Any suspected violations of academic honesty will be referred to the Student Conduct and Community Standards for review. More information: <https://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/academicintegrity>

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Please let me know as early as possible, ideally within the first two weeks of the semester, if you observe religious holidays that may conflict with exams, assignments, or class meetings, so we can arrange reasonable alternatives.

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY

Students must register with their school's Disability Services office to receive disability-related accommodations and must complete the testing accommodation request form. More information at:

Columbia: <https://health.columbia.edu/content/disability-services>

Barnard: <https://barnard.edu/disabilityservices/register-cards>

COMMITMENT TO AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

I am committed to fostering a respectful, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. Because psychology examines the mind and behavior, there will be discussion of topics that may be personal or sensitive (e.g., mental health, discrimination, etc.) and all students are expected to engage with course material and one another respectfully. Diversity of background, identity, and perspective is valued as a strength in this classroom. Please reach out if you have any concerns about the classroom climate.

COURSE POLICIES

- **A+ grade:** An A+ is awarded to students who demonstrate exceptional mastery of the course material. I do not round up even if you are 0.01 points away from the next letter grade.
- **Grade Disputes:** All grade disputes must be submitted within one week of receiving back the grade for your assignment/exam. All grade disputes must be submitted via email to be considered.
- **Make-up Exams:** There are **no make-up exams** for this course. Instead, the grading system already allows you to miss one midterm without penalty. Please review the exam dates carefully and plan your schedule accordingly. If you are on a sports team, please reach out to me ASAP.
- **Unreadable File Submission:** Assignments submitted with unreadable or inaccessible files will receive a score of 0. It is your responsibility to double-check that your submission opens correctly.

and can be viewed by the TAs. To avoid this issue, plan to submit ahead of the deadline so you have time to confirm that your files uploaded properly.

- **Late Assignments:** Late assignments are penalized 10% per day after the deadline. Assignments **will not** be accepted after one week. If you experience extenuating circumstances (such as a family emergency), please contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss options.
- **Use of AI:** You can only learn from the work you actually do. Unless otherwise stated, you should not use generative AI tools to create any part of an assignment in this course; every submission should be entirely your work.
- **Classroom Etiquette:** To help everyone stay focused and get the most out of class, please avoid texting, watching videos, or scrolling on social media during lectures. Remember to silence your phone before class begins so we can maintain a learning environment that works for everyone.
- **Important:** Talk to your TA or reach out to me if you are having issues keeping up with this class. Do not wait until the end of the semester! I want each of you to do well in this class – come see me in office hours to chat 😊

LECTURE TOPICS AND READINGS

The calendar below details topics, readings, and assignments for each class period. **This schedule is subject to change, and any changes will be announced in lecture and posted as an announcement on CourseWorks.** Students should complete the assigned reading before coming to class.

DATE	TOPIC OF LECTURE	ASSIGNED READING
(1) Tuesday 9/8	Introduction to the Course & the Field	-
(2) Thursday 9/10	Research Methods I	Chapters 2.0 to 2.3
(3) Tuesday 9/15	Research Methods II	Chapters 2.4 to 2.6
(4) Thursday 9/17	Neuroscience & Behavior I	Chapters 3.0 to 3.3
(5) Tuesday 9/22	Neuroscience & Behavior II	Chapters 3.4 to 3.7
(6) Thursday 9/24	Sensation and Perception I	Chapters 4.0 to 4.3
(7) Tuesday 9/29	Sensation and Perception II	Chapters 4.4 to 4.7
(8) Thursday 10/1	Review for Exam 1	<i>Reading Response 1 Due</i>
(9) Tuesday 10/6	Midterm Exam 1	-
(10) Thursday 10/8	Memory I	Chapters 6.0 to 6.4
(11) Tuesday 10/13	Memory II	Chapters 6.5 to 6.7
(12) Thursday 10/15	Learning I	Chapters 7.0 to 7.3
(13) Tuesday 10/20	Learning II	Chapters 7.4 to 7.7
(14) Thursday 10/22	Emotion & Motivation	Chapters 8.0 to 8.3, & 8.5
(15) Tuesday 10/27	Review for Exam 2	<i>Reading Response 2 Due</i>
(16) Thursday 10/29	Midterm Exam 2	-
Tuesday 11/3	<i>ELECTION DAY</i>	NO CLASS

(17) Thursday 11/5	Development I	Chapters 11.0 to 11.3
(18) Tuesday 11/10	Development II	Chapters 11.4 to 11.5
(19) Thursday 11/12	Language & Thought	Chapters 9.0 to 9.3 (only)
(20) Tuesday 11/17	Social Psychology I	Chapters 13.0 to 13.2 <i>Reading Response 3 Due</i>
(21) Thursday 11/19	Social Psychology II	Chapters 13.3 to 13.5
(22) Tuesday 11/24	Review for Exam 3	-
Thursday 11/26	<i>THANKSGIVING</i>	NO CLASS
(23) Tuesday 12/1	Midterm Exam 3	-
(24) Thursday 12/3	Psychological Disorders I	Chapters 15.0 to 15.5
(25) Tuesday 12/8	Psychological Disorders II	Chapters 15.6 to 15.10
(26) Thursday 12/10	Treatment of Psychological Disorders	Chapters 16.0 to 16.3 <i>Reading Response 4 Due</i>
(27) Thursday 12/17	PROJECTED FINAL EXAM DATE	8:30am-11:30am

HOW TO READ FOR THIS COURSE

Assigned readings are meant to support lectures and help you understand **core psychological ideas**, not to memorize every detail in the textbook. When reading, focus on **concepts, theories, and major findings**, rather than minor technical details.

In particular:

- Prioritize main ideas, bolded terms, and examples discussed in class.
- You do not need to master detailed biological pathways, statistical formulas, or fine-grained classification systems unless explicitly discussed in lecture.
- Some textbook chapters and sections are intentionally not assigned to help keep the reading load manageable.

If you ever feel unsure about what to focus on, use lectures and review sessions as your guide—exams emphasize concepts covered in lectures.

TA BIOS

[illegible]