

Course Description & Syllabus
PY 130-M1: Introduction to Psychology
Fall 2026
MWF 1:50-2:50 (Sec 01; 4 credits)
CSA 310

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Professor: **Dr. Saskia Boggs**
Bailey Hall, Room 307
Pyle Center Box 1302
saskia_boggs@wilmington.edu (personal email: saskia.boggs@gmail.com)

Student hours: Tuesdays, 12:00-4:00; Wednesdays, 11:30-12:30

Please note: Student hours are reserved to offer you some reliable access to your instructor outside of the class period. Please consider this to be an opportunity for us to build a rapport that supports your well-being and academic success. Scheduled student hours are drop-in; I also encourage you to contact me to set up a time to meet if the established hours do not work for you.

Required Materials:

Textbook:

Feist, G. J., & Rosenberg, E. L. (2022). *Psychology: Perspectives & Connections (5th Ed.)*. Boston: Cengage Learning.

Supplementary Texts & Additional Resources:

Available electronically via Blackboard

The textbook is the only book you need to purchase for this class. Our primary text is Feist & Rosenberg (2022), **and it is required**. Be sure to procure the 5th edition, **not** the 1st-4th; there are sections we will be focusing on in the 5th edition that are not present in other editions of the book. Please note that this textbook has been used widely at Wilmington before and you can likely borrow a copy from a peer.

You will **not** need to purchase any supplementary texts or materials, or additional resources. All supplementary materials, which may take the form of journal articles, additional texts, or other print media, will be made available on the Blackboard course website. Please see course schedule for more details.

Prerequisites: none

COURSE OVERVIEW & GOALS

This course will focus on key conceptual areas for understanding human behavior, including biological, cognitive, developmental, social-emotional, industrial-organizational, and physical and mental health. Cross-cutting common themes in the field – cultural and social diversity, ethics, variations in human functioning, and applications – will be addressed for each major topic included in the course. Students will also get to experience the integrative nature of contemporary psychology.

Psychology, broadly speaking, is the scientific study of human behavior. For decades now, the study of human behavior has been conducted on numerous different levels, ranging "from neurons to neighborhoods." As you may imagine, this encompasses a *lot* of different areas of research and kinds of information! Introduction to Psychology is a cumulative-content (meaning that ideas will build off earlier ideas learned in the semester) survey course (meaning it covers a broad number of topics) where you will get exposure to many of these areas.

At the end of the class, you will have a solid foundation in what psychological science is, how it is conducted, and what people are finding out about the human mind and human behavior across the field. Both classical examples

and cutting-edge research will be highlighted to give you examples of how psychological research is conducted and what it has helped us learn about why we are the way we are. This course is designed to equip you with the content knowledge needed to decide:

- (1) whether to pursue additional classes in psychology;
- (2) what areas of psychology might be of the most interest to you, and
- (3) foundational study skills and facts that you can apply to multiple programs of emphasis and parts of your life, even if you decide psychology is not for you.

The objectives of this course are:

- To learn to evaluate key theories, including their use in explaining and predicting behaviors,
- To learn what psychological research is, how it is conducted, and what it can tell us about ourselves,
- To facilitate YOUR interest in the human mind and human behavior, and give YOU the tools to start to ask and answer your own questions about topics that interest you,
- To apply psychological concepts to your own life,
- To enhance critical thinking skills, and encourage you to act as both a learner and a teacher,
- To integrate information across multiple areas of research (and understand how psychological topics and effects are interconnected), and
- To be able to tell your friends and family when they're relying on popular psychological misperceptions, rather than accurate scientific findings, and re-educate them with kindness and good humor ;-).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Professor's Expectations:

Expectations for students in this class are to:

1. Be respectful of others and diverse viewpoints.
2. Attend class (physically or electronically) and actively participate in class discussions and activities.
3. Prepare for class by reading all assigned material in advance.
4. Utilize office hours freely for questions, concerns, and problems, such as if you are struggling with course content/concepts.

Class Format and Conduct:

The class format includes interactive lectures, small group exercises, and discussions. Topics discussed in this class may include sensitive or controversial issues. Students will come from diverse backgrounds and may introduce various viewpoints that might yield disagreement or debate. Therefore, it is necessary for all students to facilitate a respectful environment by remaining scholarly and respectful at all times. Specifically, neither personal attacks nor discriminatory acts will be tolerated in this class.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Course evaluation will be based on class attendance and participation, in-class assignments, content quizzes, brief reflection papers, and exams. Successful completion of this course will depend on work completed both inside and outside of the classroom; students should expect to spend a **minimum** of eight out-of-class hours per week on coursework between readings, exams/quizzes, and assignments.

Readings:

The introductory psychology textbook for all PY-130 courses at Wilmington is the fifth edition of *Psychology: Perspectives and Connections* by Feist and Rosenberg. This book is approachable and clear in the presentation of important material related to psychology. While we will not be covering every single chapter (or all parts of the chapters we DO cover) in class, you are encouraged to peruse other topics at your own pace; I am happy to answer questions about these "extra" topics outside of class meeting times. As with all textbooks, there may be some shortcomings to the way information is presented. Where appropriate, shortcomings will be addressed in class. Still, students are encouraged to read all course materials critically, and be prepared to bring up and discuss

concepts that do not make sense or seem otherwise misrepresented. **You will get the most out of this class if you complete readings in advance of the class in which they will be discussed**, rather than after the fact.

Class Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism:

I consider all class absences as "excused" with the following caveats:

- Students **must** email Saskia **prior to the end of a given class period** to announce an absence for it to be counted as excused. This must happen for **every single** missed class. Failure to contact Saskia in the event of missing a class will count as an "unexcused absence"; after two unexcused absences, you will lose 5% of your Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism points for every subsequent unexcused absence. This is in addition to the points gained/lost by submitting "Exit Papers." (e.g., if you have an **unexcused absence** and **also** fail to submit an exit paper for that day, you will lose 10% of your points.)
- Students are required to submit an "Exit Paper" at least once a week. Students are required to submit an additional "exit paper" for every class they miss. An "Exit Paper" is a simple 2-minute writing assignment where you jot down one take-away thought from that day's class. The thought can be a connection you have made (e.g., between class notes and textbook, or between that day's class and another topic we have covered earlier that semester) or a lingering question that you have about the material.
- If you miss one class in a week, the missed class can be the one you write an Exit Paper for. If you miss multiple classes, you will need to write an Exit Paper for each of the times that you miss. **Exit papers are due within 24 hours of the class you miss** and should be submitted to that week's exit paper dropbox. (If your preference is to combine your 'exit papers' into one submission, this is acceptable, but you must clearly mark which takeaways come from which days in class.)
- For each day that you miss class and do **not** submit an exit paper, you will lose 10% of your Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism points.

Lecture information will often cover material not presented in the textbooks. Students are responsible for knowing the content of both the assigned readings and class lectures – assignments and exams will cover reading-specific and lecture-specific information as well as things covered in both sources. Students who miss class are responsible for any announcements, handouts, or material covered in class (including notes). You may gain this information by checking Blackboard (e.g., for handouts or links to recorded lectures), emailing the professor (e.g., for announcements), or contacting peers (e.g., for announcements or notes). It is similarly the student's responsibility to make up any eligible assignments missed as a result of an absence. For further information, see the current Student Handbook for the college's Attendance Policy, especially as it pertains to excused absences.

Out of respect for your professor and fellow peers, **please do not come to class if you are feeling ill**. Additionally, should you feel ill at any point during the semester, it is important to contact the college nurse (wchealthcenter@wilmington.edu, 937-481-2217) immediately. If you miss class due to being ill, is **your responsibility** to contact your professor immediately in order to determine how best to maintain engagement with course content and assignments during your absence. Please note that I do not require doctor's notes – I will trust you if you say you are too ill to attend, but caution you that students who attend class regularly and participate in activities and discussion tend to perform far better on assignments.

Participation and professionalism are also essential in this course. This entails submitting exit papers, participating in discussions, asking questions during class, maintaining courteous and professional communication with me and your classmates about course matters, attending student hours, and completing in-class activities (not for formal course credit) and assignments (for formal course credit) – please note that you will be assessed on your overall engagement across these areas and if you are lacking one area it will not necessarily result in a deduction of your participation and professionalism points.

In addition, all students are expected to contribute to enhance the quality of class discussions. Students are strongly encouraged to keep a list of questions (clarification and discussion-generating) as they read the textbook, and to raise these questions during class. Students are likewise encouraged to share their own viewpoints in a

respectful manner so topics can be explored from multiple angles. Please be advised that I keep notes on classroom participation, including whether you spoke during discussion, whether you were prepared for class (i.e., read class readings, brought any required materials, etc.), and whether you violated any classroom policies.

It is my expectation that students will complete all assigned readings and take-home assignments in advance of the class meeting during which they are scheduled to be discussed. Failure to do so may result in a loss of participation and professionalism points.

Participating in class and discussions: 100 points

In order to reinforce materials presented and discussed in class, a total of twelve in-class assignments will be administered during the semester. In-class assignments will be completed either individually or in groups, and may or may not be announced prior to class. Each in-class assignment will be worth 10 points (6 points for completing and submitting the ICA; 4 additional points for content and accuracy) and turned in at the end of class. **Students with absences (excused or unexcused) will not be able to make up ICAs;** in order to mitigate the effect of missing class, I drop the lowest two grades.

In-Class Assignments: 12, at 10 points each for 100 possible points. Student's lowest two scores on ICAs will be dropped.

Take-Home Assignments:

At several points during the semester, students will complete a brief take-home assignment designed to help you develop your knowledge base in psychology, improve critical thinking skills, and get some "hands-on" experience with psychological methods. Assignments will be provided no later than one week before their due date. Individual assignments will range from 10-30 points depending on the amount of work each requires. These assignments are designed to encourage students' ability to understand and draw connections between different psychological topics while improving students' ability to think critically and articulate positions in a scholarly manner. **All assignments should be submitted via Blackboard by midnight on the listed due date.**

Take-Home Assignments: 8, at 10-30 points each for 150 possible points.

Exams:

There will be three open-book and open-note exams in this class: two midterms, and a final exam. Each midterm exam will be worth 75 points and consist of both multiple choice and short answer questions; midterms are not cumulative, meaning that they will **only** cover new material. The final exam will be worth 100 points and include a heavier focus on short answer and essay-style questions. The final exam will include a cumulative section, meaning anything learned throughout the semester is fair game.

Exams will **NOT** be in-class: timed exams will be made available on Blackboard for students to take at their leisure within a specified period. Students will be given a list of review topics in advance of the test and permitted to take and use notes on these topics when completing their timed exam on Blackboard.

Access to the midterm exams will open after class (4:00 pm) on the listed start date and close before class (1:00 pm) on the listed close date; a review session will be held in-class on the day that the exam opens. The final exam access period will span several days during finals week; the review session for the final exam will be held on the last day of class. Each review session will be student-driven (i.e., students ask questions and instructor responds) and end when there are no more questions.

Exams: 3, at 75-100 points each for a total of 250 points.

Extra Credit:

Any student who comes to Saskia's office hours at **any point before the first exam (9/30)** with a question about the material we have covered in class will receive 5 points of extra credit on **every exam** they take for this class. This is good for a total of **15 points** of extra credit across the semester.

There will also be 9 quizzes posted to Blackboard throughout the semester. These are not required, but are established as a way for you to check your knowledge. If you complete all nine quizzes before the end of the semester, you will receive **10 points** of extra credit for doing so.

COURSE POLICIES

Grading

Final grades will be determined by the following points/percentage distribution:

Grade	Percentage	Total Points
A	≥ 93%	558-600
A-	90 – 92%	540-557
B+	87 – 89%	522-539
B	83 – 86%	498-521
B-	80 – 82%	480-497
C+	77 – 79%	462-479
C	73 – 76%	438-461
C-	70% – 72%	420-437
D+	67 – 69%	402-419
D	60 – 66%	360-401
F	≤ 59%	0-359

Please note that percentage scores are rounded to the nearest integer. Therefore, 92.5% will be rounded up to 93% and receive an "A" letter grade, but 92.2% will be rounded down to 92% and receive an "A-" letter grade.

Late Work

I want to help you stay on track this semester. Please reach out to me the second you think you may need help, including a conversation with me about a project or a little extra time. That said, I know that there can be times things creep up on you. For **one assignment** this term (e.g., application report, exit paper, etc.) you can turn an assignment in **up to one week** late, no excuses needed. Just be sure to include "Late freebie" in the assignment submission text box. (If you go longer than one week, standard late work deductions will apply.)

Beyond that, work is considered "late" if it is turned in **without an extension** after the deadline for that assignment/assessment. Work turned in within 24 hours after a deadline will receive a 10% deduction in points. Work turned in within 72 hours after a deadline will receive a 25% deduction in points. Late work will not be accepted more than one week after a deadline. Further, please note that unexcused late work will be graded after all other grading is complete.

Make-up Work

In general, student should turn in any/all make-up work (i.e., work that has been missed due to an **excused** absence) the next class session they attend. On a case-by-case basis, an alternate timeline can be established between individual students and the instructor. **The absolute last day to turn in any make-up work is 12/7/2026.**

Class Cancellations

In the event that classes are canceled by the college due to inclement weather (or any other reason), an online alternate activity will be made available and may consist of a prerecorded lecture, a discussion forum, or an at-home assignment. Beyond that, we will pick up where we left off when classes resume. Work that was originally due the day of the cancellation (e.g., readings, lectures, assignments and/or tests) will instead be due at our next class meeting.

If I must cancel class for unforeseen circumstances, I will send an email to you prior to our class time. I will attempt to give you as much advance notice as possible. As with college cancellations, at our next class meeting we will resume where we left off and all work will be due.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is defined as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed. Sanctions for academic misconduct can include a grade of F for the course as well as other penalties. **Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course.** Students are responsible for maintaining academic integrity. Violations include **cheating**, working with other students during an exam or sharing exam questions with other students, **fabricating** information or citations, submitting work of another person or work previously used in another class without informing the instructor, tampering with the academic work of other students, or dishonesty in any respect of course participation. Violations also include **facilitating the academic dishonesty** of another student, and **plagiarizing**. Academic dishonesty will result in a minimum sanction of a grade of zero on the assignment, and may result in failing the course or being suspended from Wilmington College. See the current Student Handbook for the college's Academic Integrity policies as they pertain to examinations, plagiarism, classroom behavior, and the process for handling academic misconduct charges.

THE REGRET CLAUSE: Good students sometimes make mistakes. Pressures from work, school, or family life may lead to a shortage of time and incentivize students to cut corners with their work. However, many students express immediate guilt or regret after committing an act of plagiarism. If you recognize or regret an instance of plagiarism or other form of academic dishonesty, including AI use, you may contact me immediately to discuss forgiveness of class penalties. To qualify students must:

- a) contact me within 72 hours (three days) of submitting problematic work,
- b) describe how the work may have violated a class policy, and
- c) offer a specific plan (including a deadline) for making up the work.

Making a request does not guarantee forgiveness. Penalties may still include a reduced grade, or additional make-up work in the form of readings/responses or letters of apology.

Note to Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

Wilmington College and the Office of Compliance and Integrity are committed to ensuring equal access to students with disabilities, including physical, medical, and psychiatric disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and feel you may need a reasonable accommodation to fulfill the essential functions of this course, you are encouraged to connect with Nathan Flack, Academic Resource Center Manager/ADA Coordinator by visiting the Academic Resource Center located in Robinson Communication Center, Room 103 or connecting via email/phone at nathan.flack@wilmington.edu or 937-481-2208 (TTY: Ohio Relay 711 for deaf/hard of hearing). Please understand that formal eligibility communication from the Office of Compliance and Integrity must be presented prior to the coordination of accommodations for this course..

Additional Information

Religious and cultural observances: Wilmington College strives for an inclusive climate and welcomes students from all backgrounds, faiths, and experiences. If religious observance impedes your ability to participate fully in classroom activities or a principal holiday from your religious tradition occurs during the semester and conflicts with class meetings or activities, please make the professor aware of this immediately to determine if a reasonable accommodation is possible. Individuals who have religious or cultural observances that conflict with classes or class assignments should inform me within the first two weeks of class. If, during this period, students do not contact me, it is assumed that they will be able to follow the schedule as outlined.

AI policy: The use of generative AI in the completion of assignments is prohibited for this course. Use of generative AI for any assignment will result in a failure of that assignment.

Email policy: Email messages addressed to me should have PY-130 or INTRO PSYCH in the subject line. All email correspondence should be professional in tone. I commit to regularly checking email between 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM Monday through Friday; I will respond to all communication within 48 hours or by the end of the next weekday if the correspondence is sent over the weekend. If, at the end of 48 hours, you do not have a response, please re-send the email.

I will also be using email as a primary communication mode with you. I expect my students to check their emails at least once per weekday and to respond to any emails that demand a response (e.g., if I ask a direct question) within a timely manner (48 hours). I **DO NOT** respond to messages sent via Blackboard as they often do not show up for me.

Course announcements: Any announcements regarding changes in the class schedule or syllabus will be announced in class and emailed to the entire class.

Technology policy: With respect to others, students will not disrupt the class with use of cell phones or other electronic devices. As such, phones and other devices should be set to "silent" (**not** vibrate) during class. Students are likewise encouraged to refrain from making or receiving phone calls and instant or text messages during the class; in the event of an emergency, please step outside of the classroom to complete your call. Laptops, smartphones, and tablets have become fixtures in classrooms nationwide, and have tremendous potential to draw us deeper into a state of engagement by providing a way to efficiently take notes or look up information that can supplement a given discussion. However, they have equal or greater potential to disrupt our engagement; research shows that students learn better when they do not use devices in the classroom, and that multitasking on devices distracts not only you but those around you. The question is always whether using technology is drawing you into class or pulling you out (e.g., through distractions such as email, social media, readings/assignments for other courses, et cetera), and the answer to that question is generally apparent to you as a thoughtful student, as well as to your peers and often to your instructor. Please keep this in mind and be judicious and conscientious in your use of technology.

Title IX Statement of Policy: Consistent with Wilmington College's testimony, "I will respect the dignity of all persons," Wilmington College (or the "College") is committed to providing a learning, working, and living environment free of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sex and gender by employees, students, and third parties. Pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), Wilmington College prohibits discrimination based on sex (including gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation) in its educational, extracurricular, athletic, or other programs or activities that it operates, or in the context of admissions or employment. Specifically, Title IX provides, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Wilmington College considers sex and gender discrimination in all its forms, including sexual harassment, to be a serious offense. Consistent with Wilmington College's commitment to compliance with Title IX, the College will promptly and equitably respond to all reports and formal complaints under this Sex Discrimination & Sexual Harassment Policy (the "Policy") in order to end the conduct, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects on individuals and the community. Inquiries regarding the application of this Policy may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator, the Assistant Secretary of the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Due to the nature of the class and the amount of the class content, I reserve the right to make any necessary changes to the class and/or in the class schedule. If changes do occur, this information will be announced in class and posted on the course website.

Date	Readings	Activities & Topic	Assignments
8/24	Syllabus	Course & syllabus review; Introductions	
8/26	Chapter 1	Introduction to Psychology	
8/28	Chapter 1	Introduction to Psychology	Submit introduction survey (mandatory, non-graded) Exit Paper Due Saturday
8/31	Chapter 1	Introduction to Psychology	Take-Home Assignment 1 Due (Classroom Agreement)
9/2	Chapter 2	Research in Psychology	
9/4	Chapter 2	Research in Psychology	Exit Paper Due Saturday
9/7	NO CLASS – LABOR DAY		
9/9	Chapter 2	Research in Psychology	
9/11	Chapter 3	Brains, biology, and behavior	Exit Paper Due Saturday
9/14	Chapter 3	Brains, biology, and behavior	Take-Home Assignment 2 Due
9/16	Chapter 3	Brains, biology, and behavior	
9/18	Chapter 5	Lifespan Development	Exit Paper Due Saturday
9/21	Chapter 5	Lifespan development	
9/23	Chapter 5	Lifespan development	
9/25	Chapter 4	Cognitive Psychology: Sensation & Perception	Exit Paper Due Saturday
9/28	Chapter 4	Cognitive Psychology: Sensation & Perception	Take-Home Assignment 3 Due
9/30	Chapter 8	Cognitive Psychology: Learning	
10/2	N/A	Cognitive Psychology: Learning Exam Review	EXAM 1 OPENS
10/5	Chapter 8	Cognitive Psychology: Learning	EXAM 1 CLOSSES
10/7	WESTHEIMER SYMPOSIUM	Attend at least two Westheimer events (Tues or Weds)	No class
10/9	Chapter 7	Social Cognition: Memory	Exit Paper Due Saturday
10/12	Chapter 7	Social Cognition: Memory	Take-Home Assignment 4 Due
10/14	Chapter 9, pp 347-364; Chapter 10, pp 389-393	Social Cognition: Thinking & Problem Solving	Personality Assessment Due
10/16	Chapter 9, pp 334-347	Social Cognition: Language	Exit Paper Due Saturday
10/19	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK		
10/21	Chapter 11, pp 429-452	Social Psychology: Emotions and the Self	Exit Paper Due Saturday
10/23	Chapter 11, pp 429-452	Social Psychology: Emotions and the Self	
10/26	Chapter 11, pp 429-452; Chapter 13	Social Psychology: Emotions and the Self; Theories of Personality	Take-Home Assignment 5 Due

10/28	Chapter 13	Social Psychology: Theories of Personality	
10/30	Chapter 13	Social Psychology: Theories of personality	Exit Paper Due Saturday
11/2	Chapter 14	Social Psychology: Interpersonal Interactions	
11/4	Chapter 14	Social Psychology: Interpersonal Interactions	
11/6	Chapter 14	Social Psychology: Interpersonal Interactions	Exit Paper Due Saturday
11/9	Chapter 15	Applied Psychology: Psychological Disorders Exam Review	EXAM 2 OPENS
11/11	Chapter 15	Applied Psychology: Psychological Disorders	EXAM 2 CLOSES
11/13	Chapter 15	Applied Psychology: Psychological Disorders	Take Home Assignment 6 Due Exit Paper Due Saturday
11/16	Chapter 12, pp 454-469	Applied Psychology: Psychological Disorders Applied Psychology: Clinical & Health Psychology	
11/18	Chapter 16	Applied Psychology: Clinical & Health Psychology	
11/20	Chapter 16	Applied Psychology: Clinical & Health Psychology	Exit Paper Due Saturday
11/23	N/A	"Wiggle Room"	
11/25-27	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK		
11/30	Chapter 11, pp 404-429	Applied Psychology: Motivation & the Workplace	Chapter 11, pp 404-429
12/2	Supplemental PDF	Applied Psychology: Motivation & the Workplace	Supplemental PDF
12/4	Supplemental PDF	Applied Psychology: Motivation & the Workplace	Supplemental PDF; Exit Paper Due Saturday
12/7	N/A	You pick the topic!	Final Take-Home Assignment + Reflection Due
12/9	N/A	Final Exam Review	Exit Paper Due Thursday
12/11-12/15	FINALS WEEK Final exam will be available electronically from 9:00 AM 12/11 through 6:00 PM 12/14.		

Note: At the end of the semester, we will have space to discuss anything that has NOT been covered in class for 1-2 class periods – let Saskia know what your preferences are by 11/20/26!