

# PsyA01 - Introduction to Psychology, Part I

## Syllabus for the Fall of 2003

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### Contact Information



**Instructor:** Steve Joordens  
**E-mail:** please see the [Ask a Question](#) link  
**Office Hours:** Mondays, 3:00 pm until 4:30 pm  
**Room Number:** S560

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### General Course Information

The study of human behaviour, and the processes and structures giving rise to it, is actually extremely broad. It ranges from issues such as basic brain structure and communication, to issues such as the way the behaviour of others around us affects our own behaviour. In general, the goal of our two Introduction to Psychology courses is to give you an introduction to research and ideas across the entire field of psychology.

This is Part I of that introduction and, in it, we will focus on topics such as a Brief History of Psychological Research, an Introduction to the Scientific Process, A Discussion of Evolution in the Context of Human Behaviour, Brain Structure and Function, Basic Sensory Processes, Perceptual Processes, Memory and Consciousness.

The course is what is often described as a survey course, meaning we will try to give you a general sense of some different approaches to the study of Psychology highlighting some of the most interesting findings within each approach. Subsequent B level courses then focus on some of these approaches in more detail, and the hope is that after taking this Introductory course you will be in a good position to (a) know which sub-areas of Psychology you find most interesting, and (b) begin your studies of these sub-areas with a good general knowledge of that sub-area and how it related to other approaches within Psychology.

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### Presentation of Lectures

We present the lectures for this course in two different ways which we term the traditional and web-based (or online) approaches respectively. By the traditional

approach we just mean the in-class lectures that are typical in the university setting. Specifically, in the fall of each year PsyA01 is offered both via the traditional and web-based way. As the lectures are given in the traditional section they are taped, then presented to the web-based section via streaming video over the web. We then use these streaming videos again in the Winter and Summer terms thereby allowing us to offer this course over every term of the year. Thus, in the Fall term both traditional and web-based approaches are available whereas we offer only the web-based approach in the Winter and Summer terms.

Note the PsyA02 is essentially a continuation of this course. It uses the same text, and the same approach to teaching with both traditional and web-based sections available. However, in contrast to this course, the traditional section is only available in the Winter for PsyA02. In the Fall and Summer terms, only the web-based approach is available.

The only real difference between these approaches is with respect to the lecture itself. Whereas the traditional approach requires you to be in a certain classroom at a certain time, the web-based approach gives you far more flexibility in where and when you view the lectures. It also allows you to pause lectures (if taking notes, or if you need a washroom break perhaps) and you can also rewind if you missed part of a lecture. Given these features, many students prefer the web-based approach. For more specific information on the approach please follow the [Information on Web-Based Lectures](#) link.

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## The Course Textbook



The textbook we will be using for this course is called *Psychology: The Science of Behaviour* (2nd Canadian Edition), and is authored by Carlson, Buskist, Enzle and Heth.

In PsyA01 we will cover chapters 1 through 9 of the text in the order in which they appear.

Note that you can either get this text new from the bookstore, or you may be able to find used copies. When purchased new, the textbook costs about \$100 and comes bundled with a workbook and CDrom. Neither of these bundled bits are critical as the tests are based on the lectures and text online. However, both the CDrom and the workbook offer interactive ways of learning the same material, so they are helpful. If you are purchasing a used copy, you may want to ask if the person also has either the workbook, CDrom or both that they would throw in with it. When thinking about the price of this (yes I know how expensive textbooks are) keep in mind that you can use this text for PsyA02 and well as for this course.

In addition, the publishers of the textbook also offer a [student support webpage](#) that offers a number of features you might find useful while studying and while

assessing your knowledge. Especially popular are the practice tests.

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## Evaluation

Your performance in the class will be assessed using two multiple-choice exams, a midterm that will likely be sometime in late October, and a final that will be during the final exam period. The exams will not be cumulative but, rather, each will focus on certain chapters of the text. Each exam consists of 50 five-alternative multiple choice exams (i.e., a question followed by five alternatives, one of which is most correct).

Note that regardless of which section of the course you are in, you have to physically come in to write the exams. That means 1300 - 1400 students writing at the same time! As you might guess, this requires a great deal of organization with students being assigned to certain rooms depending on section and first letter of last name. Fun, fun. Fear not though, we know what we're doing and we'll be sure you do too. Plus we always build in some extra time to make sure (i.e., the exams are one-hour exams but we always schedule them in two-hour slots to give us time to get everything right before we start).

The first midterm will focus on Chapters 1 through 5 and will be worth 50% of your final mark. I do not yet know exactly when the midterm will be or where you will have to go to write it. However, when I do have that information I will (a) mention it in class, (b) post an announcement on the webpage with a link to all the gory details, and (c) place the critical information here in the syllabus, also with a link to the gory details.

The second midterm (aka final) will be on Chapters 6 through 9 and will also be worth 50% of your final mark. It will be held sometime during the final exam period. Again, when I know more I will give you all the information just as I will for the midterm.

It is also possible to receive an addition 2% worth of bonus marks through experimental participation. To find out more about this follow the [Experimental Participation](#) link.

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If you have questions about the course that are not answered in this syllabus, please first proceed to the [Ask a Question page](#), and if your question is not answered there you will find appropriate e-mail addresses provided there. Thanks and good luck!!

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