Biopsychology Psychology
PSY 5330

When: T 4:00-6:30pm
Instructor: Dr. Nathan Sparkman  Office: ED 215P
E-mail: sparkmannl@sfasu.edu  Phone: 936-468-4402 *- email is better
Office Hours: MW 10-12; R 11-12 or by appt

Materials

Texts: There are no required textbooks for this course, but I suggest that you acquire a compatible text to serve as a reference. Original research and review articles will constitute the required reading. The typical reading load will be about 2-3 articles. Students should be prepared to spend several hours completing and considering the readings for each class meeting.

D2L & EMAIL: You are responsible for checking your email daily. The course has a D2L site that can be found at d2l.sfasu.edu. You are responsible for all announcements and materials presented on this web page, so you must check it daily. All course readings will be posted to the content area of D2L. Your final course grade will also be posted here. If you do not have access to our class D2L page for any reason, you must contact me.

Overview

Course Description: This course will include a graduate-level overview of biopsychology and behavioral neuroscience of methods, theories, principles, and research findings to understanding and resolution of neuropsychological and behavioral issues. Students will explore diverse topics such as psychopharmacology, neurodevelopment, genetics, and neuropsychiatric disorders.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Develop an understanding of the complex interplay between genetics and the environment
- Explain behavior in terms of a multifaceted approach that includes genetics, development, experience and neurophysiology.
- Develop an understanding of the physiological factors influencing behavior, as well as research methodologies.
- Learn about the etiology and treatment of neuropsychiatric disorders and diseases.

Course Expectations and Grading
Class participation: Each week students will be expected to make a contribution to the class discussion. This may be in the form of a critical analysis of the reading, answering a question that demonstrates significant insight, bring in outside material or demonstrating in-depth knowledge of the week’s materials.

Topic Presentations (x2): These presentations will be on topics related to course materials and assigned to each student. Student will be responsible for presenting an overview of the topic along with showing appropriate knowledge of course materials and application of appropriate terminology. (20-25min)

Final Presentation: During the second half of the course students will be presenting on a topic. Each student will be responsible for locating a review article and (at least) two experimental articles (one human and one consisting of nonhuman models). Students presentations should be presented as a synthesis of the articles and provide an in-depth review of the topic. The presentation should include a review of major theories, techniques, and implications. (35-45min)

Final Paper: Each student will prepare a 5-7 page review of a topic relevant to the course. This paper will be in the style of a review article suitable for publication.

Exam: The final exam will consist of a take home essay questions that will be answered utilizing the readings from class and the lecture topic materials.

Grading Policy:

- Participation – 25 points
- Topic presentations: - 25 points
- Presentation – 75 points
- Paper – 75 points
- Exams (1) – 25 points each

Attendance: Attendance is required. Given that our class meets only once a week, missing one class means you’ve missed an entire week of materials. You should email me promptly if you are going to miss. Absence(s) will result in a reduction in participation.

Additional Information

Civility: I expect you to act civilly at all times. This means respecting yourself, other students, and me. Uncivil behavior will not be tolerated. Examples of uncivil behavior include, but are not limited to, ringing or vibrating cell phones, excessive texting, sleeping, talking when another student or I am talking, wearing headphones, using a laptop or tablet during class, disrupting the class in any manner, becoming physically or verbally aggressive, breaking student code of conduct rules, etc. Students engaging in uncivil or disruptive behavior may be asked to leave the classroom. Audio or video recordings without my permission are not allowed. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on
coursework may be referred to the iCare Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**Personal reactions to topics:** Sometimes certain material covered in a psychology class can bring up personal feelings and reactions you may not know what to do with. In these cases, please feel free to make use of the counseling services available on campus via Counseling Services. Their phone number is (936) 468-2401. More information can be found on their website:
http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/

**Academic Integrity (4.1)**

*Please copy and paste the following information regarding Academic Integrity into your syllabus. In addition, you may include your guidelines for academic integrity as appropriate.*

Academic integrity is the responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty and abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are

(1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.
**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Mental Health and Wellness**

SFA values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**

SFA Counseling Service  
[www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices)

Health and Wellness Hub (corner of E. College and Raguet)  
936.468.2401

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic  
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp) Human Services, Room 202  
936.468.1041

**Crisis Resources:**

Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343S

National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255) Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

**Syllabus Change Policy:** This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, course schedule, and exam dates as necessary. I will announce any changes both in class and on D2L.
Disclaimer: If you disagree with the policies described in this syllabus, you should consider dropping the course. By remaining in this course, you acknowledge and accept the policies as stated herein and accept the policies as stated or amended during the course of the semester.

“Biopsychology” (3 credits) is designed to introduce students to the field of biopsychology by covering the relationships between behavior and underlying physiological mechanisms including neural conduction, sensory receptor mechanisms, learning and memory, and other aspects of higher cortical functioning in both humans and animals. The course typically meets 150 minutes a week in two 75-minute segments or three 50-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2-hour final examination period. Students typically have significant weekly reading assignments, writing assignments, are expected to take regular tests, and a final examination. These activities average at a minimum 6 hours of work each week to prepare outside of classroom hours. Online course sections contain extensive written content that includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture sections receive, requiring students to engage the online modules for at least three hours per week. For every hour a student spends engaging with the online content, he/she spends at least two hours completing associated activities and assessments.
## Tentative Course Calendar

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<td>GETTING STARTED</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW and MAJOR ISSUES</td>
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<td>2-3</td>
<td>NERVE CELLS AND THE NERVE IMPULSE</td>
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<td>3-4</td>
<td>SYNAPSES AND DRUGS</td>
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<td>5-6</td>
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<td>LAB</td>
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<td>9-10</td>
<td>GENETICS, EVOLUTION, DEVELOPMENT &amp; PLASTICITY</td>
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<td>11-12</td>
<td>THE BIOLOGY OF LEARNING AND MEMORY</td>
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