



Course Syllabus

PSY 2012–14094—Online
General Psychology
B Session, Spring Semester, 2026
3 Credit Hours—Prerequisites: None

Instructor: Dr. John W. Erickson, Jr., M.Div., J.D., Ph.D.

Spring 2026 B Session Dates: 09 January – 04 March 2026

Note: For any syllabus posted before the beginning of the term, the instructor reserves the right to make minor changes before or during the term. The instructor will notify students via email or Canvas announcement when changes are made to the course's requirements and/or grading.

Online Courses at Gulf Coast State College: All online courses at GCSC utilize the Canvas Learning System. Students should read all information presented on the Canvas course site and should periodically check for updates--at least **EVERY 48 HOURS**.

Remember: This course is not one in which students may work at their own pace. Each week there are learning modules, assignments, online lectures, online discussions, and/or online exams with due dates. Refer to the schedule within this syllabus for more information.

Instructor Contact Information:

Dr. John W. Erickson, Jr., M.Div., J.D., Ph.D. Adjunct Professor
Social Sciences Division (907) 841-1139 – iPhone
jerickso1@gulfcoast.edu

Please include your name and the course title in the subject line of your emails. **Thank you!**

Instructor Education:

B.A., Justice, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska, 1992

B.A., Speech Communication, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska, 1993 J.D., J.

Rueben Clark School of Law, Provo, Utah, 1999

M.A., Administration of Justice, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska 2004

M.M.O.A.S., Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama, 2009 M.S.,

Forensic Psychology, Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, FL, 2015

Ph.D., Criminal Justice-Behavioral Science, Nova Southeastern University, Florida, 2016

M.Div., Iliff School of Theology, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado, 2022

M.S., Counseling, Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, FL, Pending

Office Hours: I am typically available between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. (Central Time), Monday through Friday.

Social Sciences Office Contacts:

Dr. Robert Saunders, Chair Social Sciences Division

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rsaunder2@gulfcoast.edu

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Required Textbook:

The textbook for this course, *Psychology 2e*, ISBN-13: 978-1-975076-44-3, is usually available in the Gulf Coast State College Book Store and is currently free online at:

<https://openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e>.

Authors:

Rose M. Spielman, Formerly of Quinnipiac College William J. Jenkins, Mercer University

Marilyn D. Lovett, Spelman College

APA Citation for Required Textbook:

Spielman, R. M., Jenkins, W. J., & Lovett, M. D. (2022). *Psychology 2E*. OpenStax.

Technology Requirements for this Course: This section of PSY 2012 requires that students have regular and open access to a computer and that they maintain reliable internet service.

Technical Assistance: Technical support is available by phone 24 hours a day, seven days per week, by calling (850) 913-3303. Technicians are also available on the Panama City Campus from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

PSY 2012 Catalog Description: In this course, students will gain an introduction to the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. Topics may be drawn from historical and current perspectives in psychology.

Course Content: The academic content for this section of PSY 2012 will be covered primarily via digital lectures, textbook readings, and discussion board contributions.

Instructor-Specific Objectives and Broad Goals: Upon successful completion of PSY 2012, students should be able to:

1. Explain why psychology is a science just as much as physics and chemistry are sciences.
2. Utilize your analytical and critical thinking skills when reading and evaluating scientific research.
3. Describe your own and others' physical, cognitive, and socioemotional development.
4. Discuss why, despite their differences, human beings are generally more alike than they are different.
5. List the aims and/or goals of psychology.
6. Identify critical regions of the brain and distinguish structure-function relationships (e.g., knowing which parts of the brain serve particular perceptual, cognitive, linguistic, and motor functions).
7. Identify the most common types of methods used in psychological research.
8. Examine and/or explain some sociocultural and international contexts that influence individual differences.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- Students will be able to identify basic psychological theories, terms, and principles from historical and current perspectives.
- Students will be able to recognize real-world applications of psychological theories, terms, and principles.
- Students will be able to recognize basic strategies used in psychological research.
- Students will be able to draw logical conclusions about behavior and mental processes based on empirical evidence.

Student Expectation Statement: The student is expected to participate in the course via email exchanges with the instructor by listening to and taking thorough notes on all digital lectures, reading the assigned readings, submitting the "Biosketch Essay," contributing to the discussion board, submitting as due four 300-word essays, and by completing all four exams as scheduled.

I am here for you! I am typically available between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. (Central Time), Monday through Friday. Notwithstanding, please do not hesitate to email or text me anytime. I will get back to you as soon as possible, usually within 24 hours.

All of the course content and graded assignments will be delivered and conducted on Canvas.

Students enrolled in this course will be expected to:

1. Listen to and take thorough notes on the video lectures assigned with each weekly Learning Module (I cannot overstate the importance of the video lectures);
2. Read all of the textbook pages assigned with each Learning Module;
3. Complete all exams **AS SCHEDULED**; see the course schedule below; and
4. Contact the instructor via email at once with any problems or issues. I cannot handle problems unless you make me aware of them.

Academic Integrity Policy: Honest participation in academic endeavors fosters an environment in which optimal learning can take place and is consistent with the college's mission. Academic misconduct, including cheating or plagiarism, is destructive to the spirit of an educational environment. Social Science professors report every instance of student academic misconduct to the college for inclusion in the student's records.

- **“Cheating”** includes but is not limited to the use of any unauthorized assistance in completing coursework.
- **“Plagiarism”** includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of another person's published or unpublished work without full and clear acknowledgment, as well as the purchase of papers or projects.
- **“Self-plagiarism”** occurs when a student submits the same or considerably similar document to fulfill requirements in different classes. For example, if a student submits a term paper in Religion they originally wrote for an English class, this is self-plagiarism. Once a paper receives a grade in one class, it cannot be submitted again for another class.
- **The use of AI software** in any form to create class assignments *may* violate GCSC's Academic Integrity Policy. Before employing AI technology in any manner and to any degree, students should consult with their professors for all courses offered through the Social Sciences Division.

Sanctions for incidents of academic misconduct, depending on the severity of the incident and/or its repetition, may range from receiving an F grade (or 0) for the test, assignment, or activity to failure of the course to suspension or dismissal from the college.

Student Accessibility Statement - Gulf Coast State College supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If aspects of this course's instruction or design hinder your full participation, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Before receiving accommodations, you must register with Student Accessibility Resources. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the student. For information regarding the registration process, email sar@gulfcoast.edu or call 850-747-3243.

Recording Lectures - Under federal and state privacy laws, students may record class lectures for their personal educational use, in connection with a complaint to the college, or as evidence in internal or external legal proceedings. Students may not publish or upload the recordings or any components thereof without the knowledge and written permission of the faculty member. Failure to obtain permission to publish could lead to the student(s) paying damages, attorney fees, and court costs.

For more information about what can be recorded, please see the guidelines in the GCSC Student Handbook:

<https://www.gulfcoast.edu/current-students/student-handbooks/2021-2022-student-handbook.pdf>

Email & Voicemail Response Time - Instructors will check and respond to messages sent to their gulfcoast.edu email within 48 hours during scheduled workdays, barring illness or emergencies. The instructor may or may not check email during holidays or weekends. This policy also applies to messages sent via Canvas, as well as voicemails left on a provided phone number.

Attendance - Regular class attendance and participation are significant factors that help to promote success in college. In face-to-face courses, students are required to be in class at the beginning of each class session, as attendance will be taken at this time. If a student arrives late, it is their responsibility to inform the instructor after class of their presence. Failure to do so may result in the student being marked as "Absent." Attendance in an online/hybrid CANVAS class is defined as the submission of complete written assignments before their posted deadline.

Withdrawals - Students may withdraw themselves from any course until the published withdrawal deadline for that term in the Gulf Coast State College catalog. Students wishing to withdraw from a course and receive a "W" must complete a withdrawal form and submit this to the Office of Enrollment Services before the scheduled withdrawal date as published on the college calendar. If you feel you have a unique situation *that warrants removal from all of your courses for a term after the withdrawal deadline has passed, you may contact the Vice President of Student Affairs to discuss your situation.*

Consequences of Withdrawals - *Two withdrawals are permitted per credit course. After that, a grade will be assigned. Please be concerned about withdrawals. When admitting students into certain programs, universities may calculate withdrawals as grades. It is your responsibility to verify the effects of enrollment and/or withdrawal upon your financial assistance (financial aid, scholarships, grants, etc.).*

Incomplete Grades - Grades of Incomplete in any Social Sciences course can only be assigned to students who have an emergency arise during the last two weeks of the course.

To receive an Incomplete, students must:

- Submit a written request to the instructor before the last face-to-face class meeting. For online courses, a written Incomplete request must be received no later than the week before the Final Exam period begins.
- Have completed no less than 60 percent of the course requirements and be passing the course at the time the request for an Incomplete is submitted.

Important Note: The Incomplete option provides 30 days from the date grades are due to make up any missing work; if work is not submitted during this period, the grade will automatically change to an "F" in Lighthouse.

Assessment Instruments:

I. Exams (3 exams at 20%, 20%, and 10% each = 50% of the final grade):

- A. Each exam will be comprised of multiple-choice, true-false, and matching questions.
- B. Each exam will be available for a specific period. See the Course Schedule in this syllabus for the dates during which the exams will be available.
- C. The exams will be delivered on-line via Canvas.
- D. The exams may be timed. Each exam is “opened book” and “opened notes.”
- E. None of the exams will be comprehensive.

Biosketch Essay (05% of the final grade):

The “Biosketch Essay” should be submitted as a Word document directly into Canvas no later than 10:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, 14 JAN 2025**. This brief assignment requires you to draft a 300–500-word essay about yourself, being certain to include items such as career aspirations, educational background, previous college-level history courses, etc. YOUR ESSAY SHOULD BE GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT, WITH NO MISSPELLINGS OR “TYPOS.”

II. Comprehensive Essay (10% of the final grade):

All students will submit one (1) 700–900-word essay. All grammar, punctuation, and composition rules apply and will be graded. See the due dates and the Canvas page for further details.

III. Discussion Board Contributions (35% of the final grade):

Each student must participate in the course’s Discussion Board at least three times in each module. All contributions should add substantively to our discussion and generate further discussion and additional in-depth analysis.

IV. Extra Credit (Points to be Determined):

Occasionally, I will hold live Zoom sessions to review material, provide additional guidance, discuss current events, etc. Attendance at these Zoom sessions is **NOT** mandatory. But, if you attend them, I will likely add no less than one point to your overall grade for each Zoom session you attended. Those who cannot participate in a live Zoom session may submit a 300-word essay summarizing the recording.

COURSE OUTLINE OF LEARNING MODULES

<u>Week of:</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>Module Assignments</u>
	00	Term Begins, 09 January
12 JAN	01	Course Overview and Introductions Chapter 01, Introduction to Psychology Chapter 02, Psychological Research Biosketch Essay (Due Wednesday, 14 JAN) Discussion Board # 01 (Due: Thursday, 15 JAN)
19 JAN	02	Chapter 03, Biopsychology Chapter 04, States of Consciousness Discussion Board # 02 (Due: Thursday, 22 JAN)

26 JAN	03	Chapter 05, Sensation and Perception Chapter 06, Learning Chapter 07, Thinking and Intelligence Discussion Board # 03 (Due: Thursday, 29 JAN) Exam # 01, Chapters 01-07 (Due: Sunday, 01 FEB)
02 FEB	04	Chapter 08, Memory Chapter 09, Lifespan Development Chapter 10, Emotion and Motivation Discussion Board # 04 (Due: Thursday, 05 FEB) Comprehensive Essay (Due Sunday, 08 FEB)
09 FEB	05	Chapter 11, Personality Chapter 12, Social Psychology Chapter 13, Industrial-Organizational Psychology Discussion Board # 05 (Due: Thursday, 12 FEB) Exam # 02, Chapters 08-13 (Due: Sunday, 15 FEB)
16 FEB	06	Chapter 14, Stress, Life, and Health Discussion Board # 06 (Due: Thursday, 19 FEB)
23 FEB	07	Chapter 15, Psychological Disorders Discussion Board # 07 (Due: Thursday, 26 FEB)
02 MAR	08	Chapter 16, Therapy and Treatment Exam # 03, Chapters 14-16 (Due: Wednesday, 04 MAR)
04 MAR	Term Ends	

ALL GRADES WILL BE AVAILABLE ON LIGHTHOUSE ON OR AFTER 09 MAR 2026
Method of Evaluation:

Biosketch Essay	(05%)
Comprehensive Essay	(10%)
Exam # 01	(20%)
Exam # 02	(20%)
Exam # 03	(10%)
Discussion Board # 01	(05%)
Discussion Board # 02	(05%)
Discussion Board # 03	(05%)
Discussion Board # 04	(05%)
Discussion Board # 05	(05%)
Discussion Board # 06	(05%)
Discussion Board # 07	(05%)

Assignment of Grades: All grades will be posted in the student grade book in Canvas and will be assigned according to the following scale:

A (90%-100%) **B** (80%-89%) **C** (70%-79%) **D** (60%-69%) **F** (59% and below)

Generative AI Use with Permission and Disclosure:

Students may use basic assistive technologies for spelling, grammar, and formatting (*e.g.*, PaperRater or SpellCheckPlus). Generative AI tools (*e.g.*, ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly's AI function, etc.) may also be used for classes and/or assignments where instructors have given explicit permission.

Students must clearly disclose and properly cite any AI-generated content used in their work, following course guidelines. Students are permitted to use AI only in the manner and means described by the instructor. Unacknowledged or unauthorized AI use will be treated as a violation of academic integrity and may result in penalties, including a zero on the assignment and additional disciplinary actions as outlined in the college's academic integrity policy.