EL CAMINO COLLEGE

Psy. 5

Dr. Michael Braun

CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS

Please keep this handout to refer to during the semester.

Names: I will make up a seating chart which will make attendance count easier and will also help me gradually learn your names.

On Being A Student: I assume that you are serious about your learning. This means, among other things, that you are here primarily to increase your learning. In contrast to this is the not uncommon experience of doing something due to various forms of social pressure (often felt in the form of what one "should do" or is "supposed to do"). Also, these types of motivational forces are frequently occurring without our awareness, but will show up in our behavior (e.g., starting out the beginning of the semester with effective study methods, but failing to maintain the approach after a couple of months). One of the problems with doing things due to fear, guilt, shame, etc. is that such motivational pressures generate internal conflict that will be resisted by the individual, but in a confused fashion which winds up being self-defeating.

Therefore, being aware of what your main motivating factors are is central to your understanding how to be successful in your studies.

Respect: You are expected to demonstrate respect at all times towards the purpose of our class – learning. This includes showing respect – always – for the instructor, your fellow class members, and yourself. Absolutely no disrespect of any kind will be tolerated. It is grounds for immediate dismissal from this class.

Personal Responsibility: This is a growthful process which can be described partially as the gradual learning of how to be in conscious control of your own life and how to function in a truly useful, interdependent fashion with others for mutual fulfillment.

In terms of your learning, this means recognizing that you will increase the amount and quality of what you learn to the extent that you actively involve yourself in your situation. This indicates that your learning is a direct function of the degree to which your heart, mind and body are attentive and aware of whatever it is that you want to know.

Learning is interfered with to the extent that you or I believe that we have to be "perfect." Most of us have, unfortunately, learned that the making of what we call "mistakes" emotionally gets equated to "I am not ok." But we can only learn by finding out something new or seeing things in new ways and that occurs only when we are willing to experience the learning process which includes making mistakes. So to enhance my learning capacity I need to separate my worth as a person from getting either right or wrong answers.

Our culture and institutions tend to foster the fear of being seen as less than perfect (i.e., being seen as "not ok") as a major way of controlling our behavior. When I am overly controlled by my fear of imperfection, then I cannot learn to become responsible for my own life. Consequently, I will limit myself to a child's form of dependency on the environment and on those around me. Without accepting the challenge of acquiring the skill and understanding of progressive interdependency necessary for true adult functioning, then I reject the opportunity and my need to further evolve consciously by discovering my hidden and real potential.
Learning Resource Center: Many students have special learning needs (e.g., skills involving reading, writing, note taking, test taking, etc.) and the Learning Resource Center is available to help. It is one of the most utilized facilities on campus and I highly recommend it. There is also a Writing Center and many other educational services available for you at El Camino. So don't be shy about getting what you need.

My Educational Approach: There is a great deal of valuable material that I want you to be exposed to, even though we won't have time to cover all of it in class. Consequently, there is a lot of reading to do. To accomplish this efficiently, it is suggested that you organize your methods and time for studying for our class today, or by the end of this week at the latest. Preparing and following a study schedule that works for you will improve your learning and prevent getting behind (college courses tend to proceed at a rate that covers twice as much material in a semester as compared to high school).

I will review in class with you some of the more difficult and/or less familiar concepts as well as areas that I believe deserve greater attention. I take the usual college approach of assuming that you are capable of mastering most of the material independently with sufficient motivation and appropriate effort.

Discussion and Questions: Remember that our degree of learning is directly related to our amount and quality of involvement and participation. Your questions about something that you do not understand, or that you want to pursue in more depth, or that you believe will help clarify an issue, and so forth are all highly encouraged. A key to learning and increasing your understanding is the asking of productive questions.

Likewise, entering into and/or initiating discussions about our subject matter is intensely valuable to enhancing your learning. Expressing freely your ideas, feelings, questions, beliefs, doubts, and so forth in a safe and supportive environment and in a respectful manner is very beneficial to learning and growing as a human being. You are not here to agree with whatever you think my viewpoint might be at the expense of struggling to clarify your own awareness and understanding. What is extremely useful is to know why you believe or disbelieve whatever you do.

You are required to raise your hand and be called on by the instructor prior to asking questions or entering into discussions.

A Sense of Humility and Humor: Humility means to recognize that whatever I might know or think that I know, it is relatively little in comparison to what there is that I need to learn. Especially in regards to what I need to learn in order to continue my development toward becoming a real human being. It means opening my mind and becoming receptive to new information and changing conditions so that I can be flexible and capable of dealing with the requirements of whatever happens. Cultivating a good sense of humor is an invaluable tool in this effort and a wonderful cure for the trap of perfectionism. This is not "hostile humor" where we judge or condemn other people or ourselves. It is concerned with maintaining our balance between taking things too seriously versus taking them for granted. It is allowing ourselves to be surprised again by the magnificence and mystery of the universe in which we live.

Nutrition: Your learning is directly concerned with taking good care of yourself. This includes making sure that you are eating nourishing meals and getting adequate sleep. It also involves meeting your social needs sufficiently...like seeing friends, boyfriend/girlfriend, family, recreation, pets, etc.

Attendance: Class starts when I arrive. Once I begin class, I lock the door to reduce distractions from late-comers that interferes with learning. This is its only purpose. If you arrive late and the door is closed, then quietly try the knob to make sure it is locked. If it is locked, then quietly leave and return next class. DO NOT KNOCK ON THE DOOR!
The college allows you to miss one (1) week of classes. I will permit you two (2) weeks. If you miss more than a total of two weeks, then you drop yourself from our class. This includes all reasons for non-attendance. (Exceptions: Verified court appearance or ECC team athletics.) If for some reason you miss more than two weeks of classes and do not officially drop yourself before the semester time limit for doing so, then you will lower your grade corresponding to the amount of accumulated absences at the end of the semester.

**Grades:** The grade for our class is primarily determined by test scores. Your participation and attendance definitely will affect your grade if, at the end of the semester, your average is on the border of the next higher grade level. If you have attended regularly and participated in class discussions, then you will have earned the higher grade by demonstrating your interest and learning through other methods additional to the test results. I encourage you to set your standards high.

**Extra Credit:** There will be one assigned activity and written response to it for which you can earn up to fifteen (15) points extra credit during the semester.

**Testing:** There are five (5) multiple-choice tests of about 60 questions each and a comprehensive final exam of about 120 questions. Approximately 85% to 90% of these questions come from the material in *Essentials of Psychology*. The rest cover various articles that I will give you during the semester and lecture notes on certain subjects. There is a lot of testing because studies have shown that the more people practice, then the better they learn the information.

You are required to take each test. There is an optional make-up test following the first three required exams. It usually is given within one week of receiving results on a given test. The higher of the two scores counts for your average on that particular test. After a make-up is scheduled for a specific test, it will not be offered again in the future.

In the event that you score below the "C" range on any of the first three tests, then you are required to retake that exam when it is offered the second time. If you score below a "C" on both the first and second attempts on any of the first three tests, then you are required to retake it open-book within one (1) week after receiving results from the make-up test. This is done in order to help you see where you are having difficulty with the information and to keep your average at a "C". The greatest number of points permitted on an open-book test is the middle of the "C" range. These opportunities to improve your test scores are made available as a means of reducing your anxiety about testing and to help place your focus on learning.

**Distractions to Learning:** There are many things that can interfere with our successfully educating ourselves. Some are preventable and two which I wish to call to your attention and will not allow are the following: (1) Studying during our class session for some other course and/or reading anything else that is not relevant to what we are discussing in the class at the moment; (2) Talking to your fellow classmates during a class session once we have started to discuss course material and/or any other behavior that interferes with the purpose of our learning together.

**Office Visit:** I make an office visit optionally available for each of you during the semester. This will involve about fifteen minutes during which time we can talk about anything that you are interested in discussing. I have found that by providing the opportunity for a few minutes of more personal contact that this definitely enhances learning together more effectively. I will send around a sign-up sheet in a few days for those who are interested.

**Class Operation and Your Needs:** It is essential that you both take care of your needs and that they not conflict with our class. For example, do not ask me and the rest of the class to wait to begin because you forgot a book, or you forgot to go to the restroom, etc. Simply take one of your absences for that day and, if you wish, appreciate how you are teaching yourself to develop greater personal responsibility.
The following include Psy. 5 course objectives:

Identify, compare and contrast various schools of thought across the history of modern western psychology as well as seeing its relationship to other behavioral sciences.

Have a comprehensive overview of scientific method in its various formats and how this applies to human experience and behavior.

Understand what is generally known about different parts of the brain and how these are correlated with various states of mind and associated action in the world; recognize the importance of the hormonal system and the general function of the body in comprehending our psychological experience and related behavior. Realize how this form of study is connected to the notion of biological evolution and its implications and the controversy with some aspects of our religious heritage.

Recognize what psychophysics has revealed regarding how vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell operate and are integrated into perception of our world of experience as well as how the senses of other animals (that have to date been studied) seem to work. Be aware of how this type of research connects with the ideas of biological evolution.

Identify the particular forms of learning, distinguish them from genetically programmed behavior, and describe how they apply to human and other animals.

Describe the cognitive processes including thought, memory, language, intelligence, and creativity.

Understand the various theories of motivation and emotion.

Describe the different theories of human development across the life span.

Recognize the different theories of personality and how they apply to the assessment of human experience and behavior.

Define what “abnormal” experience and behavior are from a western psychological perspective, differentiate the various classifications presently in use, and compare and contrast our societal notion of “abnormal” with other cultural perspectives concerning this issue.

Identify the various schools of psychotherapy in western psychology and compare and contrast these with other societies’ approaches to helping their communities with serious biopsychosocial problems.

Understand the nature of social psychology, its relationship to and difference from sociology and anthropology, and the pressing human problems that it can help us to solve more effectively today.

Comprehend that there is a complex nature existing among the dimensions of biological functions, mental processes, and social interactions affecting an overall predisposition towards greater propensity for either illness or health for the human being.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) include:

Students will develop the ability to list the steps of the scientific method and apply them to an example of psychological research.
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**Dr. Michael Braun**

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## COURSE OUTLINE

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<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>ASSIGNED STUDY MATERIALS &amp; DUE DATES</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb. 15-19*</td>
<td>Intro: The Psychology of Studying</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Feb. 22-26</td>
<td>Ch. 1: Introducing Psychology &amp; Research Methods</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Mar. 1-5</td>
<td>Ch. 6: Conditioning &amp; Learning</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Mar. 8-12</td>
<td>Ch. 2: The Brain &amp; Behavior</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Mar. 15-19</td>
<td>Ch. 4: Sensation &amp; Perception</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Mar. 22-26</td>
<td>Ch. 3: Human Development</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar. 29-Apr 2</td>
<td>Ch. 8: Intelligence, Cognition, Language, &amp; Creativity</td>
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| 9    | Apr. 12-16* | Ch. 5: States of Consciousness (Spring Break)  
                       Ch. 15: Social Behavior            |       |
| 10   | Apr. 19-23  | Ch. 9: Motivation & Emotion         |       |
| 11   | Apr. 26-30  | Ch. 14: Gender & Sexuality          |       |
| 12   | May 3-7     | Ch. 7: Memory                       |       |
| 13   | May 10-14   | Ch. 12: Psychological Disorders    
                       Ch. 13: Therapies                |       |
| 14   | May 17-21   | Ch. 11: Health, Stress & Coping     |       |
| 15   | May 24-28   | Ch. 16: Applied Psychology         |       |
| 16   | May 31-Jun 4|                                      |       |
| 17   | Jun. 7-11   | Class & Final Exam                  |       |

*Signifies one or more holidays in the week

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**Books:**

*Psychology: Modules For Active Living, 11th ed., by Dennis Coon & John Mitterer*

*Study Guide for Psychology, 11th ed., by Steven Hoekstra*

**Accessories:**

Scantron test form #882; notebook; #2 lead pencils with erasers, etc.