PSYC 3: PSYCHOLOGY OF THINKING (ONLINE)
El Camino College
Section 4194, Spring 2008

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Office Hours: M 2:00-2:30, W 2:00-2:30, Th 1:00-3:00
Online Office Hours: M 7:00 – 9:00 pm

GETTING STARTED: To participate in this course, you must first read the instructions and advice on this webpage:
http://www.elcamino.edu/faculty/ahimsel/psyc3online/index.html

ETUDES ACCESS
To gain access to the course website, follow these instructions:
1. Go to the ETUDES portal: . https://etudes-ng.fhda.edu/portal
2. Enter your User ID, which follows this format: firstname_lastname (all lowercase) e.g., amy_himsel
   Note: If you have trouble with your User ID, go to this site to verify it:
   https://secure.elcamino.edu/portal/logininfo/main.aspx?item=forgot
3. Enter your Password. By default, your password is the month and day of your birth. e.g., My birthday is January 14th, so my password would be 0114. You can change you password later.
4. Press Login.
5. Click on ECC PSYC 3 4914 AH SP08

REQUIRED READING & LISTENING
Texts to purchase:

Other requirements (free of charge):
• Lectures - PDF slides and podcast, click MODULES
• Articles - click RESOURCES
• Announcements (read each time you log in) - click ANNOUNCEMENTS

You will need Adobe Reader to access some required readings. Download the free software here: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html
COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on the psychological study of the nature of thinking. Its emphasis
is on the progressive development and refinement of critical thinking and writing skills.
These skills are expressed through the reading and writing of analytic and argumentative essays. Principles are applied from such areas as philosophy, psycholinguistics, and cognitive psychology. The logic of the scientific method and the analysis of experimental designs are also addressed. The key components of arguments are studied as well as various forms of fallacies in reasoning.

REQUIRED WORK
Start-Up Quiz: After reviewing the syllabus and announcements, take the 10-point Start-Up Quiz available in the TEST CENTER. You may take the quiz multiple times, and it must be completed by Sunday, 2/17 at 11:45pm. (10 points)

Writing Assignments: The bulk of your grade in this class is based on writing assignments, which include essays and discussion. There are four essay assignments listed at the end of this syllabus, and specific instructions for each essay will be posted in ASSIGNMENTS at a later date. Discussion participation occurs in the DISCUSSION AND PRIVATE MESSAGES area, under CLASS DISCUSSION. There will be at least five discussion assignments throughout the semester, some of which are listed on the course schedule and others which will be announced in the future. To receive credit for discussion, you will compile your posts in one document submitted as an assignment. More information will be provided at a later date. (250+ points, to be determined)

If you struggle with writing, get help! The ECC Writing Center is a wonderful, free resource for students: http://www.elcamino.edu/academics/humanities/writingcenter/ You can also get help from me during office hours. Please note that I do not read drafts over email, but I can answer specific questions. We can also read through your draft together during my on-campus office hours.

Exams: You will take three exams: two midterm exams and one cumulative final. Each midterm is worth 30 points, and the final is worth 50 points. You will have 45 minutes to take each midterm and 65 minutes to take the final. Each test may be taken twice, and each attempt will contain a different selection of questions. Questions appear one at a time and must be answered in the order in which they appear. It is not possible to stop or rewind the questions once you begin, so make sure to have a long stretch of uninterrupted time to complete the exams. The dates of the exams are listed at the end of this syllabus, and you are expected to clear your schedules accordingly. Click TEST CENTER. (110 points).

Class Wrap-Up: During the last week of class, you will be asked to reflect on the course in discussion. To receive credit, you will submit your post as an assignment as well. Details will be provided at a later date. (10 points)
A Note on Participation: In cases of borderline grades, I will take into consideration overall participation. In other words, it is to your benefit to engage actively in the course by making meaningful contributions in all areas of discussion. A side benefit is that you will also get more out of the course by doing so. It’s a win-win situation.

ADVICE
Online classes are challenging! Each semester, nearly 50% of online students drop. Don’t let this happen to you. Here are some tips for doing your best in this online course:
• Get started right away and don’t fall behind.
• Spend at least 9 hours on this class each week. At least!
• Create and stick to a regular work schedule for this class.
• Log in every weekday and at least once over the weekend.
• Check for new announcements and discussion posts each time you log in.
• Complete ALL writing assignments, including ALL discussions.
• Prepare a technology back-up plan in case your computer/internet fails you.
• Ask questions and contribute replies. Engage in the course.

COURSE POLICIES

Asking Questions. Please do not hesitate to ask questions. Just make sure you know how and where to ask them!
• Basic course questions: Post your question in the QUESTIONS forum.
  Click DISCUSSION AND PRIVATE MESSAGES, QUESTIONS, NEW TOPIC and write your question.
• Personal questions: Email me at amyhimsel@earthlink.net with your section number in the subject line.

Grading. It will be possible to earn a certain number of points in this class. Grades will be determined by the percentage of total points earned.
A = 90 – 100%
B = 80 – 89%
C = 70 – 79%
D = 60 – 69%
F = 0 – 59%

I am happy to speak with you about your exam or assignment scores throughout the semester. In fact, reviewing your work is a great way to learn how to improve your grade. If you wish to have a grade on written work reconsidered, you must first submit to me a written description your reasons, along with the assignment or essay question response. This gives you the chance to collect your thoughts and make your best case. In order to make sure the material is still fresh in our minds, you must submit your request within one week of receiving the grade.
Drop Policy. Students who have not completed the last three required assignments (including discussion) before F 5/9 will be dropped from the course.

Extra Credit. Students who complete a course evaluation survey will receive four extra credit points. Small extra credit opportunities may occasionally arise as part of other required course elements as well.

Missed Work. Writing assignments will be penalized 10% per each day late, including weekend days. Regarding exams, one missed midterm may be replaced by the cumulative final exam score (converted to a 30-point scale). The cumulative final exam may not be made up.

In the event of emergency circumstances (medical emergencies, car accidents, death of a close family member), the above policy may be modified if you discuss your situation with me in advance of the exam or the due date. In fairness to all students, I require you to verify the extreme circumstance with adequate documentation.

Academic Dishonesty. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any student who cheats, plagiarizes, or engages in any other form of academic dishonesty will receive a score of zero for that work and may be suspended from all classes as well. In an online course, cheating also includes plagiarism in discussion posts, taking the exam with other students, and/or informing other students of exam content. For more information, see pp. 25-26 of the ECC College Catalog.

http://www.elcamino.edu/admissions/catalog.asp

Online Communication. One great thing about online courses is the opportunity for dialogue with other students. However, online communication differs from face-to-face communication because we do not have the luxury of facial expressions or tone of voice to convey our ideas (although emoticons help). Unfortunately, misunderstandings are common in an online context. Do not take misunderstandings personally or respond out of anger. If you think you have been the target of someone else’s anger or disrespect, email me immediately. Do not allow yourself to be provoked by someone else’s post, because you will be held responsible for the content of your posts regardless of who started the conflict. Disrespectful communication of any kind will be handled according to the Standards for Student Conduct described in the ECC College Catalog (see p. 24).

Note: I have taught several online courses in the past year, and I have had only one incident of disrespectful communication. Let’s keep it that way!
COURSE SCHEDULE

All exams start on a Sunday at 7pm and end on a Monday at 9pm. All other work is due by 11:45 pm on the due date. Information about the timing requirements for discussion posts will be provided in ANNOUNCEMENTS at a later date.

Module 1: M 2/11 – Th 2/14
Critical Thinking and Psychology
M/P Ch. 1, S Ch. 1

Module 2: F 2/15 – Th 2/21
Falsifiability
S Ch. 2, Loftus (2004)
Start-Up Quiz (10 points): Due Su 2/17

Module 3: F 2/22 – Th 2/28
Language and Critical Thinking
M/P Ch. 2; S Ch. 3
Brief Argumentative Essay (20 points): Due M 2/25

Module 4: F 2/29 – Th 3/6
Credibility of Sources and Messages
M/P Ch. 3
Discussion

Module 5: F 3/7 – Th 3/13
Case Studies & Testimonials
S Ch. 4
Credibility Analysis Essay (30 points): Due M 3/10

MIDTERM #1 (50 points): Su 3/16 7pm – M 3/17 9 pm

The Anatomy and Varieties of Arguments
M/P Ch. 7, 10

Module 7: F 3/28 – F 4/4
Special Topic: Addiction
Readings on ETUDES
Discussion

Spring Break 4/5 - 4/13

Module 8: M 4/14 – F 4/25
Rhetorical Devices: Slanters & Fallacies
M/P Ch. 4, 5, 6

Discussion

Argumentative Essay #1 (50 points): Due M 4/21

MIDTERM #2 (50 points): Su 4/27 – M 4/28

Module 9: M 4/28 – Th 5/8
Correlation and Experimentation
S Ch. 5, 6, 7

Module 10: F 5/9 – Th 5/15
Special Topic: Homosexuality
Readings on ETUDES
Discussion

Module 11: F 5/16 – Th 5/22
Converging Evidence & Multiple Causation
S Ch. 8, 9

Argumentative Essay #2 (50 points): Due F 5/23

Module 12: F 5/23 – Th 5/29
Understanding Statistical Reasoning
S Ch. 10, 11
Discussion

CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM (50 points): Su 6/1 – M 6/2

Course Wrap-Up Discussion (10 points): M 6/2 – Th 6/4

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES:
Last Day to Add – F 2/22
Last Day to Drop and be eligible for a Refund – F 2/22
Last Day to Drop Without Notation on Permanent Record – F 3/7
Last Day to Drop with a "W" – F 5/9
Campus is closed on M 2/18 (Washington’s Day), and M 5/26 (Memorial Day)
Campus is open, but classes are not in session during Spring Break (4/7 – 4/11)

NOTE: I reserve the right to modify any part of this syllabus as the semester progresses. Changes to scheduled readings and/or due dates will be announced in class.

Get started as soon as possible. Good luck and have fun!