

Psychology 971: Sophomore Tutorial in Psychology Spring 2020

When/Where: Wednesday 9:45-11:45 am | William James Hall (WJH) B4

Course website: <https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/71917>

Office hours: Wednesday 11:45am-12:45pm WJH 802, or by Skype/Google Hangout

Instructor: Leah Bakst, Ph.D. (leahbakst@fas.harvard.edu)

I am a postdoctoral fellow at Boston University studying decision-making through the lens of the visual system. I got my PhD in neuroscience at the University of Washington, where I studied the visual system of monkeys.

As the instructor for this course, I am happy to meet or email with you about the course or psychology in general. The best way to reach me is via email. I will try to reply within 24 hours; if you have not heard from me within 24 hours, please feel free to re-send the email as they can occasionally get lost in the shuffle. Additionally, you are welcome to share any praise or concerns regarding the course with the Director of Undergraduate Studies (Professor Jill Hooley, jmh@wjh.harvard.edu), or the Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies (Dr. Katie Powers, kpowers@fas.harvard.edu).

Overview

The goal of the course is not for you to leave with any particular set of content knowledge, but to have developed the ability to think, read, and write like a psychologist. By the end of this course, you should be able to understand and critique the methods, results, and conclusions in primary research articles, and communicate this through both your speech and writing.

As you will see below, this course requires no textbooks. You will not have to take any tests. Each week, you will read ~3 journal articles and generate some written responses. These articles and your thoughts on them will be the basis for our weekly discussions.

Levels of Analysis

In order to fully understand psychological phenomena, we need to draw on three levels of analysis: **B**rain, **I**ndividual, and **G**roup. These different levels of analysis interact with each other – they are different aspects of the same phenomenon and affect each other. Using a **BIG** approach will serve you well in future courses and research, but will also help you synthesize information from different areas of psychology.

Readings for each week will focus on at least two of these levels:

1. **Brain:** this level addresses the *mechanisms* that underlie mental processes and behavior. This can range from genetic, to biochemical, to neural, to information processing.
 2. **Individual:** this level addresses the *content* of mental processes and behavior. This can range from beliefs to goals, motivations, and attitudes.
 3. **Group:** this level addresses the *effects* of the social surround. This can range from dyads, to small groups, to communities, all the way to culture.
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Course Policies

1. **Attendance** is mandatory. Any unexcused absence will result in a zero for your participation grade for that day. An excused absence (i.e. a medical or family emergency) will not incur a penalty as long as it is accompanied by the appropriate documentation from UHS or your Resident Dean. More than one absence – excused or unexcused – may not be possible. Class will start on time, and it is important that you are present at the start of class. You are allowed one late arrival (more than 5 minutes after the start of class is considered late), after which lateness will result in a zero for participation for that day.
2. **Late assignments.** One grade step will be deducted for each day late (e.g. a B+ will become a B). An assignment is late if I receive it after the deadline (e.g. by 9:59 pm for a 10:00 pm deadline). After 3 days, assignments will no longer be accepted and will result in a zero. The final draft of the Sophomore Essay may not be turned in late. However, the semester can get hectic, so you are allowed two 24-hour extensions during the semester. These extensions can be used for any assignment except for the final draft of the Sophomore Essay and student presentations. To extend a deadline, you must email me *before* the original deadline. No reason is necessary, but you have to let me know before the deadline.
3. **Meeting with me.** I will meet with each of you individually 3 times this semester (at minimum – feel free to meet with me more often!).
 - a. First week of class: everyone should schedule a 10-minute meeting with me the first week of class so I can get to know you!
 - b. Before proposals are due: to discuss ideas for your proposal.
 - c. After submitting your full draft: to discuss my feedback and make a plan for your final draft.
4. **Academic integrity and plagiarism.** Plagiarism or any other type of unethical academic behavior will not be tolerated. All work in this course must be based on your own ideas and thoughts. Whenever you use ideas that are not your own, give credit where it is due and cite accordingly. Also, see the section below on collaboration. Some useful tips: Direct quotes should be used rarely, if at all, but are permissible. In general, it is much more desirable in this course to describe other people's work (whether results, theories, arguments, etc.) in your own words and include a citation to the original source. For example, do not quote one or two sentences that describe the results of a study. Instead, demonstrate your understanding of the study by putting it in your own words and cite the original authors. To be clear: it is vital that you cite the source of any research finding, theory, or argument, even if you have rewritten it significantly in your own words. You are still drawing upon that original idea. When in doubt, err on the side of caution by citing the source. For more information on citation, you can consult the [Harvard Guide to Using Sources](#). For more information on academic integrity in general, please review the [FAS Handbook for Students](#).
5. **Collaboration.** Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates. For some assignments, collaboration is even required. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the results of your own research and writing. You must also adhere to standard citation practices (see academic integrity above). If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc.), you must acknowledge this assistance immediately following the body of the written assignment, just before the Reference section.
6. **Accessibility.** There are many options available! Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to present their letter from the Accessible

Education Office (AEO) and speak with me by the end of the second week of the term. Failure to do so may result in my inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although AEO may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation.

7. **Class etiquette.** You may eat and drink during class so long as it is not disruptive. ***Laptops/tablets/phones are not permitted. You are welcome to print out assigned readings and bring them with you, and I will provide a few copies for reference.***
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Grading:

30% Participation: one grade per class. Your participation grade will be determined by:

- **15% Class Participation:** Are you on time, engaged, and did you make an intellectual contribution to class? Are you acting respectfully towards others? When you present readings to the class, do you address all aspects of QALMRI? Do you generate discussion?
- **15% Discussion Starters:** Have you completed your reading and prepared your discussion starters? Do they address substantive points, or just superficial details? Did you submit on time?

30% Four Short Papers: 1-2 pages each.

1. QALMRI Analysis (5%)
2. Synthesize and extend (10%)
3. Revision of Paper 2 (10%)
4. Psychology in the media (5%)

40% Sophomore Essay: this will be broken down into multiple assignments during the second half of the semester.

1. Meeting and written proposal (2%)
 2. Outline and annotated bibliography (7%)
 3. Partial draft (5%)
 4. Full draft (8%)
 5. Final paper (15%)
 6. Mini-conference presentation (3%)
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Assignments:

Discussion Starters:

Each week you are required to post discussion starters to the course website, ~100 words each for all but one of the readings (you can choose which to snub!). This will form the basis for our in-class discussions. Submit to Canvas by 5pm on Tuesday before class so that I have enough time to give feedback. Here are some general ideas for discussion starters:

- Ask a clarifying question about the methods or results of a paper that would help you discuss it in class.
- Critique a paper on the basis of any aspect of QALMRI (e.g. the authors' conclusions do not follow from their results, alternative explanations are not considered, methodological flaws, etc.). Be civil in your critique and make a good-faith effort to understand the authors' reasoning.
- Identify a connection or tension between papers.

- Suggest future research to build upon questions left open by the papers.

Reading Presentations:

Each student will present one paper during the semester, 5-10 minutes long, in the QALMRI format. Please prepare your presentation as if for a naïve audience that has not read the paper (even though everyone will have read the paper!). If you choose to use slides, I recommend focusing on figures or graphs, rather than text. I will give an example during the first or second class. All students will need to sign up for one paper. You *do not* need to complete discussion starters on weeks you are presenting to the class.

Short Papers:

1. QALMRI Analysis: Select one reading for the week and summarize it using the QALMRI framework.
2. Synthesize and extend: Select and synthesize the results from two peer-reviewed empirical papers and propose future research that extends or reconciles the results from these papers. You have two options: 1) choose one paper from week 2 and one from outside literature, or 2) both papers can be from week 2.
3. Revision of Paper 2: This will be a major revision of paper 2. Based on feedback from me and your peers, you will rework your paper.
4. Psychology in the media: Psychology is often reported in major national and international media. This is great for the field, as it helps to communicate our work to a much larger audience. At the same time, a lot can be lost in translation: journalists often draw conclusions that are not warranted from the results. For this assignment, choose a recent newspaper article (or video segment from a news show) that reports on a finding from psychology. You will also read the original journal article that it cites. In your paper, summarize the main points and conclusions of the newspaper article, explain what, if anything, the journalist got wrong. This could include inaccurate descriptions of the methods, misinterpretations of the underlying theories, or inappropriate generalizations of the conclusions. If the journalist was pretty faithful to the original, point out problems shared by both the newspaper and journal articles.

All short papers are due the day after class (Thursday by 11:59pm).

Sophomore Essay:

This is a 15-page paper (not including the title page, abstract, or references) that serves as a capstone to this course. The essay must do the following:

- Review the relevant literature on a specific psychological research question
- Map out specific alternatives to this question
- Propose a specific research question that could be empirically tested
- Design an experiment (or experiments) to test these alternatives
- Make predictions about the results
- Discuss the implications of the proposed research

In the process of writing the final essay, you will complete the following

1. Meeting and written proposal: Schedule a meeting with me during the week of March 23rd. Come prepared with two ideas for your paper topic and one or two general review papers about both topics. We will discuss these and evaluate them together. By the end of the week of our meeting, you must turn the conclusions of our discussion into a written proposal. This should be about 2 pages in length, and convey the QALMRI of

your paper. You must also provide the citations for five relevant primary research articles.

2. Outline and annotated bibliography: The annotated bibliography is intended to help you get a good overview of your research area and build up your reference list. You must include a minimum of 15 research articles, and a brief summary of each article with its relevance for your essay. You must also provide an outline of your essay. This is designed to help you organize your thoughts and formulate your arguments.
3. Partial draft: 5-7 pages, double spaced, partial draft of your paper. This will help you start translating your ideas from outline to paper. You may turn in any consecutive 5-7 page section of your essay. This must be embedded in the outline of your paper. Please schedule a meeting with me or the writing fellow to discuss the feedback I'll give you.
4. Full draft: 15 pages, double spaced.
5. Final paper: After feedback on all of the prior stages of your essay, you will prepare a polished 15-page final paper. The paper should use in-text citations and a reference list (all in APA format). Important note: The Undergraduate Office handles the submission of the Sophomore Essay so I cannot grant any extensions or exceptions. The Office rarely grants extensions and only in extreme circumstances; they require advanced documentation of a serious issue from a Resident Dean.
6. Mini-conference presentation: At the end of the semester, prepare a ~10-minute slide presentation of your final paper. Plan to present for ~7 minutes, and leave ~3 minutes for questions. You must show graphs displaying the data expected under each alternative you consider in your essay. Slides must be submitted to me by 5:00pm Tuesday 4/28.

Resources:

Required Texts:

1. [Writing for Psychology at Harvard](#) includes important guidelines for writing generally and for your Sophomore Essay specifically. Use this material as a reference throughout the semester. We will also discuss it in class.
2. American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.), Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press.

QALMRI: This is a framework to summarize, interpret, and critique research. We will be using this approach to discuss and write about research throughout the semester. I will introduce this on the first day of class.

Library training session: The Psychology Undergraduate Office will email you about a required library session in a Harvard library, in which you will receive information about how to use PsychInfo (a specialized psychology search engine) and other helpful research tools. This 1-hour session will occur outside of class.

Meeting with Departmental Writing Fellow: Asma Ghani is the Departmental Writing Fellow. You can meet with her to get help on writing including generating paper ideas, structuring papers, reviewing drafts, and providing feedback. You can schedule an appointment by emailing her at aghani@g.harvard.edu. If you meet with her before turning in the Sophomore Essay Partial Draft, you will receive extra credit (5% toward your grade on that assignment).

Writing Center at Harvard: They offer appointments as well as drop-in help with writing. Find out more: <https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/>.

Course Calendar:

Week/Date	Topic	Assignment Due
1 Feb 5 th	How to Read & Discuss	Pre-class survey 10-minute intro meetings this week
2 Feb 12 th	How to Study & Learn	Reading presentation survey Discussion starters QALMRI Analysis (due 2/13)
3 Feb 19 th	Writing Workshop I	Synthesize & Extend Paper (due 2/20)
4 Feb 26 th	Mindsets & Stereotype Threat	Discussion starters Peer review Synthesize & Extend (due 2/27)
5 Mar 4 th	Love	Discussion starters Revision of Synthesize & Extend (due 3/5)
6 Mar 11 th	Eating	Discussion starters Psychology & the media (due 3/12)
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8 Mar 25 th	Writing Workshop II	Discussion starters Proposal meeting this week Proposal (due 3/26)
9 Apr 1 st	Happiness	Discussion starters Outline & Annotated bibliography (due 4/2)
10 Apr 8 th	Morality	Discussion starters Partial draft (due 4/9)
11 Apr 15 th	Prejudice	Discussion starters Feedback meeting this week
12 Apr 22 nd	Eyewitnesses	Discussion starters Full draft (due 4/23)
13 Apr 29 th	Conclusions	Mini-conference presentations FINAL ESSAY DUE: May 4, 2020 by 4 pm

Reading list by week:

UNIT 1: The Science of College

Week 1: Welcome & Introductions/How to Read and Discuss

- Gray, K., & Wegner, D.M. (2008). The Sting of Intentional Pain. *Psychological Science*, 19(12), 1260-1262. (I)
- Hollander, J. (2002). Learning to Discuss: Strategies for Improving the Quality of Class Discussion. *Teaching Sociology*, 30, 317-327.
- Kosslyn, S.M. & Rosenberg, R.S. (2001). How to Read, Critically Evaluate, and Write Research Papers (Appendix B, pp. 605-610). *Psychology: The brain, the person, the world*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Week 2: How to Study & Learn

- Calderwood, C., Ackerman, P.L., & Conklin, E.M. (2014). What else do college students “do” while studying? An investigation of multitasking. *Computers & Education*, 75, 19-29. (I)
- Mueller, P.A., & Oppenheimer, D.M. (2014). The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop notetaking. *Psychological Science*, 25, 1-10. (B)
- Sana, F., Weston, T., & Cepeda, N.J. (2013). Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers. *Computers & Education*, 62, 24-31. (B,I,G)

Week 3: Writing Workshop I

- A Brief Guide to Writing the Psychology Paper.
<http://writingproject.fas.harvard.edu/pages/brief-guides-disciplines>.
- Bem, D.J. (2003). Writing the empirical journal article. In J. Darley, M. Zanna, & H. Roediger, III (Eds.), *The Complete Academic: A career guide* (2nd ed.) (pp. 185-219). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. *Note: read the section “writing your article,” pages 4-11.
- Carson, S.H., Fama, J.M., Clancy, K., Ebert, J., & Tierney, A. (2012) *Writing for psychology at Harvard: A guide for psychology concentrators*. Cambridge: The President and Fellows of Harvard University.

Week 4: Mindsets & Stereotype Threat

- Cohen, G.L., Garcia, J., Purdie-Vaughns, V., Apfel, N., & Brzustoski. (2009). Recursive processes in self-affirmation: Intervening to close the minority achievement gap. *Science*, 324(5925): 400-403. (I)
- Crum, A.J., Corbin, W.R., Brownell, K.D., & Salovey, P. (2011). Mind over milkshakes: mindsets, not just nutrients, determine ghrelin response. *Health Psychology*, 30, 424-429. (I)
- Yeager, D.S., & Dweck, C.S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, 47, 302-314. (I)

UNIT 2: Decision Making

Week 5: Love

- Bolmont, M., Cacioppo, J.T., & Cacioppo, S. (2014). Love is in the gaze: An eye-tracking study of love and sexual desire. *Psychological Science*, 25, 1749-1756. (I)

- Diamond, L.M. (2004). Emerging perspectives on distinctions between romantic love and sexual desire. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 116-119. **(B)**
- Whitechurch, E.R., Wilson, T.D., & Gilbert, D.T. (2011) He loves me, he loves me not: The effects of uncertainty on romantic attraction. *Psychological Science*, 22, 172-175. **(I,G)**

Week 6: Eating

- Boothby, E.J., Clark, M.S., & Bargh, J.A. (2014) Shared experiences are amplified. *Psychological Science*, 25, 2209-16. **(I,G)**
- Hare, T.A., Malmaud, J., & Rangel, A. (2011). Focusing attention on the health aspects of foods changes value signals in vmPFC and improves dietary choice. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 31(30), 11077-11087. **(B,I)**
- Wansink, B., Painter, J.E., & North, J. (2005). Bottomless bowls: why visual cues of portion size may influence intake. *Obesity Research*, 13, 93-100. **(I)**

Week 8: Writing Workshop II

- Pinker S. (2014). The Curse of Knowledge. *The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century*.
- Pinker S. (2014). Arcs of Coherence. *The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century*. This is a long chapter, feel free to skim.
- McGuire, W.J. (1997). Creative hypothesis generating in psychology: Some useful heuristics. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 48(1), 1-30. Skim; read main headings.

Week 9: Happiness

- Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2008). Spending money on others promotes happiness. *Science*, 319, 1689-2688. **(I)**
 - Note: Main article required, supporting online material optional.
- Ruedy, N.E., Moore, C., Gino, F., & Schweitzer, M.E. (2013). The cheater's high: the unexpected affective benefits of unethical behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 105, 531-548.
- Bastian, B., Kuppens, P., Hornsey, M. J., Park, J., Koval, P., & Uchida, Y. (2012). Feeling bad about feeling sad: The role of social expectancies in amplifying negative mood. *Emotion*, 12, 69-80. **(G)**

UNIT 3: Law

Week 10: Morality

- Cushman, F., Gray, K., Gaffey, A., Mendes, W.B. (2012). Simulating murder: The aversion to harmful action. *Emotion*, 12(1):2-7. **(B,I,G)**
- Knobe, J. (2003). Intentional action and side effects in ordinary language. *Analysis*, 63(279), 190-194. **(I)**
- Moran, J.M., Young, L.L., Saxe, R., Lee, S.M., O'Young, D., Mavros, P.L., & Gabriele, J.D. (2011). Impaired theory of mind for moral judgment in high-functioning autism. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108(7): 2688-2692. **(I)**

Week 11: Prejudice

- Buttelmann, D., & Böhm, R. (2014). The ontogeny of the motivation that underlies in-group bias. *Psychological Science*, 25, 921-927. **(G)**

- Correll, J., Park, B., Judd, C.M., & Wittenbrink, B. (2002). The police officer's dilemma: Using ethnicity to disambiguate potentially threatening individuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 1314-1329. (G)
- Kinzler, K.D., & Spelke, E.S. (2011). Do infants show social preferences for people differing in race? *Cognition*, 119(1), 1-9. (I,G)

Week 12: Eyewitnesses

NOTE: This week you will be assigned to read only **one** of the following articles. In discussion you will explain the study and its findings to the classmates who did not read your article. You may want to practice explaining it using the QALMRI framework before coming to class.

- Forgas, J.P., Laham, S.M., & Vargas, P.T. (2005). Mood effects on eyewitness memory: Affective influences on susceptibility to misinformation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 41, 574-588. (I)
- Loftus, E.F., & Palmer, J.C. (1974). Reconstruction of automobile destruction: An example of the interaction between language and memory. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 13, 585-589. (I)
- Papailiou, A.P., Yokum, D.V., & Robertson, C.T. (2015). The novel New Jersey eyewitness instruction induces skepticism but not sensitivity. *PLOS ONE*, 10(12): e0142695. (G)