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| stack_logo_gold_navy | Syllabus – Fall 2023  PSY 370 010 MC2023 Environmental Psychology  Fall 2023: MWF: 9:00 AM–9:50 AM  Dobbs 100 |

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Robinson Office: Tarpley 204

Office Hours: Make an appointment on https://calendly.com/docrobreinhardt/15min

E-mail: Christopher.Robinson@reinhardt.edu

Required Textbook:

Mark, G. (2023). *Attention span: A groundbreaking way to restore balance, happiness and productivity.* New York: Hanover Square Press.

Steg., L., & de Groot, J. (2019). *Environmental psychology: an introduction* (2nd Edition). New York: Wiley.

Iclicker

**Course Description and Objectives:** As the population of the world rapidly expands, the demand for food, water, shelter, fuel, and consumer goods rises resulting in increasing pressure on environmental resources. We face growing concerns about global warming, air and water pollution, deforestation, and species extinction. Environmental problems are caused by people’s behavior and will be solved by changes in people’s behavior. In this course, we will explore how psychological theories and research can help to address environmental problems and improve outcomes for both people and environments.

Prerequisite: PSY 101.

*In the Final Analysis, Each Person is Responsible for Their Own Education*

Course learning outcomes:

1. Students will be able to develop and research a way in which a culture’s norms influence beliefs and behaviors.

2. Students will be able to take a more critical attitude towards the material and cultural world in which they live.

3. Students will be able to discuss different ways that cultures influence mental health.

**Purpose of the Course:** This course explores ways in which our physical and cultural environments can influence our behavior, our mental health, and the way we think about the world. In some ways, this course is a companion to abnormal psychology. If abnormal psychology is about ways that an individual can be healthy or sick, this course will focus on ways an environment can encourage healthy or unhealthy behaviors.

Your Grade: Your grade will depend on displaying both competence and eloquence. Competence means displaying that one comprehends and can use the material learned in class, and eloquence means that one can assemble evidence and lead the audience to a particular conclusion. These skills will be measured by quizzes, three (3) paper/alternative assignments, three exams, and professionalism obligations.

**Competence**

The purpose of the class periods will be to explore an area with the aim of finding topics that you want to learn more about. These twin goals are reflected in the grading.

Tests: In order to promote learning factual information about each of the main areas of cognitive psychology, you will have quizzes, exams, and a cumulative final exam. Each quiz will be a mixture of multiple choice, single answer, and short answer questions.

Since quiz questions will come from the textbook, lectures, and any assigned readings, if you wish to pass this course, you should both attend class and read the assignments. Quiz questions will test both your knowledge of the most important concepts and the ability to make clear inferences from the information presented in the textbook and lectures.

In the final analysis, you are responsible for your education. The exams and assignments are designed to allow you to know how you are doing in the class. I will give a study guide for each exam. The main grades in this course will reflect your developing understanding of the course.

**Eloquence**

In order to promote self-directed learning, communication, and thinking skills, you will have three “written” assignments. With these projects, you will take a topic, research how to quantify it, and present the research that exists on the topic. I have provided examples of these as papers online. I will upload a grading rubric, but in general your paper will be graded on grammatical correctness and on the research presented. Any plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with Reinhardt’s academic integrity policy.

The assignments are designed to give practice in explaining or persuading the reader of some fact. You want to give the reader reasons to believe what you are saying. You will be graded on whether or not your assignment clearly explains something or persuades the reader. This is a skill that you will need when you are in the professional world.

As you will hear me say repeatedly, “This is not my paper.” This is your paper and I encourage you to consider posting it to a public site (whether your social media or otherwise). The idea here is to emphasize that you should not consider the assignment between your professor and you, but rather your professor helping you develop your knowledge and skills.

Since there are multiple ways to express your ideas, you can turn your products in as either papers, give a presentation, make a video, or another format. If you draw, photograph, scrapbook, sew, video, write and perform a relevant song, or have another skill you can apply these. The product must be accurate, thoughtful, and relevant to the course, but the form need not be a paper. When grading, one of my questions will be whether the project has a clearly articulatable intellectual content.

Paper/Project:

If you are turning in a paper, papers must be at least 500 words and properly written in APA format, including APA-style in-text citations and reference page. If you would like basic feedback, you can go to the Writing Center, or you can also give me a copy of your paper and meet with me to discuss your paper. Give the time limitations, you will need to submit your paper to me at least two weeks before the due date if you want me to read it.

If you turn in an alternative assignment, you need:

i. Clearly articulatable intellectual content. This is 60% of the grade.

ii. It needs to be of a quality that I can use as illustration in future classes. The execution and effort expended comprise 40% of the grade. The effort needs to at least be equivalent to what it would take to study for an exam or write a paper.

iii. If it is a painting or illustration, you need a 150 word museum-esque statement describing your project.

iv. It must be a project that was either begun or substantially revised for this assignment.

v. If you just wish to turn in a Powerpoint, it will be graded as a Powerpoint. That is, it must have appropriate images, transitions, animations, etc.

vi. If you wish to turn in a presentation, you must present your presentation to me.

If you choose to research the same topic for all three papers/projects, you will be given a chance to “revise, expand, resubmit.” This means that you have to revise your paper taking into account feedback, expand the paper to make it the length of the later assignments, and resubmit it. You will have to turn in your assignment three times.

**Professionalism**

**Class**: In this class, I will insist on a level of professionalism. Indeed, I think learning how to be professional is one of the goals of a university education, and so the policies are designed to give you practice interacting in professional environments, both in person and online. Many of these rules can be considered simple curtesy (e.g., not interfering with someone else’s education by being a distraction), but others relate more specifically to interacting in business and professional environments (e.g., learning “soft-skills”).

In this class, we are going to practice intellectual hygiene. By that, I mean that we are going to encourage putting away distracting devices; take your headphones out of your ears, put your phone away.

Because of the way the classes are set up, the main outcome of the course is your grade. This means that in order to hold you accountable for professional behavior, part of your grade in the class depends on your professionalism. Since the bulk of your grade should reflect the content and skills of the course, the professionalism grade is primarily a negative. I have on this syllabus my expectations. If you fail to follow one of them, I will give you a reminder, and after that deduct points from your final grade. Violations of the professionalism policy (e.g., with inappropriate cell phone use or unprofessional emails) will result in a cumulative deduction of points, starting with 1, 2, and then up in a Fibonacci sequence off your final grade.

**Emailing**: If you have any questions that aren’t answered on this syllabus or about the material or want to discuss an issue more in depth, you can send a professional email or could also meet if we need to. Even though many people send emails from their phones, I tend to view student/professor emails as a rather formal form of communication. So, write your emails the way you remember being taught how to write a professional letter when you were younger (e.g., “Dear Dr. X, my name is . . . and I am in your XX class . . .”) and a salutation and name at the end. You need to put your class in your email. You are in college, so I will assume that your email includes proper spelling and punctuation. I will try to answer emails within 48 hours of receiving them. If you haven’t received a response by that time, you should send me a follow up email. If you have never written a professional email, here’s a good third-party site telling you how: <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Formal-Email>

I will also upload an email template.

**Attendance:** Attendance is highly encouraged, and regular studying and active participation will be rewarded. Every day, I will ask review questions, class participation questions, and other sorts of questions to enhance your learning and understanding of the material. Review questions will come from the text and the notes, and will be graded on correctness; the other questions will be graded on participation. With these points, you can earn up to 50 points added to final grade before it is averaged.

You must bring your phone and be present for your in-class quiz points. I cannot mark you present if you don’t have your phone, if you come in after the questions are asked, if your phone malfunctions, or runs out of batteries.

In order to allow everyone a positive class experience, I have several rules about respecting your fellow students and not disrupting others’ learning environment. Since active participation (including bringing pencil and paper to class) and studying are being rewarded, failure to follow these in-class guidelines will cause you to lose your points for that day. Respect your fellow students and by turning off cell-phone sounds, and take care of snacks (especially that crinkling noise that many packages make) and going to the bathroom ahead of time.

As with exams, late assignments are docked 10 points per day.

**Grading Policies for All Assignments:**

The grading policy for the writing assignments mirrors generally expected university requirements.

A: Excellent; denotes distinguished mastery of the course material.: comprehensible, all words spelled correctly, evidence for claims clearly documented, argument clearly demonstrated.

B: Good: minor problems, some misspelled words, references improper, paper not fully substantiate argument or difficult to follow

C: Average: more than minor problems, structural issues in paper,

D: Poor; denotes minimally acceptable achievement, didn’t follow directions

F: clearly substandard work, didn’t turn in

**Grades:** Papers/Projects = 300 points, Exams = 300 points Final Exam: 100 points

**Grading Scale:** A = 90–100, B = 80–89, C = 70–79, D = 60–69, F < 60

**Extra Credit:** There are three ways to earn extra credit in this class, and they all have to do with correcting my lectures or expanding our knowledge.

First, if you find any grammatical errors on my slides and you are the first one to turn in the correction, you will receive a point on a test grade. Send this correction to me with the subject line: Slide Correction. In the email, tell me where and what the correction is.

Second, I will often say, usually in response to a question, “That’s interesting, look it up for extra credit.” If I say this, find an academic research article (*not* simply a web page from a web search) on the topic, summarize the article in how it answers your question, and email the summary and a copy of the article to me.If you don’t know what an academic research article is, come and see me or visit our wonderful library staff and they will help you. These are usually worth 5 points on a test grade, but any grade determination is at my discretion. These are due within one week of when they are announced.

Third, if I say something in class that you believe is factually false, but I do not think that it is, you can ask for a wager. If the person making the wager brings proof that I am mistaken to the next class period, they will get 3 points added to their final grade. If I was correct, they will lose a point on their final grade. This does not apply to cases where there is somewhat contradictory data but I say my reading is one interpretation, or to cases where I am using round numbers (e.g., around 6 months).

**Schedule (subject to change as conditions warrant)**

Paper/Project Due Dates

These are at roughly week increments. If you read a chapter a week you will be on top of the course.

Marks: Introduction: Breaking the Myths of Attention 11

Marks: Chapter 1 Your Limited Cognitive Resources 31

Marks: Chapter 2 The Battle for Your Attention 48

Marks: Chapter 3 Types of Attention 65

Marks: Chapter 4 Why, How and How Much We Multitask 87

Marks: Chapter 5 The Consequences of Constant Interruption 110

Marks: Chapter 6 The Rise of the Internet and the Decline of Focus 133

Marks: Chapter 7 How AI and Algorithms Influence Your Thoughts 150

Marks: Chapter 8 Our Digital Social World 168

Marks: Chapter 9 Personality and Self-Regulation 186

Marks: Chapter 10 Happiness and Our Devices 204

Marks: Chapter 11 How the Media Conditions Our Attention 222

Marks: Chapter 12 Free Will, Agency and Our Attention 245

Marks: Chapter 13 Achieving Focus, Rhythm and Balance 261

1 Environmental Psychology: History, Scope, and Methods by Linda Steg, Agnes E. van den Berg, and Judith I. M. de Groot

2 Environmental Risk Perception by Gisela Böhm and Carmen Tanner

4 Environmental Stress by Elena Bilotta, Uchita Vaid, and Gary W. Evans

5 Scenic Beauty: Visual Landscape Assessment and Human Landscape Perception by Mari S. Tveit, Åsa Ode Sang, and Caroline M. Hagerhall

6 Health Benefits of Nature by Agnes E. van den Berg,Yannick Joye, and Sjerp de Vries

7 Restorative Environments by Yannick Joye and Agnes E. van den Berg

8 Ambivalence Towards Nature and Natural Landscapes by Agnes E. van den Berg and Cecil C. Konijnendijk

9 Human Dimensions of Wildlife by Maarten H. Jacobs, Jerry J. Vaske, Tara L. Teel, and Michael J. Manfredo

10 Children and the Natural Environment by Karin Tanja‐Dijkstra, Jolanda Maas, Janke van Dijk‐Wesselius, and Agnes van den Berg

11 Appraising and Designing Built Environments that Promote Well‐Being and Healthy Behaviour by Robert Gifford and Lindsay J. McCunn

12 Urban Environmental Quality by Mirilia Bonnes, Massimiliano Scopelliti, Ferdinando Fornara, and Giuseppe Carrus

13 Environment and Quality of Life by Goda Perlaviciute and Linda Steg

15 How Cues in the Environment Affect Normative Behaviour by Siegwart Lindenberg

17 Values and Pro‐Environmental Behaviour by Judith I.M. de Groot and John Thøgersen

18 Social Norms and Pro‐Environmental Behaviour by Kees Keizer and P. Wesley Schultz

Three Paper/Project Due Dates: you have to turn something in this day—either a new paper or a RER version of an earlier one. I need a hard copy of any papers.

Exam Days

8 September

11 October

Final Exam: TBA

Project Due Days

11 September

16 October

20 November

**General Administrative Policies\***

**This section contains policies that apply to all courses and are set forth by the University. All policies are detailed in the Academic Catalog (and those policies shall apply).**

University Covid 19 Statement: Important: All students, faculty, staff and administration at Reinhardt University are subject to changes in policies if mandated by the State of Georgia. Current policies and procedures can be found at: https://www.reinhardt.edu/back-to-campus

If you have any questions, please refer to the website or contact Reinhardt University at the numbers below.

Campus Nurse within the Student Health Center

nurse@reinhardt.edu, 770-720-5542 or [www.reinhardt.edu/nurse](http://www.reinhardt.edu/nurse).

Public Safety

Non-Emergency Phone: 770.720.5789

Emergency Phone: 770.720.5911

[publicsafety@reinhardt.edu](mailto:publicsafety@reinhardt.edu)

Dean of Students

deanofstudents@reinhardt.edu, 770-720-5540

Office of the Provost

provost@reinhardt.edu, 770-720-9102

College Policy on Attendance: In accord with the Reinhardt College Academic Catalog, regular attendance at scheduled classes and examinations is each student’s obligation. Regarding excused absences as defined in the Catalog it is the responsibility of the student to have the excuse approved by the instructor before the absence and to complete all of the assignments. Emergency absences as defined in the Catalog are excused at the discretion of the instructor and only if the student makes his or her situation known immediately upon returning to class.

College Policy on Withdrawals: If a student drops a course during the first week of classes, the course will not be reflected on the transcript. After this, students may formally withdraw from a course and receive a grade of W up until the date set in the Academic Calendar. It is the student’s responsibility to complete the necessary steps to officially withdraw from the course. This institution does not have instructors complete “administrative withdrawals” for non-attendance. Therefore, if it is your intention to drop a class, you need to complete the required steps to formally withdraw from the course. The student is responsible for understanding the implications that may occur from dropping one or more courses (examples: financial aid, housing, health and/or auto insurance eligibility, and others).

Notice of ADA: If you have a disability which may require assistance or accommodation, or if you have any questions related to any accommodations for testing, note takers, readers, etc.; please speak with me as soon as possible.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Academic Support Office (ASO). ASO is located in the basement of Lawson Building. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper ASO letters.

Center for Student Success: The Center for Student Success (CSS) is located at the lower floor of Lawson, room 035. CSS offers free peer and faculty tutoring for all subjects. For appointments, go to Reinhardt webpage and click Center for Student Success.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty and penalties as defined in the Academic Catalog will be strictly enforced. All acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration.

All students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, and to abide by the Reinhardt Honor Code. Also, all students are expected to be familiar with the Reinhardt policy on academic dishonesty stated in the University Catalog and in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism (using the ideas and phrases of others without crediting them, therefore claiming those ideas and phrases as your own) will not be tolerated in this course or on this campus. To avoid such academic dishonesty, you must use a citation (footnote or in text) for all ideas drawn from your reading and research, including research in encyclopedias and online, even when you have restated those ideas in your own words.

Consequences for cheating or plagiarizing:

a) I expect all students to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Acts of academic dishonesty include plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration, and falsification. Working together with classmates is acceptable and even encouraged, but all assignments submitted for a grade should reflect your own efforts (and writing). It is fine to discuss questions and topics with your peers, is it academic dishonesty to copy someone’s work (this includes information from the internet that is not properly credited). The penalty for academic misconduct in this course varies from a 0 on the assignment to a failing grade in the course, depending on the severity of the offense and the student’s history of academic conduct. Disciplinary action may be taken in addition to the academic penalty if the instructor, department, or college feels such action is warranted.

b) The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will be notified of actions taken against students who violate the academic integrity policy, which may result in further consequences, including designation of “academic warning” on your official transcript, academic suspension, or expulsion for academic reasons.

Additional Administrative Policies

This section contains policies that apply to this course and instructor. My aim in this section is to help you understand my expectations and motivations.

As the course instructor, I take my responsibilities to you very seriously. I want to help you succeed at Reinhardt University. I try to be available to you in many different ways.

Sometimes, there is no substitute for a conversation. I encourage you to see me during office hours or to schedule an appointment if you are having difficulty with any of the course material, want to clarify anything or just want to talk about the class or school in general. I am usually easy to find or get in touch with (email, visit).

Email: As a professional, it is important to be able to communicate effectively through email. This is a formal communication that produces a trail of documentation. All messages should come through your official Reinhardt student email. The subject line should reference the course and content (e.g. PSY101: Homework question). I try to respond quickly, but do reserve some times for my family and personal obligations. Messages that I receive before 4pm will usually receive a response within 24 hours. Messages received in the evening may receive a response the next business day (so, on the weekend, messages may not receive responses until Monday). Quick disclaimer: Grades will not be sent through e-mail and please retain any and all correspondence (e.g. copies of e-mail messages) for your own records.

Professionalism: One of my goals is to help you get ready for the next step in your professional journey. With this in mind, I want to give you a safe space in which to learn the expectations that you will encounter in your career as well as to help you polish your newly emerging skills. For example, understanding the culture of our workplace, meeting expectations, communicating competently, and building credibility are important parts of being successful in today's workplace, regardless of the type of workplace you ultimately join. Some of these expectations are really important to me and I want to highlight a few of these points.

Make up Policy and Late Work: When I am submitting a proposal to present at a professional conference, they have a submission deadline. Even if the server crashes, my paper is not considered if it was not submitted before the cutoff. Deadlines are an important part of professionalism. Because I understand that life is unpredictable and things go wrong, I have tried to build in some flexibility to all of the classes that I teach. For example, sometimes I will offer a term paper to replace a grade or I drop the lowest test grade. In this course, I have tried to provide multiple opportunities to earn points. Basically, you can expect to work steadily through the entire semester. I set it up this way with you in mind. All submissions are expected at the beginning of the class period when it is due. Papers should be submitted electronically through the Assignments section of Canvas. Please use .doc, .docx, or .pdf formats. I cannot read Apple Pages files. If something has gone awry on the day that something is due, you will want to email your work as soon as possible, and get in touch with me as soon as you can to get things worked out. This is a time when you want to follow up with a personal conversation so that I am in the best position to help you. I have a good deal more flexibility before an assignment is due rather than after the fact. So, the sooner we talk, the better. (That is a professional way to handle the situation).

Attendance: In the workplace, the expectation is that you will be present and prepared for all meetings. You will find that a considerable part of your workday is spent in meetings of various types. Sometimes, you know that you will not be able to be at work on a certain day or you will not be able to attend a meeting. When this is the case for me, I notify people (such as my class or my boss) and I make arrangements so that my absence minimizes the impact on others (students, colleagues, team members). If the unexpected happens, it is my professional responsibility to make contact as soon as possible. If you know in advance that you are going to miss a class, you should contact me in advance (and not let this duty fall to someone else). In cases of an emergency, contact me as soon as possible. The best way to handle this situation is to send me an email. Your message does not have to include personal or private details. The purpose of the contact is to let me know that you will not be there. So, excused absences are communicated in advance and emergency absences are communicated as soon as possible.

Class etiquette: Every professional culture has formal and/or informal expectations during meetings - both regularly scheduled class periods and individual meetings outside of class. Ideally, meetings are a time for a group to come together to get important work done. In my experience, meetings that are most productive require a few key ingredients. First, good meetings start on-time. I usually plan to arrive a few minutes early so that I have time to settle in, focus, and get set to start. It is important to not only be present, but also to be prepared. Do I have my notebook, computer, papers, etc? What is this meeting about? And, I always have a way to take notes. Finally, before starting a meeting, I check my phone. Professional cultures create norms for use of technology in meetings based on a number of variables including meeting length, objectives, and attendees. Our meetings are relatively brief. So, it is only in extenuating situations that I would have my phone accessible and then it would be on silent. If there were an emergency that I had to deal with, I would step out of the room. I would not use this time to text, email, tweet, etc. This behavior would be considered unprofessional (and reflected in the course grade).

Students are expected to arrive on time and remain for the full class period. All members of the class are expected to treat each other in a respectful, civil manner – particularly when engaging in activities related to this course. I encourage every student to actively participate throughout the term. We will be covering some very important issues and there will be some very intense discussions. While I encourage everyone to share their opinions, this forum will not be used to attack or belittle anyone’s position on any topic. Disruptive or abusive students will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. Subsequent problems may lead the student to be dropped from the course. Deductions will be taken for excessive absences and disruptions (such as leaving class, cell phones, sleeping, etc.).

Academic honesty: One issue that I deal with every semester is addressing academic honesty. This includes cheating and plagiarism. I consider this a very important topic. We live in a technological world where endless amounts of information can be copied with just a few keystrokes, answers are available on your phone, and papers can be bought and sold. Ultimately, I take this issue so seriously because it is a critical measure of your readiness for the professional world. In the next phases of your professional life, your work will directly impact the well-being of others. Your academic integrity is a direct reflection of how seriously you are willing to take this responsibility.

In my professional culture, taking someone else’s ideas without giving them credit is stealing. Ironically, giving them the credit they rightfully deserve actually earns me more points on the respect scale because it is viewed as good background research. When writing research reports or other “official” documents (e.g., any assignment submitted for points), you cannot use the structure or the wording generated by another person without giving them proper credit. What makes this standard especially challenging for students is that -- in contrast to styles used in other academic disciplines (e.g., MLA, Chicago) -- APA style actively discourages quoting. Instead, scientific writers summarize and paraphrase the original work in their own words, then provide an appropriate citation in the text to indicate where the original ideas for the content came from. Doing this effectively, without infringing on the intellectual property rights of the original author, requires practice and conscious effort. It is, however, a skill that you can master.

The reality is that you will use material created by others as the basis for your own writing in this class. When you do, following the rules below will minimize the likelihood that you will plagiarize your sources:

1. Do not use the sentence structure or paragraph structure of the original author and just change words.

2. Do not take phrases or chunks of words from the original and stick them in your own sentence(s). Sentences in your work shouldn't map up with sentences in the original.

It is much better NOT to turn in sloppy scientific writing and get a 0 than it is to turn in plagiarized work and get written up on charges of academic misconduct. Acts of academic dishonesty include plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration, and falsification. Working together with classmates is acceptable and even encouraged, but all assignments submitted for a grade should reflect your own efforts (and writing). It is fine to discuss questions and topics with your peers, it is academic dishonesty to copy someone’s work (this includes information from the internet that is not properly credited). The point of the writings that I assign is to help you develop skills that you will need in the future. I expect all students to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. I believe that you can make a meaningful difference in this world and I want you to thrive!

The instructor reserves the right to modify the course requirements and other policies as circumstances may dictate, and with sufficient notification to all students. Even the professor can have an unanticipated emergency, and the university—or the community at large—may experience an emergency that requires changing the class schedule or requirements. If I need to invoke this clause you will be notified as soon as possible via email.