## **Experimental Psychology**

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide an introductory overview of general psychology, with particular reference to the elements that characterize the discipline as a science, providing an overall picture of mental functions and deepening some of them. At the end of the course, the student will be able to know the nature and functioning of the main psychological processes relevant to both the cognitive and emotional-motivational spheres. Furthermore, (s)he will be able to re-read events and experiences of daily life in light of the theories on the mental processes learned.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module 1

Unit 1

*Course introduction and History of psychology*

The precursors of psychology

Structuralism

Functionalism

Behaviourism

Gestalt

Psychoanalysis

Biological perspective

Cognitivism

Embodied mind

How psychological research is done

Unit 2

*Sensation*

Definitions

Vision

Audition

Other senses

Unit 3

*Perception*

The use of perception

Attention

Localization

Recognition

Abstraction

Perceptual constancies

Unit 4

*Consciousness*

Aspects of consciousness

Sleep and dreams

Meditation

Hypnosis

Psychoactive drugs

PSI phenomena

Unit 5

*Learning and conditioning*

Definition and general concepts

Classical conditioning

Instrumental conditioning

Learning and cognition

Learning and the brain

Learning and motivation

Unit 6

*Language and thought*

Language and communication

The development of language

Concepts and categorization

Reasoning

Imaginal thought

Problem solving

Module 2

Unit 7

*Memory*

Three Important Distinctions

Sensory Memory

Working Memory

Long-term Memory

Implicit Memory

Constructive Memory

Spatial Memory

Improving Memory

Unit 8

*Motivation*

Theories of Motivation

Drives and Homeostasis

Incentive Motivation and Reward

Hunger, Eating, and Eating Disorders

Unit 9

*Emotion*

Components of Emotion

Cognitive Appraisal and Emotion

Subjective Experiences and Emotion

Thought and Action Tendencies and Emotion

Positive Psychology and Emotion

Bodily Changes and Emotion

Communication and Emotion

Emotion Regulation

Emotion, Gender, and Culture

Unit 10

*Intelligence*

Assessment of Intellectual Abilities

Theories of Intelligence

Genetics and Intelligence

Emotion and Intelligence

General Learning Disability

Unit 14

*Stress, Health, and Coping*

Characteristic of Stressful Events

Psychological Reactions to Stress

Physiological Reactions to Stress

Coping Skills

Managing Stress

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

- Susan Nolen-Hoeksema, Barbara L. Fredrickson, Geoff R. Loftus, Willem A. Wagenaar, Atkinson & Hilgard's Introduction to Psychology 16th Edition. Wadsworth Pub Co, 2014 (Chapters excluded: 2,3,13,15,16,17,18)

Slides and articles uploaded on Blackboard are considered as additional course materials

***TEACHING METHOD***

The classroom lessons - which will consist of explanations, examples, and practical activities - will be enriched by the materials made available online on the Blackboard platform.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam is split in two mandatory steps:

1. a written test composed by the following sections: section A- 10 multiple-choice questions and Section B- 2 open questions. Multiple-choice questions are scored with 0 points for wrong or missing answers and 2 points for the correct response. Therefore Section A score ranges from 0 to 20 points. Open questions receive a score ranging from 0 (for missing response or response completely wrong) and 5 points (for exemplary responses). Section B score, indeed, ranges from 0 and 10 points. The written test is passed when the student reaches a sufficient score in both the sections (12/20 in A; 6/10 in B). The sum of scores obtained in Section A and Section B is the starting grade with which the student accesses the oral exam

2. an oral exam upon passing the written test. The final grade is calculated as follows: written test score +/- 3 points.

For the purpose of the evaluation, the relevance of the answers, the appropriate use of specific terminology, the reasoned and coherent structuring of the speech, the ability to create connections, and the critical re-reading of the topics will be crucial.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Given the introductory nature of the course, previous knowledge of the contents is not required.

In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified to students.

*Contact*

Teachers meet students by appointment before or after lessons (to make an appointment please write an email to claudia.repetto@unicatt.it or silvia.serino@unicatt.it).

1. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)