**Suggested Syllabi for *Introducing Psychology: Brain, Person, Group*, v5.0**

**by Stephen M. Kosslyn and Robin S. Rosenberg**

Psychology is a vast and varied field that covers the entire spectrum of human thoughts, feelings, and actions. It is a discipline that relies on the scientific method to ask and attempt to answer questions, and it is essential that any information we take from our study of psychology bear in mind the importance of scientific exploration and validation. This textbook introduces the student to some of the most important areas of psychology, while also recognizing that no textbook can cover the breadth of the field in a single volume.

Each instructor is encouraged to review the chapters included, as well as the subtopics and major coverage areas within each chapter, to decide what inclusions are most appropriate for a specific class. You will find that individual chapters are broken down into logical sections that can serve as individual topic lessons while still drawing from those that come before and contributing to those that come after. At the same time, however, themes are maintained throughout the textbook so that the chapters are not presented as standalone subject matter but rather as being connected to other concepts contained within the text. These links demonstrate the vast complexity and interconnectivity of the discipline of psychology.

The following are two suggested ways to organize the textbook content for a semester (15 weeks) and a quarter (10 weeks).

**Semester (15 Weeks of Instruction)**

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| Week | Book Chapter | Topics Covered | Notes |
| 1 | 1  Introduction to the Science of Psychology | * Introduction to the Course * The Science of Psychology: Getting to Know You * Psychology Then and Now * The Research Process: How We Find Things Out | The first day of class will involve introductions, review of the syllabus and class policies, and a general introduction to the field. After some initial rapport is developed, the Chapter 1 material can be introduced.  Note that students often find coverage of the research process to be a bit dry, so group activities designed to have them construct research questions and map out appropriate techniques for exploring them are advised. |
| 2 | 2  The Biology of Mind and Behavior: The Brain in Action | * Brain Circuits: Making Connections * The Nervous System: An Orchestra with Many Members * Spotlight on the Brain: How It Divides and Conquers * Probing the Brain * Genes, Brain, and Environment: The Brain in the World | You may wish to cover these topics in a different sequence based on your preferred style. Some instructors may wish to cover the Genes, Brain, and The Environment section with less depth than presented in the text. |
| 3 | 3  Sensation and Perception: How the World Enters the Mind | * Vision * Hearing * Sensing and Perceiving in Other Ways | This chapter is particularly enhanced by the use of videos demonstrating various sensory and perceptual phenomena. Some videos can be found in the Instructor’s Manual, as well as by searching relevant topics on YouTube. Personal examples of such topics as gestalt principles, depth cues, and sensory limitations are particularly engaging to students. |
| 4 | 4  Learning: How Experience Changes Us | * Classical Conditioning * Operant Conditioning * Cognitive and Social Learning | For instructors using examinations as part of their evaluation, this week might begin with an examination covering the Chapters 1 through 3, followed by coverage of Chapter 4 material. |
| 5 | 4 & 5  Memory: Living with Yesterday | * Encoding Information into Memory Stores: Time and Space Are of the Essence * Retaining Information: Not Just One LTM * Retrieving Information from Memory: More Than Reactivating the Past * When Memory Goes Wrong and What to Do About It | Emphasis may be placed on how the lessons of Chapter 4 can be immediately applied to students’ study habits and their success in this and other college classes. Self-assessment via various online study skills resources may be a good engagement technique. |
| 6 | 5 and 6  Language, Thinking, and Intelligence: What Humans Do Best | * Language: More Than Meaningful Sounds * Means of Thinking: The Mental Tool Kit * Problem Solving and Reasoning: From Mental Processes to Behavior * Intelligence: What Is It and How Does It Aris? | A useful class exercise during this chapter is to have students work in groups of three or four to formulate their own theories of intelligence prior to covering those presented in the text. |
| 7 | 7  Emotion and Motivation: Feeling and Striving | * Emotion: I Feel, Therefore I Am * Motivation and Reward: Being Guided to Our Goals * Hunger and Sex: Two Important Motivations | The week begins with an examination covering Chapters 4 through 6, followed by coverage of Chapter 7 material. Either this or the third examination may serve as a “mid-term test,” or instructors may wish to have four chapters on a mid-term and have the final exam cover only the final three chapters. |
| 8 | 7 and 8  Personality: Viva La Difference! | * Personality: Historical Perspectives * What Exactly Is Personality? * Biological Influences on Personality * Contributions of Learning and Cognition to Personality * Sociocultural Influences on Personality | Students often come into this chapter with pre-existing opinions about the theories of Freud, and this is a good critical-thinking opportunity to see how student can separate valuable parts of the theory from those details that are no longer accepted in the field. |
| 9 | 8 and 9  Psychology Over the Life Span: Growing Up, Growing Older, Growing Wiser | * In the Beginning: From Conception to Birth * Infancy and Childhood: Taking Off | This chapter may begin near the end of the week and extends into the next due to the long span of material to cover. Some faculty may want to divide the coverage into distinct phases for different class periods. The transition from adolescence to adulthood is particularly important to the typical undergraduate student if the class is composed of traditional-age students and presents valuable opportunities to engage previously reluctant students in class discussions related to their own experiences. It also provides excellent engagement opportunities for older students to contribute with their own life experiences. |
| 10 | 9 (cont)  Psychology Over the Life Span: Growing Up, Growing Older, Growing Wiser | * Adolescence: Between Two Worlds * Adulthood and Aging: The Continuously Changing Self | This week ends with an examination covering Chapters 7 through 9. |
| 11 | 10  Stress, Health, and Coping: Dealing with Life | * What Is Stress? * Stress, Disease, and Sleep * Strategies for Coping | Discussion of different stressors experienced by students is useful in this chapter, giving them an opportunity to share what makes their own life challenges varied and unique. One good icebreaker is to ask about stress resulting from students’ experiences with the recent coronavirus pandemic. |
| 12 | 11  Psychological Disorders: More than Everyday Problems | * Identifying Psychological Disorders: What’s Abnormal? * An Overview of Mood and Anxiety Disorders and Schizophrenia * An Overview of Other Selected Disorders * A Cautionary Note About Diagnosis | This and the following chapter can be difficult for some students, and recognition that some may feel uncomfortable given personal histories is important. Advisories that students are not required to stay in class for material that is too disturbing to them may be advisable. |
| 13 | Week of Recess | A week is typically reserved for Thanksgiving recess during a standard fall semester and spring break during a standard winter/spring semester. The actual occurrence of this week off will be adjusted based on individual school and term calendars. |  |
| 14 | 12  Treatment: Healing Actions, Healing Words | * Insight-Oriented Therapies * Treatments that Focus on Behavior, and More * Innovations in Psychotherapy * Biologically Based Treatments * Treatment Issues | This is a chapter in which students may share their own experiences in psychotherapy, and faculty should be careful about the amount and kind of information shared in such disclosures. At the same time normalizing and destigmatizing the choice to seek therapy when needed is also important. |
| 15 | 13  Social Psychology: Meeting of the Minds | * Social Cognition: Thinking About People * Social Behavior: Interacting with People * A Final Word: Ethics and Social Psychology | There are two appendices that follow Chapter 13, one addressing statistics and another entitled “How to Think About Research Studies.” Instructors may wish to combine some of the topics above into fewer course meetings to allow for presentation of these two additional sections. |
| 16 | Final Examination Week | Final Review and Exam | Administer a final exam during the institution’s mandated testing period to cover Chapters 10 through 13 and the overall course if the final exam encompasses the entire term. |

**Quarter (10 Weeks of Instruction)**

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| Week | Book Chapter | Topics Covered | Notes |
| 1 | 1  Introduction to the Science of Psychology | * Introduction to the Course * The Science of Psychology: Getting to Know You * Psychology Then and Now * The Research Process: How We Find Things Out | The first day of class will involve introductions, review of the syllabus and class policies, and a general introduction to the field. After some initial rapport is developed, the Chapter 1 material can be introduced.  Note that students often find coverage of the research process to be a bit dry, so group activities designed to have them construct research questions and map out appropriate techniques for exploring them are advised. |
| 2 | 2  The Biology of Mind and Behavior: The Brain in Action | * Brain Circuits: Making Connections * The Nervous System: An Orchestra with Many Members * Spotlight on the Brain: How It Divides and Conquers * Probing the Brain * Genes, Brain, and Environment: The Brain in the World | You may wish to cover these topics in a different sequence based on your preferred style. Some instructors may wish to cover the Genes, Brain, and The Environment section with less depth than presented in the text. |
| 3 | 3 & 4  3 Sensation and Perception: How the World Enters the Mind  4 Learning: How Experience Changes Us | * Vision * Hearing * Sensing and Perceiving in Other Ways * Classical Conditioning * Operant Conditioning * Cognitive and Social Learning | Chapter is particularly enhanced by the use of videos demonstrating various sensory and perceptual phenomena. Some videos can be found in the Instructor’s Manual, as well as by searching relevant topics on YouTube. Personal examples of such topics as gestalt principles, depth cues, and sensory limitations are particularly engaging to students. |
| 4 | 5  Memory: Living with Yesterday | * Encoding Information into Memory Stores: Time and Space Are of the Essence * Retaining Information: Not Just One LTM * Retrieving Information from Memory: More Than Reactivating the Past * When Memory Goes Wrong and What to Do About It | This week begins with the first examination covering Chapters 1 through 4.  Emphasis may be placed on how the lessons of Chapter 5 can be immediately applied to students’ study habits and their success in this and other college classes. Self-assessment via various online study skills resources may be a good engagement technique. |
| 5 | 6 & 7  6 Language, Thinking, and Intelligence: What Humans Do Best  7 Emotion and Motivation: Feeling and Striving | * Language: More Than Meaningful Sounds * Means of Thinking: The Mental Tool Kit * Problem Solving and Reasoning: From Mental Processes to Behavior * Intelligence: What Is It and How Does It Arise? * Emotion: I Feel, Therefore I Am * Motivation and Reward: Being Guided to Our Goals * Hunger and Sex: Two Important Motivations | A useful class exercise during this chapter is to have students work in groups of three or four to formulate their own theories of intelligence prior to covering those presented in the text. |
| 6 | 8  Personality: Viva La Difference! | * Personality: Historical Perspectives * What Exactly Is Personality? * Biological Influences on Personality * Contributions of Learning and Cognition to Personality * Sociocultural Influences on Personality | Students often come into this chapter with pre-existing opinions about the theories of Freud, and this is a good critical thinking opportunity to see how student can separate valuable parts of the theory from those details that are no longer accepted in the field.  This week ends with the midterm examination covering Chapters 5 through 8. |
| 7 | 9 and 10  9 Psychology Over the Life Span: Growing Up, Growing Older, Growing Wiser  10 Stress, Health, and Coping: Dealing with Life | * In the Beginning: From Conception to Birth * Infancy and Childhood: Taking Off * Adolescence: Between Two Worlds * Adulthood and Aging: The Continuously Changing Self * What Is Stress? * Stress, Disease, and Sleep * Strategies for Coping | The transition from adolescence to adulthood is particularly important to the typical undergraduate student if the class is composed of traditional-age students and presents valuable opportunities to engage previously reluctant students in class discussions related to their own experiences. It also provides excellent engagement opportunities for older students to contribute with their own life experiences.  Discussion of different stressors experienced by students is useful in this chapter, giving them an opportunity to share what makes their own life challenges varied and unique. One good icebreaker is to ask about stress resulting from students’ experiences with the recent Coronavirus pandemic. |
| 8 | 11  Psychological Disorders: More than Everyday Problems | * Identifying Psychological Disorders: What’s Abnormal? * An Overview of Mood and Anxiety Disorders and Schizophrenia * An Overview of Other Selected Disorders * A Cautionary Note About Diagnosis | This and the following chapter can be difficult for some students, and recognition that some may feel uncomfortable given personal histories is important. Advisories that students are not required to stay in class for material that is too disturbing to them may be advisable. |
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| 10 | 13  Social Psychology: Meeting of the Minds | * Social Cognition: Thinking About People * Social Behavior: Interacting with People * A Final Word: Ethics and Social Psychology | There are two appendices that follow Chapter 13, one addressing statistics and another entitled “How to Think About Research Studies.” Instructors may wish to combine some of the topics above into fewer course meetings to allow for presentation of these two additional sections. |
| 11 | Review and Final Exam |  | This week will include the final examination covering Chapters 9 through 13. |