

Introductory Psychology (PSY-101)

Sections: 20, 90, and 95

Fall 2024

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Professor: Courtney Kowalczyk, PhD

Preferred Name: Dr./Professor Kowalczyk or Dr./Professor K (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Phone: 616-331-3729

Email: kowalcou@gvsu.edu (expect a response within 24 hrs. on weekdays, 24-36 hrs. on weekends)

Office: 2142 Au Sable Hall

Student Hours/Appointments: Student hours will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00pm - 2:15pm in my office or via Zoom. I will have Zoom open on my computer during office hours, but if you have been waiting for a few minutes in the waiting room on Zoom, please send me a quick email to let me know you are ready in case I am working with another student. Additional meeting/appointment times will be available on Fridays for Zoom sessions. Please email me to set-up a time if you would like to meet on a Friday. If you cannot meet during these times, please contact me to discuss other possibilities. I'm always happy to find a time that works for both of us!

Ask Me About: Anything related to our class, real world applications of psychology, majoring or minoring in psychology, getting involved in psychology research, graduate school and psychology based careers, working in the field as a psychologist, working with children and adolescent clients, horses, scuba diving, cooking for individuals with food allergies, etc.

COURSE BASICS

Meeting Time and Place: Each section of PSY 101 will meet as follows for lecture:

PSY 101-20: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30-3:45pm in 2302 Au Sable Hall (ASH)

PSY 101-90: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30am-12:45pm in 2302 Au Sable Hall (ASH)

PSY 101-95: Tuesdays and Thursdays 4-5:15pm in 2302 Au Sable Hall (ASH)

**Please refer to your course schedule in Banner for your specific Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) workshop day and time, which you will be required to attend in addition to lectures.*

Textbook: Our course will be using *Psychology 2e* by Spielman, Jenkins, and Lovett (made available by OpenStax). This textbook is REQUIRED and is available to you FREE OF CHARGE via the following link: <https://openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e>. You will not need to purchase the physical copy of the textbook unless you would prefer to do so.

Course Overview: This course will introduce you to the theories, research methodologies, and applications of psychology – the study of human behavior – and help you appreciate the importance of psychological phenomenon in your own life. A wide range of topics will be covered; some students consider the course to be rigorous and difficult because of this. However, it is important to remember that all of these topics refer to our experiences as humans...and chances are, all of us have spent some time contemplating the causes and consequences of our own and other's behavior. You are encouraged to apply your knowledge of the material to your own lives and the world around you.

Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to...

- Identify major psychological theories and concepts and use psychological terminology correctly
- Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific process in psychology
- Critically evaluate the findings of psychological research
- Recognize examples of how psychological concepts are applied to daily life

Technology Requirements: Although this course is scheduled to meet in person, the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that access to computers and related technology is integral to educational flexibility. Access to the Blackboard Learning Management System is required for this course. Students will also their laptop or tablet to complete exams. I strongly encourage you to seek out: 1) regular access to a computer or tablet, and 2) a reliable, high-speed internet connection. A computer with a video camera and microphone is ideal for attending virtual appointments (if you prefer that style of meeting) and if we need to transition online for some reason. If you do not have access to a computer or reliable internet, please talk with your professor and/or review the resources available to you on Blackboard (see “Student Resources” folder). These resources include information about on-campus computer labs, Special Circumstances and Financial Hardship funds, etc.

Class Format: The class sessions will utilize lecture and discussion as well as additional methods to foster active participation. Class sessions and the text supplement each other – both cover material that will not (and cannot) be covered in the other format. Because class sessions highlight important concepts within the text, students are strongly encouraged to complete assigned readings PRIOR to the corresponding lecture and attend all class sessions. Please note that class sessions will NOT be recorded; if you miss class you are encouraged to reach out to your classmates for notes.

Active Engagement with the Course Material: To understand the material covered in ANY course, active engagement is necessary. To help you be successful in this course, I have taken special care in designing it and am committed to facilitating your learning throughout the semester. My hope is that you are also intentional and effortful in your engagement with the course.

You can expect your professor to...

- 1) Present interesting information clearly and in an organized fashion.
- 2) Facilitate your efforts to learn the material. For example, Blackboard will contain in-depth assignment instructions and various supplemental resources. Your professor will also be readily available via email and during student hours/appointments. Although I encourage students to take the initiative to approach me if they have questions, I will also reach out to students that are doing fabulous work or who appear to need assistance.
- 3) Be responsive to questions and concerns. This includes posting announcements regularly, responding to emails promptly (within 24 hours on weekdays), and providing feedback and prompt grading. Consistent communication is essential to a smooth semester!
- 4) Facilitate a safe, respectful, and curiosity-driven learning environment. When basic needs – physical safety, psychological stability – are met, it is easier to focus attention on our self-improvement goals, like our academic studies. Please reach out if you need assistance.

Your professor expects you to...

- Basic expectations:
- 1) Read the syllabus and consult it throughout the semester
 - 2) Read assigned readings completely and in a timely manner
 - 3) Complete all assignments/exams on time
 - 4) Regularly attend class sessions
 - 5) Take notes during classes and when reading/studying

- 6) Study regularly throughout the week
- 7) Communicate your questions and concerns
- 8) Be respectful and curious

Going a step further:

- 1) Complete readings before class
- 2) Meet with your professor to discuss your understanding of the material
- 3) Review concepts that you missed on assignments, exams, etc.
- 4) Answer questions on the study guide in depth
- 5) Engage in study strategies that test your amount and depth of knowledge on the material

A ton of educational research suggests that students should devote around 2-4 hours per credit hour they take. PSY 101 is a 3-credit course, so this equates to spending around 6-9 hours a week on this class, which includes time spent in the classroom. If you are taking a full course load (i.e., 15 credits), this equates to spending around 45 hours a week on your coursework, which is equivalent to a full-time job. Each week, you will have assigned reading (~2 hours), two class sessions (~2.5 hour), and some brief assignments (~.5 hour to complete, not including study time), so please consider how you are spending the remaining 1-4 hours on this course. I am happy to discuss study tips and strategies if you have any difficulties in this area.

Structured Learning Assistance (SLA): This section of PSY 101 is part of the Structured Learning Assistance program offered by GVSU's Tutoring and Reading Center. The SLA program involves the typical PSY 101 lecture course plus a peer-led supplemental workshop course. These workshops help students build their foundational knowledge in PSY 101 and build effective learning and studying strategies. More details about the SLA program and its requirements are included below in the SLA Appendix (see the end of the syllabus).

GRADING POLICY

Course grades will be based on total points earned from the following sources:

COURSE ACTIVITY		POINT VALUE
Exam #1 & #2	2 exams x 40 pts each	80 pts
Final Exam		60 pts
Lecture Attendance/ Participation	15 class sessions x 2 pts each	30 pts
Homework Assignments	3 assignments x 15 pts each	45 pts
Learning Extension Activities	14 activities x 3 pts each	42 pts
Enrichment Activities	4 activities x 5 pts each	20 pts
Extra Credit		24 pts

Total of 277 points, not including extra credit

Exams: There will be two exams and a final exam in this course. Exams #1 and #2 are both worth 40 points each. The final exam is worth 60 points. All exams will include multiple-choice questions and are non-cumulative.

Late Exam/Make-up Policy: It is the student's responsibility to contact the professor within a week of the exam to plan/make arrangements for a make-up exam. Late exams will be penalized 20% each day late unless accommodations apply.

Lecture Attendance/Participation Assignments: Students that regularly attend lecture class sessions and who are “present” in class – attentive, taking notes, thinking about the material – are much more likely to succeed. To encourage attendance/participation, students will submit some type of evidence (TBD) they attended a particular class session. Class sessions will be chosen at random without advance notice. Submissions will be graded pass (2 points)/fail (0 points).

Late Work/Make-up Policy: Assignments must be turned in during the lecture class session. If make-up accommodations are requested and approved, an alternative assignment can be submitted by the agreed upon deadline.

Homework Assignments: Students are required to complete 3 out of a possible 13 homework assignments (available on Blackboard). These assignments involve answering approximately 4 to 6 short-answer questions that correspond to the textbook chapter and other course materials. You can choose which three homework assignments you want to complete. You can also earn extra credit by distributing this homework workload across the semester: Students can earn 3 EC points for every HW assignment completed before Exam #2 – so, HWs #1-#8 (max. 9 EC points from this source). Students are ultimately responsible for keeping track of the number of assignments completed. Each assignment is due on the LAST day the topic is discussed for the week (Sunday by 11:59pm). See schedule below for all deadlines.

Late Work/Make-up Policy: The deadline for homework assignments is by 11:59pm on the due date. Late assignments will be penalized 3 points for each day it is late unless accommodations apply.

Learning Extension Activities: To encourage active engagement and application of the materials covered throughout the semester, students will complete learning extension activities (LEA’s) for each subject topic. These will assess understanding and use of content covered in class sessions. LEA’s will be introduced in class and posted on the BB. LEA’s will be graded using the following rubric: 3 (good understanding; accurate and very thoughtful and detailed), 2 (basic understanding), 1 (limited understanding), or 0 (no understanding or did not turn in). A more thorough rubric can be reviewed with each LEA in Blackboard.

Late Work/Make-up Policy: The deadline for LEA’s is 11:59pm on the due date. Late LEA’s will docked 1 point each day late unless accommodations apply.

Enrichment Activities: To acquaint students with the nature and variety of research topics and experimental methodologies in psychology, students will complete 4 credits of enrichment activities of their choosing, worth 5 points each. There are two types of enrichment activities:

Option #1: Participating in PSY research studies: This type of enrichment activity gives you an insider’s perspective on how psychologists do research and an opportunity to contribute to the psychological literature you read about in your textbook!

Option #2: Participating in research technique activity sessions: This type of enrichment activity advances your understanding of specific methodological techniques used in PSY research.

Enrichment activities are described in more detail at the end of the syllabus. All PSY 101 students at GVSU are required to earn 4 enrichment activity credits. In our course, each credit will be worth 5 points, equaling 20 points total.

Late Work/Make-up Policy: The deadline listed in the schedule (see below) was established by the PSY Department and applies to all sections of PSY 101. Given enrichment activities

can be completed throughout the semester, there are no make-up opportunities for this assignment and late assignments are not accepted.

Extra Credit Opportunities: Students have the option to earn up to 9 points of extra credit by turning in their homework assignments by the assigned deadline prior to Exam #3. In addition, students will also be able to complete a 4th homework assignment for extra credit over the course of the semester. Extra credit assignments will adhere to the same due dates outlined in the course schedule. There are no make-up opportunities for extra credit assignment and late assignments are not accepted.

Final grades will be as follows:

Grade	% Earned	Grade	% Earned
A	94 and above	C	73 – 76.9
A-	90 – 93.9	C-	70 – 72.9
B+	87 – 89.9	D+	67 – 69.9
B	83 – 86.9	D	63 – 66.9
B-	80 – 82.9	F	62.9 and below
C+	77 – 79.9		

These are firm cut-offs. I only round up if a grade is $> .95\%$ (i.e., 82.96% will be rounded up to an 83%, but an 82.94% would not be rounded up). Yes, this means that it is possible that 1 or 2 more points would mean the difference between an A or an A-, or a D or an F. So don't let it come down to that! It is your responsibility to ensure your grade is where you want it to be at the end of the semester. This includes reaching out to your professor to discuss strategies for improving your mastery of the course material and ensuring your efforts translate into mastery.

COURSE POLICIES AND RESOURCES

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>.

Withdrawing from a Course: The ultimate deadline for withdrawing from this course (or any course at GVSU) is Friday, November 8th at 5pm.

Mask Policy: GVSU is currently under an Alert Level 0, which means that students and professors can choose to wear masks in classrooms if they wish, and are required to wear masks if exposed to COVID-19 or showing symptoms. Students and faculty members may be required to wear a mask at all times during class if the alert level rises. Masks are available at campus offices. [GVSU's policy on face coverings](#) is posted on the Lakers Together website. Students unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition should contact Student Accessibility Resources (SAR) to discuss their situation.

Accommodations for Late Work/Make-Ups: Attendance and participation in class activities is important for your success in this course. Your professor is required to monitor missed deadlines and determine standards and a process by which students can make-up missed work. Importantly, if a student misses the deadline for an assessment/assignment and they are seeking an accommodation (i.e., permission to turn it in late), they must **contact the professor via email within 48 hours of the deadline with an explanation**. From there, **the professor will grant accommodations based upon: 1) the cause for the missed deadline, and 2) the extent to which the student's ability to complete the assignment was impaired**.

Specifically, the reason for the missed deadline is key. The University makes a distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences, and this language is useful for characterizing the types of missed deadlines – we can miss deadlines for “excused” reasons (due to something unexpected or beyond our control, despite our best efforts) or “unexcused” reasons. Consistent with University policy, missed deadlines are excused and eligible for accommodations for the following reasons:

- 1) Active participation in an intercollegiate event
- 2) Observance of religious holidays
- 3) Military duty
- 4) Jury duty, or appearance in court or other government hearings
- 5) Student medical conditions that limit time or ability to engage with the course material
- 6) Birth or adoption of child
- 7) Attendance at an academic and/or professional conference
- 8) Medical or professional appointments (e.g., job interviews)
- 9) Medical conditions of a loved one if the student is serving as a caretaker
- 10) Funerals or memorial services
- 11) Previously scheduled family celebrations (e.g., weddings, etc.)

As you might guess, unexcused reasons are things like forgetting or mixing up deadlines, failure to properly upload the assignment on Blackboard, leaving campus early for the weekend, etc. Ideally, documentation should be provided and is easily available for most of the reasons listed above, but if documentation is not available, we can discuss that. In general, if you are unsure whether you are eligible for an accommodation or need to provide documentation, just ask! Academic life continues to be challenging and constantly changing. Please reach out if you are struggling.

Blackboard Access: The course Blackboard (BB) website is essential to your success. It is the student’s responsibility to visit BB regularly and stay up to date with the material posted in this forum. BB will be used in the following ways:

- 1) Grades:** All grades will be posted in the BB Gradebook in a timely manner. For security reasons, I only discuss grades over email if the student initiates that conversation and uses their GVSU email account.
- 2) Homework Assignments/LEA’s:** Homework Assignments and LEA’s will be posted in corresponding folders on BB. These folders will also have a place to upload completed assignments (as Word or PDF documents).
- 3) Announcements:** All major announcements and reminders will be posted on BB. Announcements posted on BB are also sent to students via email.

Classroom Conduct: We are all capable of conducting ourselves in a civil and respectable manner. In the spirit of academic discourse, you are encouraged to comment, question, and critique ideas from your professor or classmates, but you should not attack an individual or otherwise express disrespect. Think about what you want to say, edit if necessary, then speak (or type). Similarly, please be mindful of how your behavior may impact others, and limit distracting behavior (e.g., side conversations in class, eating, using your computer for things other than taking notes, etc.). Cell phones should be silenced in some way during class unless the class session activities require cell phone use or there is an urgent matter that requires you to be available via phone (in which case, let your professor know!). Meals should be eaten before or after class, not during. Let’s maintain the social contract of mutual respect. Disrespectful or distracting students will be called out and warned; persistent issues can result in grade deductions.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have special needs because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact your professor as well as Student Accessibility Resources (SAR) at (616) 331-2490 for assistance as soon as possible. Even if you have already documented your disability with SAR, please connect with your faculty member to discuss your specific needs. Furthermore, if you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating the classroom and/or building in an emergency during in-person meetings, please make your professor aware so that the university can develop a plan to assist you. You may also access resources at: <https://www.gvsu.edu/accessibility/>. The university is eager to work with you to meet your learning goals. All discussions related to disabilities will remain confidential.

Statement on Academic Dishonesty: The following is adapted from the Student Code, Sections 223.00 and 223.01: The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid of any kind.

- a. No student shall knowingly procure, provide, or accept any materials which contain questions or answers to any examination or assignment.
- b. No student shall complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person.
- c. No student shall allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, by another person.
- d. No student shall submit work that has been previously graded, or is being submitted concurrently to more than one course, without specific authorization from the instructor(s) of the class(es) to which the student wishes to submit it.
- e. No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his/her own. Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs, to entire articles copied from the internet, books, periodicals, speeches, or from the writings of other students. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgement also is considered plagiarism. In short, any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.

Students can (and are encouraged to) study together, but all academic work should be the sole work of the individual student, unless otherwise stated. Also, students should strive to avoid the *appearance* of dishonesty; these are behaviors associated with academic dishonesty (i.e., checking phone during an exam, completing individual assignments together, etc.) that raise concerns that you may be potentially dishonest in your work. Any violation of academic integrity, even on a small scale, can result in a failing grade in the course. The University is implementing a new oversight process for cases of academic dishonesty – this process requires all professors to report all cases to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, which then investigates each case and makes a determination. Doesn't this sound like an anxiety-provoking time suck? Just don't cheat.

Statement on AI: We treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT and Copilot, the same way we treat collaboration with other people: you are welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with AI-based assistants. However, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include in your assignment anything that was not written directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes).

Including anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying from AI, we recommend the following:

- Never hit "Copy" within your conversation with an AI assistant. You can copy your own work into your conversation, but do not copy anything from the conversation back into your assignment. Instead, use your interaction with the AI assistant as a learning experience, then let your assignment reflect your improved understanding.
- Do not have your assignment and the AI agent open at the same time. Similar to above, use your conversation with the AI as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your revised knowledge. This includes avoiding using AI directly in your composition environment: just as you should not let a classmate write content directly into your submission, so avoid using tools that directly add content to your submission.

Psych Friends Resource: If you feel you could use some extra help/guidance/support in any academic domain or for your well-being, please consider scheduling an appointment with a mentor through Psych Friends. Psych Friends mentors are upper-level undergraduate peer mentors who are trained to provide support in many areas including: effective study and time management techniques, exam preparation and reflection skills, psychology and behavioral neuroscience major requirements, tips for engaging in the field, strategies for education continuation, methods for maintaining physical and mental health. Schedule an appointment here: <https://www.gvsu.edu/navigate>. Questions? Email psychfriends@gvsu.edu.

APPENDIX #1: PSY 101 FALL 2024 COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change and students are responsible for any changes announced in class or on our course Blackboard site.

<u>Class Meetings</u>	<u>Topic/Readings</u>	<u>Important Dates</u>
Aug. 27 th and 29 th	Welcome & Introduction Chapter 1	Due 9/1: Intro LEA
Sept. 3 rd and 5 th	Psychological Research Chapter 2	Due 9/8: Research LEA & Chapter 2 Homework
Sept. 10 th and 12 th	Biopsychology Chapter 3	Due 9/15: Biopsychology LEA & Chapter 3 Homework
Sept. 17 th and 19 th	States of Consciousness Chapter 4	Due 9/22: Consciousness LEA & Chapter 4 Homework
Sept. 24 th and 26 th	Sensation and Perception Chapter 5	Due 9/29: Sen./Percep. LEA & Chapter 5 Homework
Oct. 1 st	--	EXAM #1
Oct. 3 rd	Learning Chapter 6	Due 10/6: Learning LEA & Chapter 6 Homework
Oct. 8 th and 10 th	Thinking & Intelligence Chapter 7	Due 10/13: Think./Intell. LEA & Chapter 7 Homework
Oct. 15 th and 17 th	Memory Chapter 8	Due 10/20: Memory LEA & Chapter 8 Homework
Oct. 22 nd	--	No Class —Fall Break
Oct. 24 th	Lifespan Development Chapter 9	Due 10/27: Lifespan LEA & Chapter 9 Homework
Oct. 29 th	--	EXAM #2
Oct. 31 st	Emotion and Motivation Chapter 10	Due 11/3: Emo./Mot. LEA & Chapter 10 Homework
Nov. 5 th and 7 th	Personality Chapter 11	Due 11/10: Personality LEA & Chapter 11 Homework
Nov. 12 th and 14 th	Social & Industrial Organizational Psychology Chapters 12 and 13	Due 11/17: Social Psych. and Indust./Org. LEA & Chapters 12/13 Homework
Nov. 19 th and 21 st	Psychological Disorders Chapter 15	Due 11/24: Psy. Dis. LEA & Chapter 15 Homework
Nov. 26 th	Stress, Lifestyle, & Health Chapter 14	No LEA or homework for this chapter. Enjoy your break!
Nov. 28 th	--	No Class —Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 3 rd and 5 th	Therapy and Treatment Chapter 16	Due 12/6: All Enrichment Activities Completed by 5pm Due 12/8: Therapy/Treatment LEA and Chapter 16 Homework
FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE: PSY 101 Section 20 - 12/12/24 from 2pm - 3:50pm, PSY 101 Section 90 - 12/10/24 from 10am-11:50am, PSY 101 Section 95 - 12/10/24 from 4pm - 5:50pm,		

Dates **highlighted** indicate a class that will be held online. In person meetings will not occur on that date due to Dr. Kowalczyk's conference travel for the university.

APPENDIX #2:

Enrichment Activities: Learning about Psychological Research

In the Enrichment Activities (EA) portion of the course, students will be given the opportunity to experience psychological research first-hand. Two kinds of enrichment activities are available:

- *Option 1* involves being a participant in research studies conducted by Psychology Department faculty and students.
- *Option 2* involves completing activities that will introduce you to a variety of research techniques used in psychological research.
-

Students must earn **four** EA credits for this requirement. The credit you earn by completing each EA is a function of the amount of time it takes to complete it. For example, by participating in a brief online study (30 minutes or fewer) you would earn ½ of an EA credit whereas an EA that takes one hour to complete would earn 1 credit. Both types of Enrichment Activities will be available in face to face and online formats. You may complete the EA requirement using any combination of EA types, however, **at least two full credits of EAs must be completed in person.**

Enrichment activities are scheduled and offered through the Sona Study Scheduling System. You will receive an email at the beginning of the semester containing your User ID and an initial password, and a link to the Sona system website at <https://gvsu.sona-systems.com>. If you do not receive an email regarding your account by the end of the first week of class, please contact the Lab Supervisor, Hannah Todd, at psychlab@gvsu.edu.

SONA Systems maintains a strict policy protecting your privacy and confidentiality. This policy is available for review in the Psychology Office. Additional details regarding the enrichment activities and an FAQ are available online at <https://www.gvsu.edu/psychology/psy-101-participation-in-research-sona-435.htm>

Screening Instrument: Once you receive your User ID and password, you will be able to immediately earn .5 credits by completing an online prescreening questionnaire. This is a short questionnaire used by some researchers to determine your participation eligibility for studies carried out throughout the semester. You must be 18 or older to complete the prescreen survey. You are not required to complete it, but doing so increases the number of studies you will be able to choose from during the semester. You can complete the prescreen at any time from the My Profile tab on the blue bar at the top of the page, however, completing it early (within the first two weeks of class) ensures that you will have access to the widest variety of EA activities within the Sona System.

Enrichment Activity Deadline

The last day to complete your EA requirement is **Friday, December 6th @ 5:00pm.**

If you have questions regarding any aspect of the Enrichment Activities, please contact the Lab Supervisor Hannah Todd, who can be reached in the Psychology Department Office (2224 Au Sable Hall, 616-331-2427) or by sending an email to psychlab@gvsu.edu.

APPENDIX #3:
Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) Program Expectations

What is SLA? What are SLA workshops? Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) is a form of peer-led supplemental instruction that focuses on collaboration, group learning, and interaction to help students succeed in historically difficult courses with high rates of poor grades or withdrawals. SLA workshops provide students with course-specific learning and study strategies like notetaking, test-taking, reading skills, etc. as well as structured review and study time with a group of peers. The goal of the SLA program is to help students build foundational knowledge and skills that will improve their course performance now and in the future.

What are the benefits of SLA? While the data changes every semester, students who enroll in an SLA section of a course and attend workshops regularly, typically gain:

- A greater sense of community and belonging
- Higher test and final course grades
- A deeper understanding of course content
- Positive study habits and reading skills
- A positive relationship with a peer tutor/mentor

What should I expect from the SLA workshops? These are all about active engagement and discussion, so attendance AND participation are important. Students should expect to...

- 1) Bring their textbooks/notes to workshops
- 2) Participate fully and actively
- 3) Work with other students and/or individually when asked
- 4) Work only on PSY 101 course material during the workshop
- 5) Address the Peer Facilitator respectfully
- 6) Treat classmates respectfully
- 7) Strive for a positive attitude about your learning

Who is the Peer Facilitator for PSY 101? I am lucky to be working with three separate facilitators this semester! Teagan Bayne will be working with students in lecture section 20, Kylie Zimmer will be working with students in lecture section 90, and Angel Hughes will be working with students in lecture section 95. You will see your SLA facilitator during our PSY 101 lecture sections, and he/she will be leading the SLA workshop sessions. Your SLA facilitator and Dr. Kowalczyk will be working closely throughout the semester to ensure SLA workshops are informative and interesting, and that student needs are addressed.

You can connect with your SLA facilitator before and after lecture and workshops and via email. Please see the “About this Course” section of our Blackboard site for your facilitator’s information.

Here are some things you can expect from your SLA Workshop Peer Facilitator...

- 1) Attend all lecture class sessions (a great way to touch base with him/her if you have questions).
- 2) Prepare weekly workshop sessions that address difficult course content, engage students in active learning activities, and build important learning and study strategies.
- 3) Answer questions about course material.
- 4) Advise students on relevant resources available from GVSU.

But your SLA Facilitator is NOT a teaching assistant, and IS NOT responsible for...

- 1) Re-lecturing on material covered during the lecture class sessions.
- 2) Teaching lecture class sessions in the professor's absence.
- 3) Answering questions about grades or course requirements (like when certain assignments are due). Instead, consult the syllabus and BB for this, or ask your professor.
- 4) Grading assignments and exams.
- 5) Providing late work/make-up accommodations.

When do SLA workshops meet? Please see the "About this Course" section of our Blackboard site and/or refer to your course schedule in Banner for your specific Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) workshop day and time.

Do I have to attend the SLA workshop each week? The short answer is YES. The longer answer is IT DEPENDS. Below is the detailed attendance policy created by the [Tutoring & Reading Center](#) for SLA workshops. *Please note that the attendance policy for SLA workshops is SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT from the attendance policy for lecture class sessions.

- All students are **required** to attend weekly SLA workshops until Exam #1 grades are posted.
- After Exam #1 grades are posted, students with an exam grade of a B or higher (so, 83% or higher) are excused from weekly SLA workshops, although they are encouraged to continue attending.
- After Exam #1, if a student's exam grade falls below a B (so, below 83%), they will be required to continue attending weekly SLA workshops.
- No more than **3 unexcused absences** from the weekly SLA workshops will be permitted during the semester. Students who exceed their allowable number of unexcused absences will receive an F in their PSY 101 course. Please keep in mind that students can withdraw from any course at GVSU (earning a "W", which doesn't negatively impact GPA) until Friday, November 8th. Please see the Accommodations section earlier in this syllabus for examples of excused and unexcused absences.
- Attendance for the complete workshop session is required. A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late or leaves more than 5 minutes early will be marked as absent.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SLA PROGRAM AND FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR EDUCATION!