

**PSY 3360 / CGS 3325
Historical Perspectives
on Psychology
Minds and Machines since 1600**

**Dr. Peter Assmann
Spring 2012**

Instructor

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Course web page:

<http://www.utdallas.edu/~assmann/PSY3360/>

- Syllabus and study guides
- Review sheets for the exams
- Additional (optional) course readings

<http://www.utdallas.edu/~assmann/PSY3360/>

PSY 3360 - Historical Perspectives on Psychology
CGS 3325 - Minds and Machines since 1600
Spring semester 2012

Class meetings: Tue 6:00-10:00 PM, Green Hall 4.428
Course web page: <http://www.utdallas.edu/~assmann/PSY3360/>

Instructor Dr. Peter Assmann Email: assmann@utdallas.edu Office: GR 4.126 Office hours: Tue 11:00AM-12:00 PM Tel: 972-883-2435	Teaching Assistant Shaikat Hossain Email: shossa3@hotmail.com Office: GR 4.404 Office hours: Mon 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM Tel: 281-686-5081
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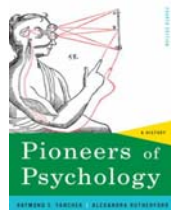
Course Prerequisites
PSY 2301 or CGS 2301.

Course Description
The course examines the historical and philosophical antecedents of our present conceptual frameworks in psychology. Beginning with the 17th century, when the foundations of our contemporary approaches were laid down, the course looks at the philosophical discussion of issues central to our work as psychologists: What is it that psychology studies? What counts as data? Is psychology ultimately reducible to biology, chemistry, and physics? Are humans more deterministic machines, and do they possess a free will? Central issues in the philosophy of science and the philosophy of mind that are pursued into the 20th century include the synthesis of rationalism and empiricism, the mind/body problem, the problem of free will, and the scientific status of mental events. Twentieth century developments include ethology, behaviorism, Piaget, Freud, human information processing, connectionism, and artificial intelligence.

Required textbook:
F.E. Fancher & A. Rutherford 2012.
Pioneers of Psychology

Course Text

R.E. Fancher & A. Rutherford
Pioneers of Psychology. 2012.
4th edition.
© 2012 W. W. Norton & Co., Inc.



In addition, choose one of the following as the basis for your **term paper**:

- (1) S. Pinker (2011). The better angels of our nature. Viking Press.
- (2) D. Kahneman (2011). Thinking: Fast and Slow. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- (3) R.F. Baumeister & J. Tierney (2011). Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength. Penguin Press.
- (4) P. Miller (2010). Smart Swarm: How Understanding Flocks, Schools, and Colonies Can Make Us Better at Communicating, Decision Making, and Getting Things Done. Avery.

Course requirements

- **Quiz/participation (10%)**
- **Midterm exam (30%)**
- **Final exam (40%)**
- **Term paper (20%)**

Quiz/participation grade (10%)

- Selected classes will include a brief unannounced quiz. Their purpose is to help prepare for the exams. No makeup quizzes are provided. **1-2** quizzes may be missed without penalty.

Midterm exam (30%)

- Mixture of short-answer, medium-length, multiple choice and essay questions.
- There will be a choice of questions to answer. Study questions are provided.
- Makeup exams are provided *only* in documented cases of medical and family emergencies.

Final exam (40%)

- Same format and rules as the midterm exam
- Final exam is scheduled for 3 hours in the regular classroom from **8:00-11:00 AM** on **Fri May 11**.

Term paper (20%)

- Due **Wed April 18**.
- Start early in the semester; choose one of the four books from the list, and read it early in the semester. We will be happy to discuss ideas for paper topics.

Term paper (20%)

- Due **Wed April 18**.
 - The paper should not be a "book report" or a summary of the book.
 - Focus on one topic in the book and relate it to something outside the book.

Term paper (20%)

- Due **Wed April 18.**
 - 7-8 (typed, double-spaced) pages
 - based on one of the four recommended books
 - relate some aspect of the book to something outside of the book, either in the course or in your more general experience.

Term paper (20%)

- Due **Wed April 18.**
- Penalty of one letter grade notch per class period the paper is late. This policy ensures fairness to students who turn their paper in on time and do not have the advantage of extra time to improve its quality.

Grading Scheme

Letter grade	Percent
A+	96
A	93
A-	89
B+	84
B	80
B-	75
C+	70
C	65
C-	60
D+	55
D	50
F	<50

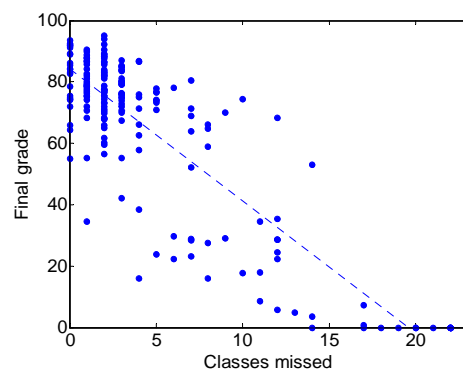
Attendance policy

- Class attendance is mandatory and will count toward the course grade (through quiz grades). There are two reasons for this: (1) each lecture builds on materials covered in previous lectures; (2) exam questions are based both on lecture materials and the textbook.

Attendance policy

- 1-2 missed quizzes is considered acceptable; we will omit the 2 lowest quiz grades.
- **No makeup quizzes will be given.**
- If there are circumstances that lead to missed classes please see us to discuss the situation.

Why is class attendance mandatory?



Jan 18	General introduction	Fancher, Chapter 1
Jan 23	17 th century background	
Jan 25	European rationalism: Descartes	Fancher, Chapter 2
Jan 30	European rationalism: Spinoza and Leibniz	
Feb 1	British empiricism: Hobbes, Locke	
Feb 6	British empiricism: Berkeley, Hume	Fancher, Chapter 4
Feb 8	Kant's synthesis of rationalism & empiricism	
Feb 13	Helmholtz (I)	Fancher, Chapter 3
Feb 15	Helmholtz (II)	
Feb 20	Rise of psychophysics and neuroscience	Fancher, Chapter 5
Feb 22	Wundt and 19 th century experimental psychology	
Feb 27	Midterm review session	Study guide posted online
Feb 29	Midterm Exam	
Mar 5	Darwin and the theory of evolution	Fancher, Chapter 6
Mar 7	Galton and individual differences	Fancher, Chapter 7
Mar 12-17	Spring Break – no class	
Mar 19	Peirce and James	Fancher, Chapter 8
Mar 21	Russian reflex school; Pavlov	Fancher, Chapter 9
Mar 26	Behaviorism I: Watson	
Mar 28	Behaviorism II: Skinner	Fancher, Chapter 10 & 11
Apr 2	Freud: changing conceptions of mental illness	
Apr 4	Ethology and animal behavior	Fancher, Chapter 13
Apr 9	Piaget and development	
Apr 11	Rise and fall of radical behaviorism	Fancher, Chapter 12
Apr 16	Information processing and cognitive psychology	Fancher, Chapter 14
Apr 18	Impact of computers: Minds, machines, free will	Term paper due
Apr 23	Approaches to the study of language	
Apr 25	Developments in cognition and neuroscience	Fancher, Chapter 15
Apr 30	Recent developments	
May 2	Last class: final exam review session	Study guide posted online
Fri May 11	Final exam: ** FRIDAY MAY 11 – 8:00-11:00 AM **	

**Dates
and
Topics**

Research Credits

All core courses in Psychology and Cognitive Science include a research participation component.

- The research credit sign-up system is online: <https://utdallas.sona-systems.com>.
- Use your UTD NetID to login and sign up for experiments.
- New experiments appear every few days throughout the semester; keep checking the board if you cannot find a suitable time slot.

Historical Perspectives on Psychology

- Historical and philosophical antecedents of our present conceptual frameworks in psychology
- 17th century to the present day
- What is it that psychology studies?
- What counts as data?

Historical Perspectives on Psychology

- Is psychology ultimately reducible to biology, chemistry, and physics?
- Are humans mere deterministic machines?
- Do we possess a free will?

Historical Perspectives on Psychology

- rationalism and empiricism
- the mind/body problem
- the problem of free will
- the scientific status of mental events

What counts as data in psychology?

Reductionism: *“The attempt to explain objects or events in one domain by using terminology, concepts, laws, or principles from another domain.”*

(Hergenhahn, 1992: p. 54)

Origins of psychology

- Philosophical questions:
- **epistemology** (how do people acquire knowledge of the world)
- **metaphysics** (what kinds of objects exist in the universe)
- perception, memory, thought and emotion

Elements of scientific explanation

- **Description**
- **Prediction**
- **Control**
- **Falsifiability**

Key concepts

- **Empiricism vs. rationalism**
- Empiricism: the philosophical belief that all knowledge is derived from experience of the outside world.
- Rationalism: the belief that knowledge can only be attained by mental activity.

Problem of free will

- **Free will vs. determinism**
- Determinism: the view that everything occurs as a result of known or identifiable causes.
- Free will: the opposite position; a belief in human control of events.

Mind-body problem

- **Dualism vs. monism**
- Dualism: the philosophical position that the world is made up of two kinds of things, the *physical* and the *mental*.
- Monism: the position that there is only one kind of substance (mental *or* physical).

Zeitgeist

- **Zeitgeist** (spirit of the times) – the idea that progress in science is linked to previous discoveries and theories. The prevailing ideas, concepts, and habits of thought of a period in history are referred to as its Zeitgeist.

The Renaissance (1450-1600)

- Major advances in science, art, humanities
- Religious reforms and religious conflicts
- Rediscovery of classic Greek & Roman writings
- Rejection of **Scholasticism** – dominant philosophical position, derived from Aristotle (384-322 BC).