

**Psychology 300**  
**Psychology Honors Seminar**  
**Spring 2011**

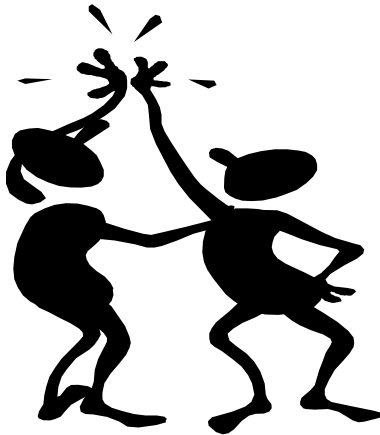
Professor Edie Greene

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Office hours by appointment

Congratulations on being accepted into the psychology honors program. I admire your willingness to undertake the additional work and commitment that the honors program entails. In return, expect to be gently nudged to become a more careful and critical thinker, a better writer, and a more convincing speaker.



**Course overview**

The aims of this seminar are to

- become more knowledgeable about psychological science and research methodologies,
- become a more critical consumer of psychological research findings,
- polish your writing and presentation skills for the world beyond graduation,
- begin to think about graduate school and beyond

To that end, you will

- read, write about, and discuss classic and contemporary studies in psychology,
- find and synthesize studies relevant to your honors thesis research,
- write a substantive paper related to your thesis research,
- make a presentation to the class about your project,
- learn about the process of applying to graduate schools

The course is modeled like a graduate seminar and includes discussions, reading and writing assignments, and presentations. You will need to prepare for class every week. There are no exams. Attendance is mandatory. Inform me in advance, if possible, of any necessary absences.

In addition to these in-class activities, you will begin work with your research mentor on an independent research project that you will conduct over the next 2-3 semesters. The topic of this research and the plan for its completion are determined by you and your mentor and are separate from the seminar activities. The chapter in my Outbox entitled “Everything you always wanted to know about research but were afraid to ask (your advisor)” may be useful.

## Course Materials

Psychology is a multi-faceted discipline whose scope ranges from neuronal activity to issues of morality. How, then, to approach it? The best we can do in this course is to take a smorgasbord approach. To that end, we will read and discuss 3 different kinds of materials:

- selected **classic studies** in psychology to give you first-hand knowledge of some of the most important work in psychology and **contemporary studies** to give you an understanding of the breadth and diversity of the field in its current state;
- articles published in the “**high-level**” **popular press**, so that you have a break from the hard stuff
- the short book “What psychology majors should (and could) be doing” and selected articles on **applying to graduate school**.

All articles are available in my Outbox (egreene). To keep things interesting, we will rotate among these three kinds of readings throughout the semester. On occasion, I will ask you to look at a website prior to class. Keep your course schedule close at hand!

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## Schedule of Readings

### Jan. 18 Course overview, introductions

#### Jan. 25 Social cognition

Classic: Greenwald et al. Measuring individual differences in implicit cognition

Contemporary: Stanley et al. The neural basis of implicit attitudes

Prior to class, please do the implicit associations test at

<http://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Then look at this website: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/background/>

Grad school reading: What can I do with a graduate degree in psychology?

**Feb. 1** We will discuss the book “*What psychology majors could (and should) be doing.*”  
By this date, please have arranged to work with a faculty mentor

#### Feb. 8 Social development

Classic: Brown et al. Parenting practices and peer group affiliation in adolescence

Popular: Gladwell. Do parents matter?

Contemporary: Sutor et al. Within family differences in parenting across the life course

Grad school reading: Getting started: Preparing for the big change

#### Feb.15 Mating behavior

Classic: Buss et al. Preferences in human mate selection

Contemporary: Ganagstad et al. Adaptations to ovulation: Implications for sexual and social behavior

Grad school reading: The application process: Doing the paperwork

**Feb. 22 Memory**

Classic: Loftus. Reality of repressed memory

Contemporary: McNally. Recovering memories of trauma. A view from the laboratory

Popular: Grierson A Bad Trip Down Memory Lane

Grad school reading: Choosing a program

How do I get information about programs?

**Mar. 1 No class.** I am out of town.

**Mar. 8 Psychopathology**

Classic: Lewis. From abuse to violence. Psychophysiological consequences of maltreatment

Popular: Gladwell. Damaged

Prior to class please watch this video:

[http://www.ted.com/talks/jim\\_fallon\\_exploring\\_the\\_mind\\_of\\_a\\_killer.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/jim_fallon_exploring_the_mind_of_a_killer.html)

Grad school reading: The GRE: *The test*

**Mar. 15 Judgment and decision making**

Classic: Tversky & Kahneman. Judgment under uncertainty

Popular: Groopman. What's the trouble?

Contemporary: Slovic & Peters. Risk perception and affect

Grad school reading: Constructing the curriculum vita (CV)

Outline for the vita and sample vita

Assignment: Write your own CV and email to me prior to class

**Mar. 22 Spring break****Mar.29 Well-being**

Classic: Brickman. Lottery winners and accident victims. Is happiness relative?

Contemporary: Cohen. Positive affect and health

Prior to class, please take the test at [www.authentichappiness.org](http://www.authentichappiness.org)

And watch this video:

[http://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_gilbert\\_asks\\_why\\_are\\_we\\_happy.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_asks_why_are_we_happy.html)

Grad school: What about letters of recommendation?

## **Apr. 5 Sustainability**

Classic: Hardin. The tragedy of the commons

Contemporary: Van Vugt. Averting the tragedy of the commons

Prior to class, please calculate your carbon footprint at this website:

[http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/personal\\_footprint/](http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/personal_footprint/)

Bring some thoughts about that to class

You may also be interested in reading this:

<http://www.nytimes.com/indexes/2008/04/19/magazine/index.html>

**Apr.12 In-class peer review of thesis-related paper.** Bring a hard copy of your paper to class.

## **Apr. 19 Presentations**

## **Apr. 26 Presentations**

## **May 4 Presentations**

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### **Discussion leader**

Each of you will have responsibility for leading a discussion of the articles that we will all read for that day. You will not need to turn in any written reflections on the day you lead the discussion.

### **Written reflections on articles**

The way to have a good discussion is to have given some thought to the topics prior to discussing them. To that end, you will prepare written reflections every week

- In response to the **Classic Studies**, in a paragraph or two, briefly summarize the main points, pose a meaningful question that you would like to ask the eminent (in some instances, dead) psychologist(s) who authored the paper, and suggest a question for in-class discussion
- In response to the **Contemporary Studies**, please prepare a short statement (one paragraph will suffice), describing either an idea for further research that you gleaned from reading the article, or the real-world applicability of the information conveyed in the article
- In response to the **Popular** media stories, simply write a paragraph or so describing your assessment of it. It's OK to be critical.

**Your written reflections should be emailed to me and to the discussion leader by 5 PM the day before class.** I will randomly select which reflections to read and comment on each week, and each of you will have feedback on 2 sets of reflections. (**Worth 10 points**)

### **Paper**

The assignment is to write a literature review, using APA format (either 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> edition), that will serve as the introduction to your honors thesis. The articles in my Outbox ("Writing the empirical journal article" and "Writing a literature review" will help you.) An APA style sheet is in my Outbox, also. Just as in life, there are no page restrictions or requirements, except that the paper must do a thorough job of reviewing the literature relevant to your study (i.e. a few pages will not suffice; most papers will be between 10-20 pages. Longer is not necessarily better.)

You must **not** have gotten feedback on your written work from your mentor or a graduate student before you hand it in to me. You will get in-class feedback from a peer. You will be graded on the structure and organization of your paper, ability to describe research findings, and clarity of your writing. **Papers must e-mailed to me on the Thursday following your presentation (see below) by 5 PM. (Worth 40 points)**

### **Presentations**

Each of you will make a formal presentation of your thesis research (minimally, your literature review and research question) to the class. Plan to speak for 20 minutes and allow 10 minutes for questions. Include in your presentation some background information on your topic as well as your research question, hypotheses, and proposed methodology. Give some thought to the real-world applications of your study (“giving psychology away”). Provide sample questions or procedures if you can. Use audio-visual aids (I will have a computer and monitor available). You will be graded on the cohesiveness and clarity of your presentation. There are some tips in my Outbox to guide you. Hint: this will be a professional presentation and good preparation for your thesis defense so please dress and act accordingly. **(Worth 30 points)**

**FINALLY, showing up and pulling your weight.** Who was it that said “Half of life is just showing up”? I expect you all to show up for every class and to be engaged in our discussion. This class is what you make it. And to encourage you to make it stimulating and interesting for us all, I will offer 20 points for showing up and being engaged. I’m serious! **(Worth 20 points)**

**Policy on Plagiarism and Cheating.** Papers must be submitted electronically so that they can be checked easily for plagiarism. Any instance of inappropriate use of other people’s writing will result in a grade of F for the assignment.

**Final procedural notes:** No cell phones during class, ever.

**Grading:** I use a hybrid grading system. The highest points scored in the course will determine the 100% mark. Anyone who earns 90% of that score will receive an A, 80% will receive a B, etc. I do give plus and minus grades. Given that this is an honors course and that you are the cream of the crop of psychology majors at UCCS, I expect much from you.

<b>Written reflections</b>	10 points
<b>Paper</b>	40 points
<b>Presentation</b>	30 points
<b>In-class contributions</b>	20 points

<b>Research component (Mentor’s assessment of your research efforts over the course of the semester)</b>	100 points
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<b>Total points possible:</b>	<b>200 points</b>
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## **Honors Seminar (Psy 300) Grading Form**

**Name:**

**Written reflections (Worth 10 points, 5 points per week X 2 weeks):**

**Paper (Worth 40 points)**

**Structure and organization of information (15 points possible):**

**Description of research findings (10 points possible):**

**Clarity of writing (10 points possible):**

**Use of proper APA format (5 points possible):**

**Class presentation (Worth 30 points)**

**Cohesiveness and clarity of presentation (20 points possible):**

**Usefulness of visual aids (5 points possible):**

**Ability to respond to questions (5 points possible):**

**Showing up and speaking up (Worth 20 points):**

**Research work with mentor (Worth 100 points):**

**TOTAL POINTS:**