

M e m o r a n d u m

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

Old Main, Room 2118
Dean 581-3328 cfmah@eiu.edu
Associate Dean 581-3328 cfgco@eiu.edu
Assistant to the Dean 581-5822 csbsk@eiu.edu
FAX: 581-7110

TO: Provost and VPAA Lord
DATE: April 21, 2008
RE: CAA Executive Action Request

The proposal for offering a technology-delivered section of Psychology 3690 was approved at the College of Sciences Curriculum Committee meeting on April 18, 2008 to be effective Summer 2008. I ask that the Council on Academic Affairs approve the proposal by executive action. Included with this request are the necessary forms – the questionnaire and the course syllabus.

Mary Anne Hanner
Dean

Proposal for technology-delivered section of PSY 3690

Before a technology-delivered section of a course* previously approved as a traditional face-to-face course can be offered a department must seek approval from its College Curriculum Committee, the Council on Academic Affairs and/or the Council on Graduate Studies. The following information must be submitted to the curriculum bodies:

1. A copy of the most recent course proposal approved by CAA/CGS or a copy of the most recent course syllabus.
See attached syllabus of Psy 3690 "Controversial Topics in Psychology".
2. A rationale for offering a technology-delivered section of the course.
The Psychology Department offers several other online courses. However, there is a growing demand for online courses, especially for upper-division psychology courses that students in the School of Continuing Education can use towards their degree or towards a minor in psychology. Furthermore, native students are also starting to take advantage of the flexibility in scheduling that online courses allow.
3. A description of how the format/technology will be used to support and assess students' achievements of the specified learning objectives
The technology used in the course allows student to communicate with each other through e-mail, discussion boards, and chat. The writing assignments will be submitted and graded in WebCT or Blackboard. Online tests will be administered in WebCT. For the online version of the course, debates will be done through writing rather than oral presentations. However, they may be presented orally in the future using web conferencing software such as Elluminate.
4. A description of how the integrity of student work will be assured.
The course syllabus includes a statement about academic dishonesty. The tests can only be taken once and are time-constrained. Many of the test questions require comparing and contrasting of ideas and higher level critical thinking skills, which can not be directly found in the textbook. Student work can only be submitted through WebCT, where the identity of the sender is known to the instructor.
5. A description of provisions for and requirements of instructor-student and student-student interaction, including the kinds of technologies that will be used to support the interaction (e.g., e-mail, web-based discussions, computer conferences, etc.)
Instructor-student and student-student interaction may be facilitated by e-mail, discussion boards, chat, and synchronous web conferencing software.
6. An explanation of how the course content "units" are sufficiently equivalent to the traditional on-campus semester hour units of time described in the original course proposal approved by CAA/CGS.
The same text and supplementary materials that are being used in the face to face section will be used for the online section. The test questions, research paper requirement, and grading criteria are similar as well. The amount of work for this 3 credit course is comparable to that done for the course taught on campus.

Date approved by College of Sciences Curriculum Committee: April 18, 2008

Controversial Topics in Psychology
Psy 3690
Spring 2008

Instructor: Jeffrey R. Stowell
Office Room: 1055 Physical Sciences
Office Phone: 581-2279 (Office)
Home Phone: 348-6286 (Home)
E-mail: jrstowell@eiu.edu
Office Hours: M/W 1-2:30 pm; T 10-11 am
Textbook Web Site: <http://www.mhcls.com/online/get-isbn.mhtml?isbn=0073545589>

Teaching Philosophy

"The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled" --Plutarch

Course Materials

Required:

Slife, B. (2007). Taking sides: Clashing views on psychological issues, (14th ed.):
Duskin/McGraw-Hill, Guilford, CT.

Optional: How to Think Straight About Psychology, 8th edition (2007), by Keith Stanovich. Get [PowerPoint Outline](#).

Catalog Description

Exploration of special interest or controversial topics in psychology as: Hypnosis, drugs, behavior, transcendental meditation, gay liberation, biofeedback, ESP, and IQ controversy

Course Objectives

- Become a wise consumer of psychological research and information that you are exposed to through the media.
- Develop your critical thinking skills by examining important historical and current research in psychology.
- Improve your writing and oral presentation skills by writing and speaking about controversial topics
- Increase your ability to understand and appreciate alternative viewpoints that differ from your own.
- Enjoy learning about a variety of topics in psychology.

Course Requirements

Attendance/Issue Summary Papers:

Because this is primarily a discussion-based course, attendance is not only important, but required to do well. As evidence of your attendance and preparation for class, you will be required to submit a 1 page summary of each issue we discuss at the beginning of class. This should be typed and double-spaced. Summarize all of the reading assignments for the topic in one page. Do not include your own feelings about the topic in your summary.

On the days that you are presenting, you do not need to turn in a 1 page summary. Instead, your evidence of preparation will be a bibliography of at least 2 sources (besides the textbook) that YOU (not other members of the debate team) used to support your side of the issue. If you wish, you may turn in hard copies of the articles, but it is not required.

You are allowed to miss up to 3 summary papers without penalty. For each summary paper beyond the minimum requirement, you can earn an additional 5 points of extra credit (up to 15 total points).

Formal Debates:

For each of the topics in your book (or others I select), the class will have the opportunity to discuss and deliberate controversial issues in psychology. These are issues on which experts disagree, with reasonable arguments for both sides. Thus, there is no "correct" answer for any of these issues, although they are all important and hopefully interesting.

The formal debates will adopt a panel format. For each topic, two or three class members will take the *pro* side of an issue and an equal number will take the *con* side. The panel members are expected to clearly present the arguments for their side of the issue. After the panel members on each side of the issue have presented their arguments, the discussion will be opened up for questions, comments, and criticisms from the other members of the class. For more details about this panel discussion format, see the handout, "[Responsibilities of students](#)".

Each student will be on three different panels. Your participation on the three panels will count towards approximately 25% of your course grade. If you miss class on a day you are scheduled to be a panelist, you will be asked to help lead a discussion on a topic of my choosing at the end of the semester.

For each formal debate that we have, all students in the audience will complete the "[Issue Evaluation Form](#)" (I will bring copies) which will be the basis for a portion of the grade (30 points) given to the members of the panel. The rest of the debate grade will come from the instructor (10 points) and peer debate team members (10 points).

As an audience member, it will be helpful to know what [Questions to Ask When Examining a Position](#) and [Propaganda Techniques](#) that are used to persuade people.

Research Paper

- 6-8 double-spaced typed pages (not including title page or references)
- Use [APA style formatting](#) for: Title page, Headings (up to 3-levels if you wish), Citations (Author, Year), and References
- Have a clear stance on a controversial topic in psychology that is not formally debated in class.
 - Examples:
 - Hypnosis is an effective way to facilitate repressed memories.
 - Intersexed infants should be allowed to choose their own sexual identity.
 - Placebos should be used to treat mental illness.
 - Deception should never be used in psychological research.
 - Support your ideas using original research articles published in professional journals.
 - Search online databases such as [Psychinfo](#), [Medline](#), [ERIC](#), [Infotrac](#), [WilsonSelectPlus](#) or [Google Scholar](#)
 - Of the at least 10 reliable sources you need, MOST (8) should come from scientific journal articles.
 - [Library tutorial](#) on searching for articles .
- Present scientific evidence to support your view. Comment on the reliability and validity of the research methods used to support your view, and point out any alternative interpretations of the research results.
 - Is there an obvious bias in the research? (Is it only the hypnotists who believe that hypnosis improves memory?)
 - How many people were used in the study, how many studies were done, were they correlational, experimental, etc.
- **DUE DATE:** Wednesday, April 2nd.
 - It will be reviewed by another student and returned on the following Monday. The final

draft is due on Friday April 11th.

You will submit an electronic copy of the research paper along with a printed version. The electronic copy will be submitted to a plagiarism detection web site (TurnItIn.com). This is primarily to help you learn how to properly cite your sources and to ensure that you do not quote extensively from your sources.

- “Eastern Illinois University is committed to the learning process and academic integrity that is defined in the Student Conduct Code (1.1). To encourage original and authentic written work, any written assignment created in this course may be submitted for review to Turnitin.com and will become a searchable document with the Turnitin-protected and restricted use database.”
- To submit your paper, please view the tutorial first.
 - Login to TurnItIn.com
 - Use the Class ID and password given to you in WebCT.

Requirements and Grading

Assignment	Points	Final Grade	Points
Exams (4 x 50 points)	200	A (90%)	526-585
Issue Summary Papers (17 X 5 points)	85	B (80%)	468-525
Debate Presentation (3 x 50 points)	150	C (70%)	409-467
Controversial Paper	100	D (60%)	351-408
Final Exam	50		
Total	585		

Exams

Multiple choice and essay items will be based on material covered in lecture and in the textbook. Make-up exams will be given for University-approved absences.

Academic misconduct

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Academic misconduct will result in failure of the course, and appropriate disciplinary action, according to university guidelines.

Reading Schedule, Important Dates

Please note this schedule is subject to change. See a day-by-day outline.

Lecture Topic	Issue
Research Issues	
Should Animal Research in Psychology be Eliminated?	2
Was Stanley Milgram's Obedience Study Unethical?	3
Biological Issues	
Are Humans Naturally Violent?	4
Human Development	
Does Giving Praise Harm Children?	6
Does a Mother's Employment Harm Her Children?	7
Does the Divorce of Parents Harm Their Children?	8
Cognitive Processes	
Are Human Cognitive and Behavioral Activities Determined?	9
Mental Health	

Does ADHD Exist?	11
Does Taking Antidepressants Lead to Suicide?	12
Is Drug Addiction a Choice?	13
Psychological Treatment	
Should Psychologists Be Able to Prescribe Medicine	14
Is Treating Homosexuality Ethical?	15
Social Psychology	
Do Video Games Lead to Violence?	16
Does the Internet Have Psychological Benefits?	17
Is Pornography Harmful?	18
Important Dates	Date
MLK Birthday	Jan 21
Exam #1	Jan 30
Lincoln's Birthday	Feb 15
Exam #2	Feb 20
Spring Recess	Mar 10-14
Exam #3	Mar 19
Research Paper Exchange	Apr 2
Exam #4	Apr 9
Research Paper Final Draft	Apr 11
Comprehensive Final Exam	April 30, 8:00-10:00 am

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.