Psychology 1A03 Saturday – Fall, 2005 – Sept. 10 to Dec. 3rd (BSB 147)

**Instructor**: Elliott Beaton

Office hour: In classroom after class on Saturday or by appointment.

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**Website**: http://www.science.mcmaster.ca/psychology/psych1a3sat/index.html

**Evaluation**: I reserve the right to change the format of the syllabus, tests, and/or exam. *Both* class and textbook will be tested. **There are no make-up midterms, papers or exams in this course.** If any test does not take place on the scheduled date due to weather, facilities, or other unforeseen circumstance, the exam will take place at the beginning of the next meeting.

1) **Mid-session tests**: The first in-class test will be held on Oct. 15th and the second in-class test will be held on Nov. 12th. These tests are worth 20% and 25% of your final grade. Each of these tests will cover material up to the date of testing.

2) **Brief paper**: This will be a brief (max 2 double-spaced pages) summary of 3 journal articles written by faculty members in the McMaster Department of Psychology. This essay should follow the instructions outlined in a separate page attached to this syllabus. The essay is due on Nov. 26th in class and will make up 15% of your final grade. There will be a late submission penalty of 2% of your final grade (to a maximum of 15%) per day late (including weekends). Papers will not be accepted after Dec. 3rd with an automatic 0% assigned after this absolute deadline.

3) **Final examination**: The final exam will be held in-class on Dec. 3rd and is worth 40% of your final grade. It is cumulative and will encompass all of the course material.

**Note**: To reiterate, students are responsible for both the lecture material and assigned readings, with roughly equal weighting. **Mid-session tests can only be written at the times indicated so plan to attend. There can be no make-up tests or special sessions for any student.** Students with valid reasons for missing a mid-session test or assignment must consult the Dean of Studies office for their faculty (e.g. Science and Social Science). If, and **only if**, there is adequate written justification for missing the test or assignment deadline, such students will normally have their grades proportionately reweighted, increasing the relative contribution to their final exam. The tests and exams will be in the multiple-choice format. I use multiple mixed versions of the test questionnaires. **Bring MAC ID and a pencil to the tests and exam.** Grades will be assigned according to the following convention: 90-100% = A+, 85-89% = A, 80-84% = A-, 77-79% = B+, 73-76% = B, 70-72% = B-, 67-69% = C+, 63-66% = C, 60-62% = C-, 57-59% = D+, 53-56% = D, 50-52% = D-, 0-49% = F. **Appeal procedures for mid-session tests are strictly structured, as will be explained by the instructor.** Attention is drawn to the Statement on Academic Ethics and the Senate Resolutions on Academic Dishonesty as found in the Senate Policy Statements distributed at registration and available in the Senate Office. Any student who infringes on one of these resolutions will be treated according to the published policy.
**Tentative Schedule of Topics and Readings** *(Lecture dates and topic specifics are approximate and subject to change.)*

- **Sept. 10th** – Introduction
- **Sept. 17th** – Fundamental Ideas in Psychology and Research Methods
- **Sept. 24th** – Genetics and Biological Foundations
- **Oct. 1st** – The Brain and Basic Neuroanatomy
- **Oct. 8th** – Thanksgiving weekend – *(No class)*
- **Oct 15th** – MIDTERM #1 *(In class, 2 hours.)*
- **Oct 22nd** – Sensation, Perception, and Attention
- **Oct 29th** – Learning and Reward
- **Nov. 5th** – Memory
- **Nov. 12th** – MIDTERM #2 *(In class, 2 hours)*
- **Nov. 19th** – Cognition
- **Nov. 26th** – Motivation and Emotion – **Paper Due**
- **Dec. 3rd** – Final Exam *(In class, 3 hours)*

**Instructions for the paper:** The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to scientific writing and to the work that is going on in the psychology department here at McMaster. Your task is to search the faculty list on the departmental website and look at each faculty member’s webpage. **You CANNOT contact the faculty member directly! I will be asking them to get in touch with me if you contact them directly and you will be penalized for such short-cuts.** You are supposed to be using your investigative skills, right? When you have found an area of research that you are interested in, you must go to the literature and find three journal articles written by that faculty member. You must then summarize those three articles **in your own words** and explain how they are linked. **The paper can be no longer than 2 double-spaced pages,** and must be typed in 12 pt., New Times Roman font and standard margins. **You must reference the articles.**

**Hints:** 1) Get started early! Time will be at a premium right before the exam. 2) Use headings and subheadings to help organize your thoughts and help the reader follow your line of reasoning. 3) Think of the value and necessity of every word in your paper whilst you are editing it. For example, did I need to say both “value and necessity” in the previous sentence, or would one of those words stand-alone and convey the same message? Even one word in a two page essay takes up valuable real estate. Cutting extraneous words adds up over the course of a whole essay and adds to the conciseness of your work. 4) Even though you cannot work directly with another student on this paper, that does not mean that you cannot talk to them about your ideas or have them help you edit for clarity, punctuation, and flow. 5) There is help available at the Center for Student Development. 6) Things that affect your grade on this assignment: appropriateness of your ideas in the context of the course, the quality of your library work, organization and clarity, accuracy in referencing, the cohesiveness of your arguments, and finally, have you only presented a summary or are you showing original thought. 7) Be objective and scientific – avoid jargon, unsubstantiated opinion, sentiment, colloquial speech, and personal information.