

Introduction to Psychology- A Christian Perspective- Psy 1301

Spring 2012 - Tuesday 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Austin Graduate School of Theology

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I. Course Description:

This course is a combination of the standard introduction to Psychology and relevant applications for the Christian counselor. This course will provide a careful *“balance between feelings and behaviors, between the past and the present, and between theory and practice”*.

While the study and application of psychology within a Christian setting has been a controversial subject for many years, this course can be a valuable tool for seminary students as it opens the doors to different theories of human personality. Each theory represents a unique and a different approach to the understanding of human beings, which in turn expands and complements our biblical understanding of mankind. In addition, this course explores the role and application of secular psychology and its appropriate use in helping others in the church.

This course will be taught following the same premise expressed by the authors of the chosen textbook, *“We regard the Bible as the inerrant Word of God and as our foundation and guide for life.”*

II. Course Goals:

- a. The student will gain a basic understanding of the fields of psychology and counseling and its practical applications within a church or parachurch setting, while becoming familiarized with the basic concepts of psychology and the most traditional psychological theories behind human behavior and personality.
- b. The student will also gain a deeper understanding of important questions such as *why we behave the way we do? How did we come to be who we are? How are we different and similar to others? What distinguishes us from other species?* The answers to such questions will come from both biblical and secular sources.

While the practice of Psychology and professional counseling requires specialized training, internships, supervision and professional credentialing by

state boards, the seminary student will be better prepared to assist hurting individuals in a church or Parachurch setting

III. Course Objectives:

- a. The student will become familiar with methods and principles of biblical exegesis as applied to the practice of Christian Psychology and counseling.
- b. The student will be able to articulate elements of a coherent worldview of Christian Psychology and counseling approaches in comparison and contrast with other current worldviews, and be able to communicate this effectively in a local church or parachurch setting.

IV. Textbooks:

Meier, Paul D. (et al), (1996) Introduction to Psychology and Counseling, Christian Perspective and Applications. Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI

V. Course Requirements and Grading.

A. Course Requirements.

1. Interactive participation in discussions with instructor and class members.
2. Required readings of textbook, articles and other assigned materials. All reading materials, including those transmitted through electronic means, will be included in the exams.
3. Two major exams
4. **Class Report:** Each student will select a topic relevant to our class and will make a class presentation. Materials and guidelines will be provided in the course of the class.

Special warning for your presentation:

Plagiarism and citation of sources: Plagiarism is the representation of another person's work as your own and is a form of theft. This includes material composed by other students, purchased from an online paper service, or copied from published books and articles or from the Internet. If in any assignment you employ material written by someone else, you must give the author proper credit, documenting the source with an appropriate citation and marking any words directly quoted with quotation marks (or with indentation if four or more lines are quoted). Failure to appropriately credit the sources you use will result in a reduction in your grade for the assignment in question and/or the requirement that you revise the assignment. Intentionally representing another person's work as your own will be grounds for academic discipline, including your possible dismissal

from the School. For more information on how to acknowledge sources properly and avoid plagiarism, refer to the School's "Guide to Written Work" (http://www.austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/guide_for_written_work.htm).

B. Course Grading.

1. Two major exams equivalent to 80 points out of 100 total grade. Each worth 40 points
2. Class participation is 10 points out of 100 total grade.
3. Class presentation is 10 points out of 100 total grade.

VI. Course Outline:

Discussion Topic/Readings divided by chapters	Date
Introduction to the course	01-17-12
Chapter 1: <i>Introduction to Psychology</i> (p.17-37) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Growth of Psychology• Ways of Knowing• The Scientific Method• Psychology and Christianity• Human Beings in Holistic Perspective	
Chapter 2: <i>The biological Basis of Behavior</i> (p.39-54) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Neuron• The Central nervous System• The Peripheral Nervous System• The Endocrine System• Variations in Conscientiousness	01-24-12
Chapter 3: <i>Sensation and Perception</i> (p.57-71) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sensation• Perception	01-31-12
Chapter 4: <i>Emotions</i> (p.73-83) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theories of Emotion• Nonverbal Communication• The Positive Emotions• The Negative Emotions	02-07-12
Chapter 5: <i>Motivation</i> (P.85-100) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theories of Motivation• Biological Drives	02-14-12

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperactivity 	
<p>Chapter 6: Learning (p.103-124)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Classical Conditioning</i> • <i>Operant Conditioning</i> • <i>Observational Conditioning (Modeling)</i> 	02-21-12
<p>Chapter 7: Memory, Cognition and Self-Esteem (p.125-145)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Memory</i> • <i>Cognition</i> • <i>Developing Healthy Self-Esteem</i> 	02-28-12
<p>Chapter 8: Intelligence (P.147-160)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Intelligence? • Theories of Intelligence • Intelligence: Inherited, Learned, or Unique? • Psychological Testing • Mental Retardation • Giftedness 	03-06-12
<p>Chapter 9: Social Psychology (P.163-171)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes • Social Influence 	03-13-12
<p>Chapter 10: Child Development (P.173-198)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Theories of Child Development</i> • <i>Patterns of Child Development</i> 	03-20-12
<p>Chapter 11: Adolescent and Adult Development (P.201-221)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolescent Development • Adult Development 	03-27-12
<p>Chapter 12: Personality (p.225-241)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theories of Personality • Personality and Testing • Defense Mechanisms 	04-03-12
<p>Chapter 13: The Psychology of Religion (P.243-261)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freud's View of Religion • Jung's Archetypes • Maslow's Peak Experiences • Allport's Theory of Religious Prejudice 	04-10-12

- Why do People Become Christians?
- The Development of Religious Concepts
- Facilitating Spiritual Growth
- Spiritual Development
- The Spiritual Basis of Emotional Problems

Chapter 14: Abnormal Psychology (*p.265-294*) **04-17-12**

- Defining Abnormality
- Mental Health
- Causes of Psychological Problems
- Psychological Disorders

Chapter 15: Psychotherapy and Personal Counseling (*P.297-320*) **04-24-12**

- Therapists and Counselors
- Psychiatric Hospitalization
- Secular Counseling
- Christian Counseling
- Do Counseling and Therapy Work?
- Eclectic Counseling

Chapter 16: Group and Family Counseling (*P.321*) **05-01-12**

- Group Counseling
- Premarital Counseling
- Marriage and Family Counseling
- Ethics in Counseling and Therapy

Final for this course **05-08-12**

Bibliography: Bibliographic information is included at the end of each chapter of the book