Course: Psychology 453 (History and Systems of Psychology)
Instructor: James T. Todd, Ph.D.
Course Time: 9:30-10:45 Tuesday and Thursday
Room: Room 123 Mark Jefferson Hall
Office: 532 Mark Jefferson, 734-487-0376
Office Hours: To be announced.

Course Objectives: This course is an overview of the history of psychology. It will cover the origins of psychology in pre-20th century philosophy, science, and culture, but the emphasis will be on developments in psychology during the 20th century. For successful completion of the course, the student will demonstrate through satisfactory performance on examinations (or other requirements) knowledge of the basic concepts covered in the text, lectures, and readings.

Assignments: Aside from the weekly reading (see below), there will be no regularly scheduled graded assignments. Graded work may be assigned with the points earned added to the total points earned for the examinations. For best performance, the reading assignment should be completed by the beginning of the session it corresponds to. Many students find it helpful to read and take notes on a chapter before the lecture and reread the chapter immediately following the lecture.

Examinations: The course will have four examinations plus one final examination. All course examination questions will be multiple choice, true or false, or essay. The examinations will cover material from the lectures and the book.

Make-ups Exams: Make-up examinations will be arranged only for those students who provide valid, overriding medical or personal reasons for missing a scheduled examination. If possible, the instructor should be informed of the need for a make-up examination before the scheduled date of the examination. Documentation verifying a valid reason for the absence from the test may be required before a make-up test is arranged. Make-up tests will be conducted at a time and place convenient for the instructor. The format of the make-up examination may differ from that of the regularly scheduled examination.

Attendance: With the exception of scheduled examination meetings, lecture attendance will not be recorded and will not be used as the basis for grading. However, because the examinations will cover lecture material and important announcements may be made at any time regarding issues such as reading Assignment changes, class cancellations, and examination coverage, attendance at every class meeting is encouraged. Attendance at examinations will be required.

Timely Attendance: The class sessions are scheduled to begin at 9:30 A.M. The lecture will typically begin on time. Because the instructor occasionally presents new material at the very beginning of the class session, it is to the student's advantage to arrive on time. However, it is also better for the student to arrive late or attend a partial session than to not come at all. If the student must arrive late or leave early, the instructor requests that the student make every reasonable effort to avoid disturbing the rest of the class.

Tape Recorders: Lectures may be recorded by students for their personal use. Please be advised that the instructor makes liberal use of the blackboard and other visual aids. Therefore, a tape recording should not be used as a substitute for attending class.

Lecture Notes: The instructor frequently lectures without notes and may add or delete material extemporaneously if he does use notes. Therefore, the instructor will not be able to supply useful copies of notes to students. A student who needs class notes should consult their classmates. Be advised that students with high grades do not necessarily take good notes.
Grading: The grading scale for examinations will be as follows: A=100-90.0%, B=89.9-80.0%, C=79.9-70.0%, D=69.9-60.0%, E=59.9-0.0%. The top third of each range will be assigned a plus, and the bottom will receive a minus. The final examination will be 1/5 (20%) of the student's total grade, the other examinations will count for 2/5 (40%). Any student who averages 90% or higher on the first four examinations and passes the fourth examination will be excused from the final examination. The lowest of the four regular examination scores (not including the Final grade) will be dropped from the average.

"Extra Credit": The instructor does not give "extra credit" work designed to raise the student's course grade. The course grading system is designed to allow up to three-fifths of the course grade to be earned in the last week of the course. Thus, rather than asking for extra work, students who are unsatisfied with early course performance should concentrate their efforts on improving their examination scores.

Cheating: University and departmental policies with respect to academic dishonesty and cheating will be followed and enforced. If you are caught cheating on an examination, the very least that will happen is that you will fail the examination on which you cheated and you will also forfeit the option to drop your lowest examination score. You might also be reported to Student Judicial Services for possible additional action including being expelled from the course or even the university. Unless required by special circumstances, no student will be permitted to use notes, books, tape players, radios, calculators, or similar items during testing periods. Students may be required to show picture identification and sit in assigned seats during testing periods. Exceptions to this policy must be arranged prior to the examinations, be based on demonstrated need, and include appropriate official documentation if required. To reduce the opportunity for cheating by collusion, make-up tests may be in a different format and contain different questions than the examination given in class.

Student requests: Requests for make-up tests, grade changes, extensions, etc. should be made in directly to the instructor in a timely a manner. In accordance with University policies, the instructor, department, or university may require that the student provide supporting documentation for any request. Students with specific needs related to recognized disabilities such as interpreters, readers, and amplified listening systems, should inform the instructor of those needs in a timely manner. Please note that requests not made in a timely manner might not be considered (even if there had been a legitimate reason for the request at the earlier time).

Syllabus Changes: Unforeseen circumstances may result in changes in any aspect of this course including, but not limited to examination schedule, reading schedule, assignments, course requirements, and examination policies. Any such changes will be announced in class or disseminated by other appropriate means.

Class Cancellations: Class meetings may be canceled by university authorities or by the instructor. Cancellations will be announced in as timely a manner as possible. You will be responsible for reading material assigned for the day of the canceled class.

Other policies: Please refer to official university publications for questions regarding enrollment, registration, schedules, adds, drops, grading options, and other policies.
Course Schedule

Week 1

(1/6): Introduction to the course/Approaches to the history of psychology

Topics: What is psychology? What is history?
Approaches to history

Week 2

(1/11): Background for psychology in America.

Topics: The relationship between science and technology.
The influence of materialism and the control over nature.
The relationship between physics and psychology
The influence of biology on psychology.
Natural selection and biology
Psychology as the study of consciousness

Reading: Text, pp. 115-173.

(1/13): Background for psychology in America (continued)

Week 3

(1/18): The Era of Systems and Schools 1890-1935

Topics: Why did systems and schools develop and are they really gone?
Why psychology had to separate from philosophy and physiology
The role of Wundt and James in American Psychology

Reading: Text: pp. 361-391; 443-485

(1/20): The Era of Systems and Schools (continued)

Week 4

(1/25): The Era of Systems and Schools 1890-1935 (continued)

(1/27) Test 1

Week 5

(2/1): Early Studies of Learning and Remembering

Topics: Why theories of skill learning did not become prominent.
Precursors of cognitive psychology in skill learning
The evolution of modern behaviorism

Reading: Text, pp. 174-189.

(2/3): Early Studies of Learning and Remembering (continued)
Week 6:

(2-8): Learning Theories

Topics: Animal learning
Skinner, Guthrie, Hull, Tolman, Kohler, others.

Readings: Text, pp. 487-532

(2/10): Learning Theories (continued)

Week 7:

(2/8): Learning Theories (continued)

(2/9): Test 2

Week 8:


Topics: Recapitulation theory, racism, and sexism.
Comparative psychology and intelligence testing

(2/17): Intelligence: Measurement and Controversy (continued)

Week 8:

(2/22): Developmental Psychology

Topics: Recapitulation theory lives: Hall, Freud, Gesell, Piaget, Kohlberg, Eriksen, Piaget, and even Spock--but not Watson and Skinner.

Readings: Text, pp. 352-355;

(2/24): Developmental Psychology (continued)

Week 9:

(3/1-3/3): Winter Recess

Week 10:

(3/8): Developmental Psychology (continued)

(3/10) Test 3

Week 11:


Topics: Skinner/Chomsky issue
The rise of computer as metaphor.
Why cognitive psychology may not have defeated behaviorism?
Why behaviorism did not impede cognitive psychology?
The inevitable decline of cognitive psychology.
(3/17): Cognitive Psychology (continued)

Week 12:

(3/22): Cognitive Psychology (continued)
(3/24): Cognitive Psychology (continued)

Week 13:

(3/29): How history is done
(3/31): How history is done. (Continued)

Week 14:

(4/5): Clinical Psychology
   Topics: From demonic possession to viruses.
   How clinical psychologies develop.
   How the concept of mental illness developed and is used.

(4/7): Clinical Psychology (continued)

Week 15:

(4/12): Professional Organizations in Psychology
   Topics: APA, APS, ABA

(4/14): Professional Organizations in Psychology (continued)

Week 16:

(4/19): Test 4
(4/21): Review for Final Test

Week 17:

(4/26): Final Examination: All lecture and text material