

Psychology of Women

(PSYC 3310 – CRN 11891; 3 credit hours)
S 11:30 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. Room N-409

Instructor: Debra Ferguson, M.A.
email: debraferguson@mentaltoolbox.com
Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

The University of Houston-Downtown catalogue describes this course as “A survey of the major theories and issues in understanding the impact of gender on thinking and behaving.”

Prerequisites

PSY 1303 and three additional hours in psychology

Educational Objectives

After completing this course, you should be able to do the following:

1. Understand the effect of socialization and culture on the behavior and experiences of women, as well as the effects of social conditions and relationships on women’s well-being
2. Appreciate both the classical and current research and theories that are important in the study of women’s psychology
3. Write about a wide variety of topics in the development of women over the lifespan, such as sex and gender, physical, psychosocial, cognitive, education, career development, sexuality, diversity, aging, and violence against women

Required Text

The text required for this class is Half the Human Experience: The Psychology of Women (sixth edition) by Janet Shibley Hyde (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004; ISBN 0-618-30632-3).

Grading

Students’ grades for this course will be based on the following:

♦ Attendance / Participation	10%
♦ Journals	15%
♦ Exams	75%
Total	100%

Attendance / Participation

As a general rule, students who attend class obtain higher grades than those who do not and, for this reason, it is to your advantage to avoid absences. I realize, however, that sometimes absences are unavoidable and I recommend exchanging phone numbers with a classmate so that you can obtain the notes for any class that you might miss.

For the attendance/participation portion of the course grade, I will take attendance at every class meeting. Please make certain that you sign the attendance sheet. In addition, students will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material from the text. Please make sure that you stay current with the reading assignments.

Journals

Students will keep journals for this course and are expected to complete one entry per week. The journal entries should be at least 500 words. They should typewritten in a double-spaced format with

1-inch margins and use a Times New Roman 12-point font or the equivalent. I am deliberately keeping the criteria for journal entries very broad so that students have a great deal of flexibility in choosing how to use their journals as learning tools. Possible types of entries include the following:

- Describe how a particular topic discussed in class/covered in the textbook relates to material from other psychology/social science courses.
- Compare course material with books that you have read, with movies that you have seen, or with lyrics from contemporary songs.
- Compare a topic discussed in class with either a current event situation or with a situation that you have experienced.
- Pretend that you are one of the theorists discussed in class and write a narrative about a current event from his/her viewpoint.

Other types of entries may also be possible. If you have an idea about another type of entry, please feel free to discuss it with me.

Exams

There will be three (3) regular exams and a final exam given in this course and I will drop the lowest regular exam grade before calculating the final grade. There are no make-ups for exams, but I will use the missed exam grade as the one to be dropped. The format for exams will be short answer/multiple choice and I reserve the option of using an essay question as a bonus question.

Please note that all exams will begin at the regularly scheduled class times—please make sure that you are on time for the exam.

Other Considerations

Dropping a Course

University of Houston-Downtown policy does not permit instructors to drop students. Should you feel that it is necessary to drop the class, please be aware that it is your responsibility to complete the necessary paperwork to drop officially. Failure to drop the course officially will result in a failing grade on your transcript.

Cell Phones, Pagers, and Tape Recorders

Cell phones and pagers are great conveniences, but can be extremely annoying in class. Please turn them off during class.

From past experience, I've determined that the presence of tape recorders in class can have an inhibiting effect during discussions. To promote class discussions that are comfortable for everyone, please do not use tape recorders for this class.

Academic Honesty

The catalog of the University of Houston-Downtown specifies the Academic Honesty Code as the following: "WE WILL BE HONEST IN ALL OUR ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND WILL NOT TOLERATE DISHONESTY." The catalog also explains that the role of the Academic Honesty Policy is ". . . to address, in a uniform manner, cases of alleged violation of the Honesty Code."

Students with Disabilities

"UH-D adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities should register with Disabled Student Services and contact their instructor(s) in a timely manner to arrange for appropriate accommodations."

Reading and Exam Schedule

The following schedule specifies the reading and exam dates for this course. These dates may be adjusted on an as-needed basis, but any changes will be announced in class.

Date		Topic	Assignment
August	27	Introduction; Chapter 1	
September	3	Chapter 2: Theoretical perspectives	Chapters 1 & 2
	10	Chapter 3: Gender Stereotypes and Differences	Chapter 3
	17	Exam I: Chapters 1-3 Begin Chapter 4: Women of Color	Chapter 4
	24	Complete Chapter 4 Begin Chapter 5: Gender and Language	Chapter 5
October	1	Complete Chapter 5 Chapter 6: Gender and Emotion	Chapter 6
	8	Exam II: Chapters 4-6 Chapter 7: Infancy to Old Age	Chapter 7
	15	Chapter 8: Abilities, Achievement, and Motivation	Chapter 8
	22	Chapter 9: Women and Work	Chapter 9
	29	Exam III: Chapters 7-9	
November	5	Chapter 11: Women's Health Issues	Chapter 11
	12	Chapters 12: Female Sexuality Chapter 13: Lesbian & Bisexual Women	Chapters 12 & 13
	19	Chapter 14: Victimization of Women	Chapter 14
	26	No class—Thanksgiving Holiday!!	
December	3	Chapter 15: Women and Mental Health Issues	Chapter 15
	10	Final Exam	Chapters 11-15