

Dear Psychology 101 Students,

## **HERE ARE A FEW TIPS FOR HOW TO SUCCEED IN PSY0101 AT UPB.**

From a UPB Psychology Major and ACTC Peer Tutor



### **THE SYLLABUS IS YOUR MAP TO SUCCESS.**

Professors will tell you to read the syllabus from the day you start college to the day you graduate. This is for good reason, because reading the syllabus regularly lets you know when exams and assignments are. This helps you avoid forgetting to do assignments or study for exams until the last minute and allows you to plan ahead. You will have an easier time managing the semester this way. Additionally, important information such as the professor's office hours, their office location, and other course requirements can be found in the syllabus.

### **READ THE TEXTBOOK AND ANY OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS.**

Please read the textbook and anything else the professor assigns for you to read. There is a reason why the professor requires it. Not only does reading help reinforce what is taught in class, but it can also help you understand concepts that did not make sense in class. Some concepts that appear on exams might be in assigned readings but never mentioned in class. Reading might seem time-consuming, but if you adopt an effective reading strategy, you will end up studying along the way. This will actually save you time!

### **FOCUS ON EXAMPLES OF CONCEPTS.**

Pay attention to any examples of concepts and come up with as many of your own as you can. Comparing and contrasting, connecting ideas to examples, and explaining concepts in your own words will make taking exams easier than if you simply read the textbook or memorized definitions. Psychology exams rarely have definition questions. They are all about application and examples! If a professor gives an example in class, write it down! Depending on the professor, that same example may appear on an exam. If you need help finding more examples, reach out to your professor, classmates, or the tutoring center.

### **DO NOT STUDY AT THE LAST MINUTE.**

Build quiet study time into your schedule and start studying as soon as the material has been presented, not the week or day before the exam. Review lecture or textbook notes within twenty-four hours of taking them, and hold regular review sessions. This will help you feel much less overwhelmed and help the information stick in your head. This also gives you more time for building connections between concepts and understanding the bigger picture, not just the facts. Follow a regular study schedule (which is where building time into your schedule comes into play!) to ensure you are constantly exposing yourself to the material.

## **REVIEW YOUR EXAMS ONCE THEY ARE GRADED.**

All of the PSY0101 professors will allow you to review your exam after you take it. Please note that this process will likely be different this year due to changes in the way classes will be taught because of the pandemic; professors should tell you how to go about reviewing, and if not, just ask! Take advantage of this and thoroughly go over your exam afterward, as this might help you identify what kinds of questions you have trouble with or areas you need to focus on. It might also help you get used to the way the professor words questions. Many students struggle with this when taking their first few psychology classes! Additionally, some professors have comprehensive finals, meaning material that appeared on previous exams could appear again on the final.

## **TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.**

Your coffee cup is not the only cup you need to fill to be a successful student. Getting enough sleep, exercising, and eating well are important to your ability to perform well in your classes. Make sure to take breaks from school and work to recharge and connect with friends. Self-care should not be overlooked, but self-care should not be an excuse to indulge in habits that are bad for you. For example, while ordering pizza can be a fun reward, it should not be your only go-to reward! Developing habits that are both healthy and rewarding will benefit you in the long-run.

## **REACH OUT TO OTHERS.**

This one is easier said than done. It can be very intimidating to seek help from anyone, whether it be friends, tutors, or professors; however, that moment of discomfort is temporary and can make the difference between being confused for half the semester and performing to the best of your ability. Many students that have come into our university's tutoring center have expressed they often receive better answers from professors during office hours than in class. Additionally, professors tend to be much more understanding and willing to help you out if they see that you are actively working to earn the grade you want. Please remember that tutors and professors will never judge you for asking for help. Helping you is their job!

## **SCHEDULE A TUTORING APPOINTMENT.**

If you ever find that you are struggling with test-taking, studying, time management, or course material, reach out to the tutoring center and make an appointment. Even if many things will be online this year, tutoring included, we will still be offering online tutoring. What happens during tutoring will remain confidential, and you will never be judged for the questions you ask or the topics you struggle with.

To schedule an appointment, follow this link: <https://www.upb.pitt.edu/how-make-appointment>