

**PSYCHOLOGY 299:
PSYCHOLOGY IN FILM
SUMMER 2019 (MAY TERM)
SYLLABUS**

Instructor: Dr. Alexander Swan

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Office Hours: May 21, 23, 28, & 30: 12- 2 PM

OR GO HERE: <http://swanpsych.com/contact-about-me/>

My Website: www.swanpsych.com

What you can call me: “Dr. Swan”, “Prof Swan”, “Swan”, “Doc”

Preferred Pronouns: He/Him/His

BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

MEETING:

When: TR 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM (Meetings: May 21, 23, 28, & 30; No in-person classes last week of May term)

Where: Burgess Hall 205

COURSE WEBSITE:

All the course announcements, quizzes, grades, this syllabus, and other resources will be available through the course portal on Brightspace.

CLASS DESCRIPTION:

Analysis and critical investigation of psychological themes in popular cinema. Films viewed and discussed will contain depictions of cognition, memory, intelligence, stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, and psychological disorders.

CLASS FORMAT:

The course will consist of viewing films, readings, writing reflection papers, and online discussion. Reading assignments should be completed before the film is viewed/discussed.

INTENDED LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After successful completion of this course, the student should have:

- an understanding of basic psychological principles related to human behavior across major fields of psychology;
- an awareness of the impact of popular film on society;
- the ability to critically evaluate the accuracy of portrayal of psychological topics in film;
- and an appreciation for techniques used in film to illustrate psychological concepts.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Discussion Forum Activity	20%	Due: Various Dates
Film Analysis Papers	60%	Due: Various Dates
Attendance	20%	

GRADING SCALE:

The grading scale I will use for the course is the following:

≥ 93%	A	≥ 80% and < 83%	B-	≥ 67% and < 70%	D+
≥ 90% and < 93%	A-	≥ 77% and < 80%	C+	≥ 63% and < 67%	D
≥ 87% and < 90%	B+	≥ 73% and < 77%	C	≥ 60% and < 63%	D-
≥ 83% and < 87%	B	≥ 70% and < 73%	C-	< 60%	F

NOTE: Grades will not be changed for any reason, except for clerical errors!

ASSESSMENTS:

A. FILMS

NOTE: Some of the movies you will be required to view may contain instances of violence, sexual content, and/or foul language as would be consistent with an R rating. If this is offensive, or if you are otherwise unable to view such movies, please discuss this with me ASAP to determine if there is a possible accommodation or alternative film assignment.

1. Film 1 – *Crash* (2004) (Rated: R)
2. Film 2 – *12 Angry Men* (1957) (Rated: Approved)
3. Film 3 – *The Breakfast Club* (1985) (Rated: R)
4. Film 4 – *Thank You for Smoking* (2005) (Rated: R)
5. Film 5 – *Shutter Island* (2010) (Rated: R)
6. Film 6 – *American Beauty* (1999) (Rated: R)
7. Film 7 – *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) (Rated: R)
8. Film 8 – *A Beautiful Mind* (2001) (Rated: R)
9. Film 9 – *Memento* (2000) (Rated: R)
10. Film 10 – *Ex Machina* (2014) (Rated: R)
11. Film 11 – *Inside Out* (2015) (Rated: PG)

B. FILM ANALYSIS PAPERS:

For each film you will view in this course (11 total), I want you to write a 1-page, single-spaced analysis paper. The reflections should contain a brief summary of the film (and don't be afraid to be honest—if you didn't understand it, I want to know!) followed by a psychological analysis from your perspective, incorporating what you know about psychology AND the readings. What questions did the film leave you with? Do you agree or disagree with the presentation of the psychology? Was the presentation correct or incorrect with what we know about psychology? What artistic liberties were used? Use these papers to put your thoughts on the material into motion, as this generative activity will help you conceptualize and digest the loads of the material in the course. **THESE REFLECTIONS ARE DUE APPROXIMATELY EVERY OTHER DAY BY 11:59 PM (SEE COURSE CALENDAR BELOW)**, so you should make sure you're staying on top of them!

C. CLASS DISCUSSION

During our class meetings, we will discuss the films and readings for a given week. Additionally, I will pose discussion questions on the forums on Brightspace for everyone to engage in. Credit will be given for active participation in the film discussions both in person and online. If you are not familiar with how discussions are conducted on BS, we'll chat about it our first day in person and go through it.

COURSE POLICIES

1. GETTING INFORMATION:

- **EMAIL PROTIP:** I use email for almost all communications/announcements. If you do not

check your Eureka email often, forward it to an address you do check. YAHOO ADDRESSES GET SENT TO MY SPAM FOLDER. The best way to contact me is always via email. If you cannot come to office hours and/or decide to send an email, be sure to use the following format so that I can help you:

To:
Subject Line: "PSY 299: (insert your topic here)"
From: your full address

Dear (insert name of person you are contacting here),

Hello, my name is (your full name here) and I am a student taking PSY 299/Psych in Film. I have a question regarding (insert your question here).

*(Considerate closing of your choosing),
Your full name*

A word of caution: I will do my best to reply within 48 hours. Depending on the nature (and popularity) of your question, my answer may be direct OR posted as a general class announcement on Brightspace. Please hold off on resending a message until 48 hours have passed. Finally, I may not respond to emails between the hours of 8 PM and 8 AM, so please keep this in mind when deciding whether to resend the message.

- **OFFICE HOURS:** As this is a hybrid course, my office hours are limited to the days we have in-person class meetings. I generally have an open-door policy: if the door's open, please feel free to bug me. You can check my website for these times rather than emailing me to ask me if I'll be there. You might want to email me to let me know you're coming, but walk-ins are welcome. I will specify whether there are circumstances that will cut into my office time as needed.

2. LATE WORK AND MAKE-UP POLICY:

- If participation in college-sponsored events (e.g., athletics) or observance of a religious holiday or other sanctioned event prevents your attendance, you must contact me prior to the relevant date, and you must have any appropriate documentation. If an assignment is due on that date, arrangements must be made to complete the assignment ahead of time, if possible.
- Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due at the beginning of class (unless otherwise noted for electronic assignment submissions). Late assignments will only be accepted in the case of extraordinary circumstances and appropriate documentation, and may involve point/percentage deductions (standard penalty is 10%/24-hr period). Please alert me to these extraordinary circumstances by email within 24 hours of the missed class, and we will set up a time to discuss these on a case-by-case basis.
- **BENEFIT OF DOUBT POLICY:** However, I recognize that sometimes life happens; therefore, I have built some flexibility into the course to allow for illness, other obligations, and bad days.
 - i. Your lowest Film Analysis and one Discussion Question will be dropped from your final category computation. You will not be able to make these up—they are dropped for whatever reason you missed, no questions asked!
 - ii. **However, Attendance will not be dropped. You must be in class each meeting.**

3. GRADE DISPUTE POLICY:

- If you disagree about how your term paper was graded, you must dispute the issue *in writing* (not email). Write a paragraph about why you think your attempt was correct/sufficient and turn it (with

the original assignment) in to the instructor at the lecture following the return of the relevant assignment. Only reasonable and well-justified complaints will be considered, and all decisions are final. Please note that if you submit a complaint, the instructor will re-grade the entire assignment, and your grade could increase, decrease, or remain the same. **This policy does not apply to final course grades.**

4. CLASS ETIQUETTE:

- **Please do not use your cell phones during class.** I would prefer them to be put on silent or off. If your cell phone goes off during class or an exam, please silence it immediately; do not let it ring through. I will remind everyone prior to exams to make sure their phones are turned off. Please refrain from text messaging during class. I know you think you're being subtle; I assure you that I can see you texting.
- Please do not leave the class partway through unless it is an emergency; it is very disruptive. If you must leave, please sit in the back and at the edge of an aisle so as to not disrupt your fellow classmates.
- Please have respect for the class, your peers, and yourselves by being fully present in the class. Please avoid anything not relevant to the class, such as sleeping, surfing the Internet, or doing homework for other classes.
- **LATENESS:** Please try to arrive a few minutes before the start of lecture. We will begin promptly at 9:30 AM, and it can be distracting to me and to your peers if you arrive late. I will try not to keep you late.

5. LAPTOP & TABLET POLICY:

- a. Research indicates that taking notes by hand results in significantly better retention of conceptual information than taking notes on a laptop (see Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014), even when students are engaged in the material (i.e., are not also checking their email or Facebook feed).
- b. Further, laptop use can be distracting in various ways to the entire class. Because my goal is to maximize the likelihood of a favorable learning environment, **I strongly recommend that you not use laptops in class.**
- c. However, laptops will be permitted on a probationary basis; should the use of laptops be taken advantage of or prove distracting to other students, I will revisit this policy then.

6. ATTENDANCE:

- Attendance for this course is required. You will receive a score for each day you are present for discussion. Attendance is marked at the end of the class period.

7. ADVICE FOR COURSE SUCCESS:

- It is important for all students to realize that there will be a distribution of grades in this class that reflects your mastery of some very technical and often-challenging concepts. Complete mastery of all concepts will earn an "A," good but imperfect knowledge earns a "B," average or adequate knowledge will earn a "C," and poorer knowledge will receive grades of "D" or "F." By these criteria, the majority of grades should (and likely will) be "B/C" grades. Remember that your grade in this course is not a reflection of your general ability or your character.
- **This is a difficult, but not impossible course;** it is my hope that you will find this class challenging but rewarding in terms of the knowledge you will walk away with. If you anticipate having difficulty (or when you are), I strongly urge you to do the following:
 - i. Attend every lecture, and take good notes. While attendance will not be graded, per se, the ability to truly learn and use the material in this class is strongly related to attendance.
 - ii. Review lecture notes on the day of the lecture (before you go to bed). If you need

clarification on anything, ask in the next lecture, lab, or office hours. Don't wait until right before the exams!

- iii. Manage your time wisely. This is an intense course with many moving pieces and specific terminology. Familiarize yourself with the syllabus, put important dates in your calendars now, and space out your work – there is just too much to do it at the last minute
- iv. Use the resources available to you – that includes your course materials (especially this syllabus), me, and the many amazing services offered on campus.
- v. Discuss the material with another student. Form a study group. Go to office hours. Ask me questions. **ASK QUESTIONS. ASK ALL THE QUESTIONS—DO NOT ALLOW IN YOUR OWN CONFUSION.**

8. FINAL POINT: I CARE ABOUT YOU

- Eureka College is an institution committed to helping everybody associated with it—students, teachers, administrators, grounds staff, custodians—become their best selves. As a teacher, I become my best self by helping you become *your* best self. That means:
 - Everything I ask you to do (even stuff you don't like) is intended to help you learn and grow. You can trust me to have your best interests at heart.
 - My office is always a safe space for you. So is our classroom. If you ever feel that isn't true, *talk to me.*
 - If you need any accommodation--- for disability, mental health, or just having a rough week, *talk to me.*
 - If anything in your life is keeping you from doing your best work in our class, talk to me. It can be illness (physical, mental). It can be loneliness and homesickness. It can be trouble at home, trouble with family, trouble with relationships. It can be fear for personal safety, food insecurity, homelessness, job loss. Whatever it is, I can't promise a solution, but I can promise to do whatever I can to help you find the resources you need. *Talk to me.*
 - I want our class to be a safe space. To me this means a place where you feel safe expressing your thoughts, working through things. But it also means a space where you are safe from abuse, negativity, bigotry. Some of the topics we deal with may be difficult. We may struggle. We may need to take breaks, come back to things. This is all part of thinking through big ideas. Because these things don't happen right away, but occur over time, brief snapshots of our class are not representative of who we are and what we do. To ensure our class remains a safe space, come tell me as soon as possible so I can rectify the situation.

ADDITIONAL COURSE AND COLLEGE INFORMATION

ACCESSIBILITY (ADA) STATEMENT:

The Learning Center, located on the first floor of Alumni Hall, provides academic services to all Eureka College students. Consultations are available in the areas of math and writing. Study groups, individual academic counseling, and course specific tutoring are also available by contacting Jason Zimmerman at x6520 or jjzimmerman@eureka.edu.

Any Eureka College student with a disability or other special circumstances requiring accommodations or other consideration in order to successfully complete the requirements of this course is requested to identify himself/herself/themselves to the instructor and discuss the matter privately. This disclosure should be made within the first week of the course so proper accommodations can be made.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY STATEMENT:

Eureka College strives to instill individual responsibility and integrity in its students, and expects its students to behave with integrity throughout their time at the College. Any giving or receiving of unpermitted aid on tests or assignments is considered cheating. If a student is uncertain about how to document sources or incorporate materials into a paper, it is his or her responsibility to seek help by speaking to the faculty member, another professor, or a Writing Center tutor. The College's Academic Dishonesty policy is outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic dishonesty constitutes a major breach of the trust that exists between the instructor and the student. It includes passing off another's ideas as one's own (plagiarism), any attempt to gain information about a test or exam prior to the test or exam date without the instructor's consent, and providing unauthorized assistance on a test, exam, paper, or other assignment to another student. **Cheating or plagiarizing on a test, exam, quiz, paper, or other assignment will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Further dishonesty will result in failing the course. Students who fail for academic dishonesty will not have the option of withdrawing from the course.**

A specific note on plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when someone misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgement, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or alter work that a student then submits as his or her own. Although some assignments or projects in this class can be completed in pairs, all writing must be the work of the student whose name is on the assignment, and that student alone. If you are at all uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me – do not risk your grade or integrity! I also encourage you to meet with me if you suspect that another student in the course has engaged in academic misconduct.

TITLE IX POLICY:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Eureka College is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility and mutual respect in an environment free of sexual misconduct and discrimination. Sexual discrimination violates an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity. Eureka College considers sexual discrimination in all its forms to be a serious offense. This resource refers to all forms of sexual discrimination, including: sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual violence by employees, students, or third parties (Title 20 U.S.C. Sections 1681-1688).

Persons who wish to report any form of sex discrimination may contact the College's Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator can assist with all aspects of the reporting procedure and will conduct an investigation into a complaint. Employees of the College can also make an initial report to their immediate supervisor who must report it to the Title IX Coordinator.

IMPORTANT NOTE: I am a mandatory reporter, compelled by both federal/state law and College policy. If you disclose a report of sex discrimination, I must report it to the Title IX Coordinator within 24 hours.

Resources for victims of sexual misconduct:

- The Title IX Coordinator can assist with finding on and off campus resources.
- Tazwood Center for Wellness: (309) 347-5522
- National Sexual Assault Hotline www.rainn.org
- Woodford County Center for Prevention of Abuse: 800-559-7233

- Reassignments – When the survivor and the accused student participate in the same class(es) and/or reside in the same college residence or in proximity to one another, survivors may request that a fair and immediate way to reassign and/or move one of the persons be decided upon by College Administration.

INCLUSIVITY

Every student in this classroom, regardless of personal history or identity categories, is a valued member of this group. Your experiences are valuable and important, and you should feel free to share them as they become relevant to our class. No student in this class is ever expected or believed to speak for all members of a group.

In this classroom you have the right to determine your own identity. You have the right to be called by whatever name you wish, and for that name to be pronounced correctly. You have the right to be referred to by whatever pronouns you wish. You have the right to adjust those things at any point in your education.

If you find that there are aspects of course instruction, subject matter, or classroom environment that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact me privately without fear of reprisal.

COUNSELING SERVICES:

Provided by Tazwood Center for Wellness, seeing a professional counselor as a Eureka College student is easy and free. Whatever is on your mind, don't be afraid to talk to someone.

Tazwood Center for Wellness visits campus twice a week for on campus counseling appointments. Each student receives 6 free sessions per semester.

Tazwood Center for Wellness
3248 Vandever Ave. Pekin, IL 61554
309-437-5522 (Phone)
309-347-1148 (Emergency Response Services)

CHANGES TO SYLLABUS:

I reserve the right to make policy/course changes to the syllabus at any time with advance notice to students.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Schedule is subject to change depending on the progress of the course or at the instructor's discretion.

Week	Day	Date	Lecture	Lecture Topic	Readings	Analysis Papers (by 11:59 PM on BS)
1	T	5/21	1	Introduce Course Mechanics; Preview Films 1-4	Film 1: Hewstone et al. (2002) Film 2: Cannon (2007) Carr (2006) Film 3: Bleach (2010) Eccles et al. (2003) Film 4: Wood (2000)	Due 5/21: Film 1
	R	5/23	2	Discuss Films 1-4		Due 5/23: Film 2 Due 5/25: Films 3 & 4
2	T	5/28	3	Discuss Films 5-8	Film 5: Gillig (2009) Film 6: Pirkis & Blood (2001) Film 7: Rosenhan (1973) Film 8: Owen (2007)	Due 5/27: Film 5 Due 5/29: Film 6
	R	5/30	4	Discuss Films 5-8		Due 5/31: Films 7 & 8
3	----	----	----	Discuss (Online Only) Films 9-11	Film 9: Renner (2006) Film 10: Warwick & Shah (2014) Film 11: Keltner & Ekman (2015)	Due 6/2: Film 9 Due 6/4: Film 10 Due 6/6: Film 11