

## **PSYCHOLOGY 335: PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN**

Virginia Commonwealth University

Fall 2012

Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30-10:45 p.m.

Franklin Street Gym, 817 W. Franklin, Room 331

Instructor: Dr. Kathleen M. Ingram

Department of Psychology

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(Email is the best way to reach me. I will check messages at least once a day, Monday-Friday. Please list "PSYC 335" on the subject line of any message you send to me.)

Phone: 828-6346

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00-noon., and by appointment

Course webpage: <http://blackboard.vcu.edu>

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This service-learning course is designed to acquaint participants with theories and issues related to the psychology of women. As a discipline, the psychology of women cuts across several subspecialties of psychology (e.g., counseling and clinical, developmental, health, physiological, and social). Topics will include gender stereotypes, gender-role socialization, female biology and sexuality, girls and women at various stages of the life span (e.g., adolescence, later adulthood), women and work, women and relationships, women from diverse ethnic and cultural groups, violence against women, and women's physical and mental health. Particular emphasis will be placed on the role of social and systemic contexts in our understanding of women's experiences. In addition, we will examine ways that ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, and physical ability interact with gender to influence women's experiences at individual, interpersonal, community, and societal levels. Students will integrate these topics with community-based volunteer work within local organizations that address issues of importance to women. Class time will be allotted for student discussion and reflection about their work in the community as part of the service-learning component of the course.

### **VCU STATEMENT OF SERVICE-LEARNING**

Service-learning at VCU is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets community-identified needs. Students reflect on the service activity to increase understanding and application of course content and to enhance a sense of civic responsibility.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

1. describe key concepts in research and theory on the psychology of women.
2. discuss the importance of research on the psychology of women, including both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.
3. apply critical thinking skills, particularly in the evaluation of professional research and of information in the popular media.

4. explain some of the contributions of feminist thought to the field of psychology.
5. describe ways in which the intersectionality of gender and other dimensions of identity affect the experiences of women who are from diverse groups in terms of ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, and physical ability.
6. articulate ways in which relevant social and systemic contexts influence women's experiences.
7. describe common assumptions about gender and gender roles, and identify and analyze the content and potential impact of some of your own assumptions.
8. identify opportunities and formulate strategies for creating personal and social change related to the psychology of women.
9. engage in thoughtful and respectful dialogue about important issues related to the psychology of women.
10. apply concepts from lectures and readings about the psychology of women when reflecting on service-learning experiences.

## REQUIRED READINGS

Matlin, M. W. (2012). *The psychology of women* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Chrisler, J. C., Golden, C., & Rozee, P. D. (2008). *Lectures on the psychology of women* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Additional readings TBD, which will be posted in Blackboard: (a) overview of service-learning; (b) readings about specific course topics.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance and Class Participation.** Students' active participation in class will make a major contribution to the quality of this course. Therefore, I expect you to attend class regularly, and I encourage you to participate actively in class discussions. To receive full credit for attendance and participation, you must have no more than two unexcused absences and you must participate actively in small group discussions. After deductions are made for absences, the maximum attendance/participation grade will be as follows: three absences = 60%; four absences = 20%; more than four absences = 0%.
2. **Exams.** You will have two exams during the semester, as well as a comprehensive final exam. Exams will cover material from lectures, class discussions, and assigned readings. The format for all exams will include a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions.

Exam dates: Exam #1 -- **Thursday, September 27**  
 Exam #2 -- **Thursday, November 1**  
 Final Exam -- **Tuesday, December 11, time TBA.**

Makeup exams will not be allowed unless you are seriously ill or have a legitimate personal emergency. In those cases, you must contact me before the scheduled exam. An exception to this rule would be something like you got into a car accident on your way to school that precluded you from getting in touch with me in advance. You also must provide an acceptable written excuse (e.g., physician's letter) for missing the exam.

3. **Completion of Service Hours.** You must complete a minimum of 20 service hours at your placement site. Service hours must be recorded on the log sheet provided on Blackboard. Your site contact must sign your log after each visit to your service site. Your log sheet is due on the last day of class.

**Due: Thursday, December 6.**

4. **Service-Learning Reflection Journal.** Choose four visits you made to your service learning placement this semester. Write one reflection journal entry about each of those four visits. Specific instructions for the Reflection Journal will be posted in Blackboard under the Assignments tab.  
**Reflections 1 and 2 due by: Thursday, October 11.**  
**Reflections 3 and 4 due by: Thursday, November 29.**
  
5. **Service-Learning Paper.** Prepare a 3-5 page paper about your service-learning experience, in which you link your experiences to key themes and concepts about the psychology of women. Specific instructions for this paper will be posted in Blackboard under the Assignments tab.  
**Due: Thursday, December 6.**
  
6. **Group Project: Thinking Critically About Research and Its Implications.** I will assign one research article to each group. Members of the group will work together to identify the strengths, limitations, and key implications of the study. The group will prepare a summary sheet about the research and, if time permits, will make a brief (approximately 5-10 minutes) presentation during class. I will provide additional information about this assignment, well in advance of the due date.  
**Due: Thursday, November 15.**
  
7. **Requirements for Written Work.** The two papers (Action Project and Event/Video/Website paper) should be typed (double-spaced, 12-point font, with 1" margins). Written assignments should demonstrate college-level writing ability. Please proofread your work. Points will be deducted for problems with spelling and grammar. Papers are due by the beginning of class on the designated dates. For each day an assignment is late (including weekend days), 20% of the total possible points will be subtracted for that assignment. Both papers must be submitted electronically via Blackboard. Specific instructions for submitting papers via Blackboard will be posted under the Assignments tab on the Blackboard webpage. Do not email assignments to me and do not slide them under my office door.

## EVALUATION

Points earned for your assignments will contribute to your final grade as follows:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage of Final Grade</u>
Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	20%
Final Exam	20%
Completion of service-learning hours	10%
Service-learning reflection journal	10%
Service-learning paper	10%
Group Project	5%
Attendance and Participation	5%

## IMPORTANT NOTES

1. **Some Tips for Succeeding in PSYC 335.** Here are two particularly important suggestions:

- a. This course requires a great deal of reading. Keeping up with the reading assignments will help you prepare fully for class and exams.
- b. At least half of the exam questions will be based on information from class. If you must miss a class, be sure to get the notes, assignments, and copies of handouts from one of your classmates.

2. **Honor System and Student Conduct.** All VCU policies pertaining to student life and conduct, including student conduct and academic integrity, apply to this class. These policies can be found in the *VCU Insider*. Honesty, truth, and integrity are values central to VCU's mission. The Honor System is built on the idea that a person's honor is her/his most cherished attribute. All VCU students are presumed to have an understanding of the VCU Honor System. It is a student's responsibility to ask course instructors to clarify expectations for each assignment in order to be in compliance with the Honor System. The VCU Honor System policy can be found at <http://www.students.vcu.edu/insider.html>

Students' responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- a. Agreeing to be bound by the Honor System policy and its procedures.
- b. Supporting an environment that reflects a commitment to academic integrity.
- c. Refraining from committing any act of academic dishonesty. The categories of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, any deliberate and dishonest act that results in, or could result in, a student receiving an unfair advantage in an academic matter: plagiarism, cheating, lying, stealing, or facilitating an act of academic dishonesty.
- d. Reporting suspicion or knowledge of possible violations of the Honor System.

3. **Students with Disabilities.** I strive to include persons with disabilities fully in this course. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 require VCU to provide reasonable academic adjustments or accommodations for students with a documented physical or mental disability. Students seeking adjustments or accommodations must self-identify with the coordinator of Disability Support Services (phone: 828-2253, Monroe Park Campus). After meeting with the coordinator and before the first exam, I encourage you to meet with me to discuss your needs.
4. **Religious Holidays.** According to VCU policy, students who intend to observe religious holidays that conflict with class meeting times must provide advance written notice to the instructor. The deadline for submitting written notice is listed below in the Class Schedule. I will make reasonable accommodations for completion of course work missed by students observing religious holidays.
5. **Blackboard.** The Blackboard site for PSYC 335 will be used to post announcements, lecture outlines, follow-up information from class, grades, and other information related to the course. If you do not know, or are having trouble with, your username and password for Blackboard (the same username/password combination as in your VCU email account), please contact the VCU Technology Services helpIT Center (phone: 828-2227), located in the Cabell Library basement, Room B-30.
6. **Lecture Outlines.** Lecture outlines will be posted in Blackboard, the day before class. You may choose to print the outlines and bring them to class, to facilitate effective note taking.
7. **Know Your VCU Student Number.** For purposes of taking exams, please make sure you know your VCU student number. To obtain your student number, log into eServices.
8. **Cell Phones and Pagers.** All cell phones and pagers must be OFF (not silent/vibrate) during class. Please do not send or receive text messages during class. Bring a watch if you depend on your electronic device to know the time. Please tell your family and friends you will not be reachable during class time and not to send text messages or call.

**9. Other Important Policies and Information.** Please see the course Blackboard page for other important information and policies relevant to your work at VCU. The topics include:

- VCU Email Policy
- Student Conduct in the Classroom
- Statement on Military Short-Term Training or Deployment
- Excused Absences for Students Representing the University
- VCU Mobile

**10. Our Shared Responsibility.** I expect all of us to help create and maintain a classroom environment where everyone feels respected and valued. Although our individual values, beliefs, and backgrounds may differ, one of our goals is to learn from our differences and to make note of our similarities. I am particularly committed to creating a safe learning space in which we can engage in productive and respectful dialogue about topics, concepts, perspectives, and experiences.

**11. Emergency Preparedness.** What to know and do to be prepared for emergencies at VCU:

- a. Sign up to receive VCU text messaging alerts (<http://www.vcu.edu/alert/notify>). Keep your information up-to-date.
- b. Know the safe evacuation route from each of your classrooms. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in on-campus classrooms.
- c. Listen for and follow instructions from VCU or other designated authorities.
- d. Know where to go for additional emergency information (<http://www.vcu.edu/alert>).
- e. Know the emergency phone number for the VCU Police (828-1234). Report suspicious activities and objects.

#### TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Aug. 23	R Introduction	
Aug. 28	T Introduction to Service-Learning Presentations by Community Partners	Overview of service-learning (readings TBD)
<i>Aug. 29 – Last day to add/drop a course</i>		
Aug. 30	R Why Do We Need a Psychology of Women? Thinking Critically about Research	Matlin: Preface, Ch 1 C/G/R: Preface, Introduction
Sep. 4	T Meanings and Politics of Gender Differences; What is Feminism?	
Sep. 6	R Gender Stereotypes and Other Gender Biases	Matlin: Ch 2 C/G/R: Ch 1
<i>Sep. 7 – Deadline for providing advance written notice of intent to observe religious holidays.</i>		
Sep. 11	T Gender Stereotypes and Other Gender Biases (cont'd.)	
Sep. 13	R Infancy and Childhood	Matlin: Ch 3

C/G/R: Ch 6, 9

Sep. 18 T Childhood (cont'd.)  
Adolescence (Part I) Matlin: Ch 4  
C/G/R: Ch 10

Sep. 20 R Gender Comparisons in Cognitive Abilities and  
Attitudes About Achievements Matlin: Ch 5

Sep. 25 T Adolescence (Part II)

Date Topic Reading

Sep. 27 R\*\* **EXAM #1**  
[includes Matlin: Preface, Ch 1-5;  
C/G/R: Preface, Intro., Ch 1, 6, 9-10]

Oct. 2 T Women and Work Matlin: Ch 7  
C/G/R: Ch 4

Oct. 4 R Women and Sport;  
Social and Personality Characteristics Matlin: Ch 6  
C/G/R: Ch 7

Oct. 9 T Social and Personality Characteristics (cont'd.)  
Love Relationships Matlin: Ch 8

Oct. 11 R\*\* Sexuality Matlin: Ch 9  
--Part I: Women as Sexual Beings C/G/R: Ch 14  
**REFLECTIONS 1 AND 2 DUE**

Oct. 16 T Sexuality (cont'd.) C/G/R: Ch 11  
--Part II: Reproductive Decisions

Oct. 18 R [No class. VCU Reading Day!]

Oct. 23 T Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Motherhood Matlin: Ch 10  
C/G/R: Ch 5

Oct. 25 R Diversity: Matlin: Ch 11 (pp. 366-369)  
--Overview C/G/R: Ch 2, 12  
--Women with Disabilities

➔➔ Nov. 2 – Last day to withdraw from a course with a mark of “W” ←←

Oct. 30 T Diversity (cont'd.): C/G/R: Ch 16-19  
--Women of Color Matlin: review Ch. 1 (pp. 13-20)

Nov. 1 R\*\* **EXAM #2**  
[includes Matlin: Ch 1 (pp. 13-20), 6-10, 11]

(pp. 366-369);  
C/G/R: Ch 2, 4, 5, 7, 11-12, 14, 16-19]

Nov. 6	T	Diversity (cont'd.): -- Lesbian and Bisexual Women	Matlin: review Ch 8 (pp. 264-277) C/G/R: Ch 15
Nov. 8	R	Violence Against Women	Matlin: Ch 13 C/G/R: Ch 20-22
Nov. 13	T	Violence Against Women (cont'd.)	
<u>Date</u>		<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Nov. 15	R**	Women, Mental Health, and Psychotherapy <b>GROUP PROJECT DUE</b>	Matlin: Ch 12 C/G/R: Ch 8, 24
Nov. 20	T	Women, Mental Health, and Psychotherapy (cont'd.)	
Nov. 22	R	<i>[No class. Happy Thanksgiving!]</i>	
Nov. 27	T	Women and Physical Health	Matlin: Ch 11 C/G/R: Ch 3, 13
Nov. 29	R	Women and Physical Health (cont'd.) <b>REFLECTIONS 3 AND 4 DUE</b>	
Dec. 4	T	Women and Older Adulthood	Matlin: Ch 14 C/G/R: Ch 23
Dec. 6	R**	Where Do We Go from Here? Making a Difference <b>SERVICE-LEARNING PAPER DUE</b>	Matlin: Ch 15
Dec. 11	T**	<b>FINAL EXAM</b> (Time TBD) [includes Matlin: Ch 1-15; emphasis on Ch 8 (pp. 264-277), 11-15; C/G/R: Ch 3, 8, 13, 15, 20-24]	

Notes:

- The dates listed on this syllabus are tentative and subject to change.
- Readings should be completed before the class for which they are assigned on the syllabus.
- Matlin = Matlin (2012); C/G/R = Chrisler, Golden, and Rozee (2008).

Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Statement:

Virginia Commonwealth University is an equal opportunity / affirmative action institution providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation or disability.

