

# Advanced General Psychology for Leaders PL150

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Wetzler

Welcome to PL150! The purpose of this course is to give you an introduction to the discipline of psychology, including overall subject matter, methods for developing and evaluating explanations for behavior, and applications for improving life. My goal for this course is to have you walk away with a better understanding of psychology *and how it relates to your role as a future leader*. Even better, you can use this knowledge to make your life better through deeper understanding of yourself and others. Most important, let's have some fun!

## PL150 Teaching Philosophy

I want to create and foster a student-centered environment in PL150. Such an environment includes mutual trust and respect as cornerstones, along with active learning throughout the course. Rather than have you passively receive a 70-minute lecture from me each time you arrive (on time) for PL150, I will have you engage in one or more activities each day. This is not a “sit back, relax, and enjoy your flight” course; it is a “stand up, get engaged, and direct your own flight” kind of experience. I think you will be amazed at how much fun it can be to spread your academic wings and take on a bigger role in the learning process. You will even get to lead class at some point during the course! Don't panic...you will be in a co-pilot position, and I won't let anyone crash and burn. ;-)

That said, I won't be regurgitating material from the text or course guide in class. You should read the assigned materials and complete the corresponding course guide lesson exercises every single day *before you come to class* and *bring a printed copy of the answers to class with you (or a hand-written copy of your answers)*. If you find that you don't understand something or are struggling to meet the course requirements, come see me for AI (additional instruction)! This is the kind of course that I always wish I had the opportunity to take, so I hope you enjoy it as much as I know that I will!

### **Textbook**

You are NOT required to purchase a textbook for PL150. The PDF version of the text is free and posted on Blackboard. The title is “Discover Psychology – PL150 Resources AY20” and it is a NOBA open source text that I custom created for this class. Every module is written by experts in that particular area of psychology and all modules have been reviewed by other experts. If you would LIKE a print copy, I will let you know how to order one directly from the print company in class. The cost for you to order one would be about \$25.

### **Course Guide Introduction and Lessons (there are 30 lessons total!)**

You will be able to find the course guide and lessons for PL150 on Blackboard, but it will take a few more days for me to get it all loaded. **This document, the syllabus, is a complement to the course guide; this is not the course guide.** The Introduction section of the Course Guide details ALL of the various assignments and point values. PL150 will have Daily Study Quizzes, three exams (called WPRs for Written Partial Reviews), and a comprehensive Term End Exam (TEE). This document provides additional information on other assignments that are unique to PL150. Additional guidance and grading rubrics will be provided as we get closer to these assignments.

## **Psychology Reflection Paper Due Date and Time: NLT 1600 on OCTOBER 9**

**Mission:** Discover psychology applications outside the classroom by observing and reflecting upon psychological phenomena in your everyday environment. You will take an online assessment of your character strengths and then write a letter to your “future self” that contains recommendations for maintaining certain strengths and for improving others. Details will be provided in advance of the assignment.

## Class Leader Assignment

### Due Date: Depends on your lesson topic

**Mission:** Serve as the Class Leader (CL) for a portion of a class period (approximately 15 minutes – no more than 15 minutes). You have the opportunity to select a lesson (hopefully on a topic that interests you) in which you will lead an activity or discussion on the assigned topic for that day. It is not my intent for you to lecture or “teach” the material, rather you come up with a fun or interesting activity/discussion to enhance the lesson and you must bring in new material by doing some outside research and reading on the topic. You will work alone or in groups of no more than two. You need to sign up for a topic and date. The sign-up sheet will always be located in the Section Marcher Folder so you can check and/or change if it becomes necessary.

Duties and responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

- Attempt to become a subject matter expert (SME) on the topic being discussed for that day.
- Be thoroughly familiar with the chapter and any supplemental reading for that day.
- You will be required to pre-coordinate with the instructor on how you propose to lead the discussion or activity for your day (i.e., classroom set-up, exercises, movie clips, skits, seminar-based discussion etc.). Plan to lead for 12-13 minutes and leave time for a few questions/discussion.

**EACH PERSON (OR GROUP OF 2) MUST MEET WITH ME AT LEAST THREE WEEKDAYS PRIOR TO THE ASSIGNED TOPIC LESSON. IF YOU PRESENT ON A FRIDAY, WE SHOULD MEET NLT TUESDAY. FAILURE TO MEET THREE WEEKDAYS IN ADVANCE WILL RESULT IN A 10% GRADE DEDUCTION! You must also email me a copy of your presentation slides at least 24 hours before you are scheduled to present or you will have another 10% grade deduction. I need time to review your slides before you present them, and I will need to be able to load them onto my computer and/or shared drive so that we are not trying to switch out computers multiple times each class.**

This meeting is critical because it allows me time to tailor the day’s lesson around your proposed content and activities and allows me to evaluate the feasibility and suitability of what you propose to do. Thus, it is important that you plan far enough out so you may arrange this meeting with me.

- Your instructor will conduct normal administrative actions and use the remainder of the class time to highlight broad and/or military applications of the day’s topic.
- Please do not freak out! I do not expect (nor do I want) this to be a 15-minute lecture by you. This assignment is designed to allow you to take the lead in facilitating an activity or discussion with your peers. I expect you to be prepared but still have fun! Be creative with this opportunity.

#### **Grading**

Grading for this assignment is part peer evaluation, part instructor evaluation, and part self-evaluation. The grading rubric will be available on Blackboard.

If we must switch to a remote learning environment, expect that this assignment may change somewhat. More details will be provided if this occurs.

## Group Applied Psychology Project

### Individual Article Summaries (Three of them): Due at start of class on Lesson 22

### Paper: Due NLT 1600 on November 20

### Preparation: Due at various points throughout semester

**Mission:** In a group setting, present a leadership problem that can be addressed using principles of applied psychology.

**Assignment:** All students must participate in the production and presentation of a group project. Group projects will be completed in groups of 2 or 3. The group will be expected to meet regularly once the topic has been decided and approved by instructor. Each group must prepare a presentation on their topic that includes visual aids. In addition, each person will evaluate the other members of their group and themselves in order to minimize “social loafing” problems.

Each group will also submit a detailed written report of their project. The group paper should be **at least 3 pages per person in the group**. You are required to reference topics from the PL150 course lessons in your analysis and bring in **several scholarly psychology research articles per group member** from outside sources (peer reviewed journals). You may bring in other sources (non-psychology relevant articles, media articles, etc.) to supplement but these do not count as scholarly articles.

### **Paper Guidance:**

1) You will select or be assigned a topic/issue that represents an ongoing area of study or concern within the Army from a list of topics that I will suggest. Projects on unapproved topic areas will receive an automatic failing grade. The paper will be a proposal for a research project that addresses an important, timely, and worthy topic.

2) Introduction & Literature Review: You should briefly provide background information on your problem or question and then provided a detailed review of previous psychological research on your topic in order to clearly define the issue at hand. Be sure to highlight psychological concepts and issues of relevance to the course.

3) Proposed Study:

- After establishing the issue at hand, you should identify and explain a novel approach to the problem based upon the knowledge you have gained in PL150 and your own review of the literature. This will be in the form of a research proposal. Your group will describe how you would conduct the study (your method—participants, materials, procedure, etc. utilizing APA style) and give details that reflect your understanding of course concepts and that show you have read and incorporated the peer-reviewed literature. This is the meat of your project!!!
- Finally, describe the outcome you expect to observe.

4) Discussion:

- Describe major obstacles involved or weaknesses of your approach.
- Discuss the potential importance/benefits of your proposal if you are successful.
- Discuss ideas for future research or future applications if you are successful

**\*\* More detailed information regarding expectations for the outline, paper, presentation and interim meetings will be available on Blackboard (rubrics, APA style, etc.).**

## **The Classroom Environment**

**Guiding Ideas:** 1) Be prepared. 2) Be respectful. 3) Participate. 4) Have Fun.

### ***The Honor Code.***

You may use your own Course Guide work on Daily Study Quizzes. You may not use the textbook, or anyone else's Course Guide or notes. A copy of the PL150 honor guidelines are attached to the Welcome email and also will be available in Blackboard. You must sign a paper copy and bring it with you to the first day of class.

### ***Homework.***

Completing the Course Guide is the first step to success in this course. You should bring the course guide, either in print or on your laptop, to **every** lesson. *Complete* assignments involve successfully meeting the Lesson Objectives through 1) assigned reading and activities, 2) Performance Objectives (POs), and 3) Integrated Performance Objectives (IPOs).

### ***Test Preparation.***

Preparing for exams should be approached in a methodical manner. Studies show that organized distributed practice, repetition, and over-learning (vice intense periods of cramming), enhance academic performance. A good way to conduct distributed practice is as follows.

- 1) Make *meaning* of lesson concepts by thinking of examples that apply to your experiences as you read the text book (Don't try to just memorize).
- 2) Hand write the answers to POs and IPOs in your course guide and include personal examples with your answers (especially for harder concepts).
- 3) Seek clarification for any material you did not understand.

- 4) Take notes during class lectures directly in the course guide.
- 5) Take a couple of days prior to an exam to study the completed lessons in your course guide (pace yourself and distribute the practice/study time).
- 6) Review all lesson material just prior to the exam.

### **Class Participation**

Although not officially evaluated, your participation in class is an important aspect of this course. This involves individual student's demonstration of achievement of course goals and contributing to the course in a positive way. Throughout the course you will be provided with a variety of opportunities, beyond regular class discussions, to participate in, and contribute to, the class. Contributing to the course in a positive way involves actively engaging in the discussions as presenter or participant, being prepared by asking and answering questions, evaluating your peers, and generally moving the course along in a focused and mindful way. Key elements of each class's discussion will be the "WHAT?", "SO WHAT?" and "NOW WHAT?".

### **Classroom Mechanics.**

**While in class, you are to be engaged (mentally and physically) in PL150 work only.** Please come prepared to take notes by hand. Later you can transfer your notes onto your laptop if you really feel that you need to or want to...but psychological research shows that students who initially take notes on laptops during class do not perform as well as students who take notes by hand! Isn't that great to know? Check out the article by Mueller and Oppenheimer (2014) for more details on how they studied this experimentally. Also, try to use your own words, not mine...it will help with recall later on. <https://sites.udel.edu/victorp/files/2010/11/Psychological-Science-2014-Mueller-0956797614524581-1u0h0yu.pdf>

It is a good rule of thumb is to back up your work in case you experience computer problems. You will write papers for PL150, so you want to make sure that your work is backed up to prevent that moment of "ARGH!" that follows right after the "blue screen of death" appears on your computer just moments before a paper is due (can you tell that this has happened to me before?) I will post documents to Blackboard so you always have access to them, which should help, and I often will email you about what I posted so you will be alerted to it. If you see an email from me... go ahead and open it! It is probably important. Also, be sure to save documents that I send you. This is all in the name of preventing headaches.

### **Class Absence:**

If you are absent from class for any reason, it is *your responsibility* to find out what was covered in class, get any homework assignments and to master the information presented in class and in the readings. If you are unable to attend class, please notify the section marcher in advance. Excessive absences will hamper your ability to show mastery of material during in-class discussions or miss critical events that may affect your grade. All DSQs are due by 0830 on the day of the lesson. Only in rare circumstances will make-up DSQs be permitted. **If you are going to miss a WPR, you must make plans with the instructor to "make ahead" this assignment (taking the test BEFORE the scheduled WPR date).**

### **Additional Instruction:**

Who wouldn't want to learn more about psychology??? I love psychology, and I love teaching. This means that additional instruction is yours simply for the asking unless I am a) teaching (I teach C, D, I, and J hours), b) eating lunch (I do need to fuel up at times), or c) in another meeting (we have department meetings from time to time etc.). I am telling you now...it can even be *fun* to talk about the concepts in more detail, especially if you are struggling to understand something. If you need help or just want to talk shop, stop by my office (Thayer 276B in the PL100 Bullpen) on weekdays up until 1600 or make an appointment to see me (if you are in trouble, don't wait until a minor problem reaches crisis proportions before seeking assistance).

That said, I am often embroiled in essential team-building exercises, such as building Lego star cruisers or making rubber band bracelets in the evenings and on weekends because I have two adorable young children (ages 10 & 11) and I cannot resist when they ask for AMT (additional mommy time). I might not be free to answer calls for AI or email pleas for AI during these family times unless we have arranged something in advance. Chances are, though, that you will meet my children and even see us watching you at a sport or club event, where I will be pointing you out to my

children and telling them things such as, “See Cadet Smith over there? Cadet Smith is in my class and is training to be a leader of character for our great nation and the United State Army!” This ensures that later my children will pepper you with questions about what kind of leader you are and what it means to be a leader of character as soon as they can, so get ready with your answers! ;-)

I hereby ban AI during times when we are all supposed to be sleeping. Of course you can send me an email in the dark of night, but I won't open it until the regular business day starts. I hope you find this to be a fair and reasonable approach. Now, if you find yourself in the area of my office and want to just swing by to see if I am free during the day...that is perfectly okay. If I am not there and some sort of colorful post-it note on my door says that I am on a short break outside “refreshing my soul by soaking in the sunshine and beauty of this special place called West Point” don't think that means I won't come scrambling back to the office if you need me! Or, I might invite you to sit outside with me to talk about the concepts you wish to discuss. I will typically leave a phone number or email so you can reach me (by text or email) if I am on one of these short breaks communing with the wonderful environment that surrounds us. If you are lucky, maybe you will find me at Kosciuszko's Garden. It is only steps away but rather hidden. Trust me, I can talk about psychology in any number of places that don't involve an office. Maybe I can even show you something at WP that you have not seen before. PLUS, you can have AI rolled into it – what a great opportunity! Come see me sometime! ;-)

### ***Rules of Engagement***

We will show, both within and outside of our classroom, respect for law and order, personal honor, and the rights of others. Further, in our class: 1) everyone is allowed to feel they can work and learn in a safe and caring environment; 2) everyone learns about, understands, appreciates, and respects varied races, ethnicities, classes, genders, religions, ages, physical and mental abilities, and sexualities; 3) everyone matters; 4) all individuals are to be respected and treated with dignity and civility; and 5) everyone contributes in sharing in the responsibility in making our class, and the Academy, a positive and better place to live, work, and learn.

### ***Recordings***

Department policy forbids the taping or recording of any class or portion of a class without the written permission of the instructor, any speakers or guests, and each cadet attending the class.

## **Other Admin**

### ***Additional Readings:***

I will post on Blackboard or distribute via e-mail beforehand any articles or other assigned readings that are not in the texts. Because we use a variety of readings, you need to be proactive to be sure that you have read all the material needed to prepare for each lesson.

### ***Blackboard and Email:***

Some course materials may be posted to Blackboard and instructors may use email to send you course updates and information. **So, if you see an email with your instructor's name -- READ IT -- it will relate to the course and be important.**

### ***Late Submission Policy.***

1. Written work that is submitted per course requirements will receive a 10% penalty for every 24-hour period that the work is late. The 10% penalty is based upon the total point value of the work. The 24-hour period includes weekends and holidays and begins at the date/time the work was due. The first 10% penalty is assessed immediately after the work is late (i.e., the work was not turned in at the date/time it was due).
2. If you fail to meet a suspense requirement for the submission of written work, you have potentially committed an academic as well as a professional duty failure. If you turn in a late paper, you have an unfair advantage (additional time) over those students who met the suspense requirement. The additional time spent improving the quality of your paper/project will be offset by a grade reduction.
3. Failure to inform me in advance of a late submission and/or if an assignment becomes more than 24 hours late, will result in immediate notification of your TAC.

**Policy for Written Submissions:**

USMA Pamphlet, “*Documentation of Academic Work*,” applies to all written submissions outside of class. *Little, Brown Handbook*, current edition, is the approved source for all citations. Use citations! Lack of documentation can become a major issue, but is easily avoided. Simply give credit to others when credit is due, and then do it according to established guidelines. In PL150, use APA format for citations. **Do not use footnotes!**

**Formatting:**

All your written papers must be in 12 font size, double spaced, with one-inch margins all around. Use a cover page that lists the title of the course, the title of the assignment, your instructor’s name, the section hour, your name, and the acknowledgement statement (please refer to the Dean’s policy on “Documentation of Written Work” updated August 2008). Please note that some assignments will ALSO require an APA-style cover page (your group research paper). **DO NOT use a “brown bomber” cover.**

**Grading:**

I evaluate your performance based on your ability to achieve pre-determined standards, specifically, the course goals and supporting performance objectives. You are judged primarily on your ability to meet these standards. Your performance determines your final grade. This is a difficult course, however, even though you have prior exposure to psychology. Please do not expect the class average to be an “A”. This class is designed to *challenge* you - work hard and do your best!

***That’s it! HAVE FUN!*** 😊