

**San José State University**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**Introduction to Psychobiology, PSYC 030-80**  
**Summer 2026 (30148)**

- Instructor:** Jill Citron, PhD
- Office Location:** DMH 352 or my Virtual Office (available on our homepage)
- Email:** [jill.citron@sjsu.edu](mailto:jill.citron@sjsu.edu)
- Drop-In Times:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:45 am – 10:15 am & by appointment
- Class Days/Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 am - 1:30 pm The class meets synchronously, from June 2 – July 2, ten sessions.
- Virtual Classroom:** Available on the home page of our Canvas course.
- Prerequisites:** PSYC 01, BIOL 021, or BIOL 065

**Canvas:** Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc., can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. Messages to the class may be sent through Canvas or MYSJSU. You are responsible for regularly checking Canvas for updates.

**Description:** Biological psychology is a significant subdivision in the field of psychology that systematically studies behavior and mental processes. Biopsychologists work to understand the biological basis for thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. This discipline examines many aspects of human functioning through the mechanisms of evolution, genetic, neural, and hormonal influences on normal and abnormal behavior. This class aims to understand better the brain and behavior from the smallest unit of the human nervous system, brain structures, and interconnections with the nervous, endocrine, and immune systems.

**Course Format:** This course will combine class lectures, assignments/discussions, and readings from the textbook and scientific journals. Lectures will expand upon reading assignments, and we will investigate additional sources not covered in the readings. We will use Zoom for lectures and Canvas for quizzes, discussions, and assignment submissions. Your presence in class is required for success in this course. Coming to class prepared and ready to engage with the material is essential to learning.

## **Course Goals and Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

PSYC30-Introduction to Psychobiology explores the biological basics of cognition and behavior. This course examines the structural and functional components of the nervous system, from the cellular level to the system level. It will consider how information from the internal and external environment can direct and influence adaptive behavior.

### Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, Psych 30 students will be able to:

CLO1 – *Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts related to basic neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, and psychopharmacology. Assessment for this will be in quiz 1, quiz 2, and discussions.*

CLO2 – *Students will be able to –describe, and communicate the major transduction mechanisms, neuroanatomical pathways and theoretical perspectives associated with vision and nonvisual sensory systems, motivational systems and learning processes. Assessment for this CLO will be conducted in quizzes 3, 4, and 5, Hypothesis.is #1.*

CLO3 – *Students will be able to –identify, describe, and communicate experimental approaches and associated empirical findings for various methodological approaches in biopsychology. Assessment for this CLO will be conducted primarily in Hypothesis.is assignments, and discussions.*

CLO4 – *Students will be able to think critically and creatively about biopsychological approaches to address behavioral and mental health issues. This CLO will be assessed in Hypothesis.is quizzes, discussions*

CLO5 – *Students can apply biopsychological principles to individual, interpersonal and group behavioral and mental health issues. This will be assessed by quizzes, Discussions, and Hypothesis.is*

### Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

PLO1 – Knowledge Base of Psychology – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

PLO2 – Research Methods in Psychology – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.

PLO3 – Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

PLO4 – Application of Psychology – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

PLO5 – Values in Psychology – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

### Library Liaison:

The SJSU librarian specializes in social sciences and may serve as a resource for developing research ideas and finding the most appropriate research materials.

<http://libguides.sjsu.edu/psychology>

**Required Textbook:** Watson, N.V and Breedlove, S.M. (2025). Minds Machine (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Oxford University Press. Available at the bookstore, there is a link to purchase directly from OUP on the Canvas home page.

**Other Required Readings:** Other required readings are available on CANVAS.

Requirements: This class requires the completion of chapter quizzes and two discussions. There will be two Hypotheses. These activities will be based on assigned scientific articles and follow-up conversations on discussion boards.

The format for quizzes will be objective (multiple choice). You may use your textbook or other notes from class, but you may NOT consult with other persons or online sources that are not your textbook. Quizzes and other course materials will be available Canvas Learning Management System course login website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. [University policy S17-1](#) “Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.” Quizzes will be completed for each chapter due on the Sunday of the week the material is covered.

Class Protocols: To promote an inclusive learning environment that encourages collaboration and active participation, students will arrive on time and refrain from engaging in distracting behaviors during class time (preparing lunch, dyeing hair, texting, etc.). We will respect the opinions and contributions of class members. Be ready to engage in class activities. Be respectful of your peers and open to new concepts and ideas. Prepare to have your cameras on, as it will be required for different parts of our class.

Attendance: Attendance and active participation are essential for success in this course. If you need to miss class, **you** are responsible for obtaining lecture notes from a classmate. After reviewing the syllabus, obtaining the notes, and completing the readings (i.e., fulfilling your due diligence), if you have further questions or concerns about the class you missed, please bring them to the Question Cafe. We will meet ten times, that's it!

University policy F69-24 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf> states, “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to ensure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

SJSU wants students to succeed. “Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course-related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practicum. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

"As members of the academic community, students accept the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all institution members. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow when questions or concerns about a class arise." To learn important campus information, view University Policy S16-15 and SJSU's current semester's Policies and Procedures

### Dropping and Adding

Students must understand the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's Catalog Policies section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the academic year calendar document on the Academic Calendars LINK. The Late Drop Policy is available at the same LINK. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material University Policy S12-7, <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain the instructor's permission to record the course:

Academic Integrity: Your commitment to learning is evidenced by your San Jose State University enrollment. The University Academic Integrity Policy requires honesty in all your academic coursework. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. *As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when the course instructor expressly permits collaboration) without using outside resources. They are not allowed to use old tests or quizzes while preparing for exams, nor may they consult with students who have previously taken the exam. When practiced, academic integrity ensures fair grading for all students. Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. Such violations also demonstrate a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students, and the course instructor, potentially damaging the university's reputation and the value of its degrees. This LINK connects you to the vital content policies on Student Conduct and Ethical Development and other policies referenced above.*

Violators of the Academic Integrity Policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action, which could result in suspension or expulsion from San José State University.

## Campus Policy in Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

*“If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec/> to establish a record of their special needs.”*

### Accessible Education Center (AEC) at SJSU:

The AEC provides comprehensive services in support of the educational development and success of students with disabilities. Use the central office link to find all types of information concerning available services and how to register. [LINK](#)

### Student Technology Resources:

The SJSU Computing Center has computers and other electronic resources for students to borrow to support class participation. [LINK](#)

College of Social Science Student Success Center. Visit their website to schedule appointments for tutoring, academic advising, and more. [LINK](#)

### SJSU Wellness Center, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):

CAPS will help you adjust to college, meet developmental needs, create meaningful relationships, improve academic performance, and cope with life crises. CAPS provides mental health services here at SJSU. [LINK](#)

SJSU Writing Center provides different ways of connecting with tutors and the type of writing support that you need. The SJSU Writing Center is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Their writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement and are skilled in assisting students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition, there are all types of resources available, [LINK](#)

## **Determination of Grade**

<b>Grading Scale</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Approximate %</b>
A (90-100%)	NYTimes (1)	1	.5% (1)
	Name Coach (1)	1	.5% (1)
B (80 - 89%)	Quizzes (12)	10	50% (110)
C (70 - 79%)	Infographic (2)	10	10% (20)
D (60 - 69%)	Hypothes.is (2)	10	10% (20)
F (59% or below)	Profile Picture (1)	1	.5% (1)
	Self-Introduction (1)	2	1% (2)
	Content Lessons (12).	2	10% (20)
	Hallmark Study (1)	40	20% (40)
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	Total	215 total points	

*The instructor reserves the right to relax (but not stiffen) this criterion, depending on the actual distribution of grades.*

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc., will be available on the Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

## Assignments and Course Timeline

	Assignment	Due
<b>Week 1</b> 6/21– 6/7	Read Chapters 1 & 2	6/1 – <i>unrealistic!</i>
	Content Lessons 1 & 2	6/1 – <i>unrealistic!</i>
	Quiz #1	6/4
	Quiz #2	6/4
	Self-Introduction Discussion Board	6/7
	NY Times	6/7
	Name Coach	6/7
<b>Week 2</b> 6/8 – 6/14	Read Chapters 3 & 5	6/8
	Content Lessons 3 & 5	6/8
	Quiz #3	6/11
	Quiz #5	6/11
	Infographic #1	6/14
<b>Week 3</b> 6/15 & 6/21	Read Chapters 6 & 7	6/15
	Content Lessons 6 & 7	6/15
	Quiz #6	6/18
	Quiz #7	6/18
	Discuss and Choose a Hallmark article for assignment	6/18
	Hypothes.is #1	6/21
<b>Week 4</b> 6/22 – 6/28	Read Chapters 8, 9 & 10	6/22
	Content Lessons 8, 9, & 10	6/22
	Quiz #8	6/25
	Quiz #9	6/25
	Quiz #10	6/25
	Infographic #2	6/28
<b>Week 5</b> 6/29 – 7/2	Read Chapters 11 & 12	6/29
	Content Lessons 11 & 12	6/29
	Quiz #11	7/2
	Quiz #12	7/2
	Hypothes.is #2	7/2
	Hallmark Article Discussion Board In class activity on Hallmark Article	7/1 7/2