

## Syllabus

### Course Overview

Why do you think, behave, and make decisions the way you do? Psychology is a human and scientific endeavor that seeks to answer this question and reveal the mysteries of human thought and behavior. In this course, you will explore psychological concepts such as learning, motivation, personality, and emotion. Understanding these concepts can help you make smarter decisions in your future. Throughout this course you will learn how to use problem solving and self and social awareness skill to practice and apply your understanding of psychological concepts. During your journey into the field of psychology, you will apply these concepts to help you understand the perspectives of other people, examine situations objectively, and use research-based evidence to develop and make effective decisions.

### Essential Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

All General Education courses reflect our Essential Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (EULOS). PSYC1100 supports these outcomes: Communication, Intercultural Competence (which includes Ethics and Social Responsibility), and Problem Solving (which includes Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Scientific and Evidence-Based Inquiry, and Information Literacy). Review the Essential Undergraduate Learning Outcomes interactive media piece to learn more about these learning outcomes and how PSYC1100 supports these outcomes.

### General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide

A Capella University library guide has been created for your use in General Education courses. The [General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide](#) contains tips on how to use the Capella University Library to find resources for your General Education courses. You are encouraged to refer to the resources in this library guide to direct your research in this course.

**Note:** This program guide supports the [Essential Undergraduate Learning Outcome](#) of Information Literacy.

### Assignments

**Week 3:** Complete a case study scenario, using what you have learned about the adolescent brain and social development to pose some recommendations and help the subject resolve a conflict.

**Week 7:** Complete a case study scenario, using what you have learned about personality traits and emotions to help the subject find a solution.

**Week 9:** Complete a case study scenario, using what you have learned about motivation and mindset to answer a set of prompts.

**Week 10:** Complete a reflection journal assignment by reflecting on how you will apply what you have learned in this course to your career and your personal life.

### Discussions

**Week 1:** Explain how developing problem solving or self and social awareness skill can contribute to your professional or personal goals.

**Week 2:** Explain how understanding the links between biology, mind, and behavior helps us to make sense of brain chemistry versus free will.

**Week 4:** Participate in a memory test exercise, and then share observations about your experience and what you learned about memory.

**Week 5:** Select one disorder from a list provided and describe its characteristics including why you selected the disorder and your curiosity about it.

**Week 6:** Select one action found in the Finnish concept of Sisu (persevering under stress to beat the odds) and describe how you can use this action to help you manage stress.

**Week 8:** Describe how the decision making process can be applied to support your pursuit of a college degree.

### Course Competencies

(Read Only)

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

- 1 Discuss the ways in which key concepts and principles of psychology explain thought and behavior.

- 2 Explain how psychological concepts and principles are used as part of a decision making process.
- 3 Apply scientific principles and psychological concepts to recommend practical solutions to real world problems.
- 4 Apply in text the standard writing conventions for the discipline, including structure, voice, person, tone, and citation formatting.

#### **Course Prerequisites**

*There are no prerequisites for this course.*

#### **Syllabus >> Course Materials**

##### **Required**

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

##### **Integrated Materials**

Many of your required books are available via the VitalSource Bookshelf link in the courseroom, located in your Course Tools. Registered learners in a Resource Kit program can access these materials using the courseroom link on the Friday before the course start date. Some materials are available only in hard-copy format or by using an access code. For these materials, you will receive an email with further instructions for access. Visit the [Course Materials](#) page on Campus for more information.

##### eBook

Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN: 9781337612395

##### **Library**

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use [Journal and Book Locator](#). Refer to the [Journal and Book Locator library guide](#) to learn how to use this tool.

- Baars, M., Wijnia, L., & Paas, F. (2017). [The association between motivation, affect, and self-regulated learning when solving problems](#). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2017(8).
- Blakemore, S.J. (2018). [Avoiding social risk in adolescence](#). *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 27(2), 116-122.

## **External Resource**

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- ASAPScience (2014). Your brain on coffee [Video]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/4YOwEqGykDM>
- Grohol, J. M. (2020). Symptoms & treatments of mental disorders. PsychCentral. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/disorders/>
- Impraise. (n.d.). How to develop a growth mindset in your team. Retrieved from <https://blog.impraise.com/360-feedback/how-to-develop-a-growth-mindset-in-your-team-performance-review>
- Khazan, O. (2016). The best headspace for making decisions. The Atlantic. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2016/09/the-best-headspace-for-making-decisions/500423/>
- McQuaid, M. (2018). Are you tougher than you think? An interview with Emilia Lahti. Psychology Today. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/functioning-flourishing/201801/are-you-tougher-you-think>
- National Geographic Video. How well can you maintain your focus? [Video] Retrieved from [https://www.kaltura.com/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner\\_id/956951/uiconf\\_id/39456672/entry\\_id/1\\_e22f7tfe/embed/iframe?](https://www.kaltura.com/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner_id/956951/uiconf_id/39456672/entry_id/1_e22f7tfe/embed/iframe?)
- Purcell, M. (2020). Demystifying decision-making. PsychCentral. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/lib/demystifying-decision-making/>
- Spiegel, A. (2016). Invisibilia: Is your personality fixed, or can you change who you are? Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/06/24/481859662/invisibilia-is-your-personality-fixed-or-can-you-change-who-you-are>
- Sprouts. (2016). Growth mindset vs. fixed mindset [Video]. Retrieved from [https://youtu.be/KUWn\\_TJTrnU](https://youtu.be/KUWn_TJTrnU)

## **Suggested**

The following materials are recommended to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course, but they are aligned to course activities and assessments and are highly recommended for your use.

## **Optional**

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

### **Unit 1 >> What Is Psychology?**

#### **Introduction**

#### **Introducing Monica**

Monica is a busy single mom with two children, working as a contract specialist in the purchasing department of a large company. In addition to her job and family responsibilities, Monica is also a Capella learner. She is nearing completion of her degree and hopes to use the knowledge she has gained to advance at her current company.

Monica is currently working on an assignment for her psychology class that calls for researching whether pay increases motivate employees to be more productive at work. How would Monica use the critical thinking process to inform her research? Review the five questions that should guide critical thinking from Chapter 1 of your text and reflect on how you would guide Monica to reach an accurate conclusion.

What makes you tick? And what ticks you off? Perhaps you have asked yourself these questions. But did you know there is a whole science devoted to studying people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and providing answers to improve your life? This course will introduce you to the basic concepts of psychology and help you use these concepts to make important decisions in your personal and professional life. You will learn about the study of

psychology, how psychologists solve problems and make decisions, and why problem solving and self and social awareness matter in your life and career.

#### To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss how the field of psychology can help you practice your problem solving or self and social awareness skill.
- **What You Need to Know:** Read about the skills you will learn in this course and the topics and methods used in psychology.
- **Prepare:** Learn about the Reflection Journal assignment you will work on throughout the course.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Stories: Introduction to the World of Psychology media.

#### Course Resources

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#### Week 1 Hook Image

#### Learning Activities

##### **u01s1 - Activity Overviews**

#### Discussion Overview

In this week's discussion you will explore how the study of psychology can help you develop your problem solving and self and social awareness skill.

##### **u01s2 - What You Need to Know**

#### Psychology and Essential Employability Skills

*"Happy are those who can perceive the causes of things."*

— Virgil, ancient Roman poet

*"Through your existence become wealthy; knowledge is king."*

— Nas, rapper

Why study psychology? If these quotes are to be believed, psychology may unlock the door to true happiness. That is because it is the study of things that matter to most people: how and why we think and behave as we do. Psychology helps you understand yourself, understand others, and illuminate the world's biggest issues, from prejudice and war to compassion and connection.

Over the next 10 weeks, you will gain a better understanding of the study of psychology. You will practice two essential employability skills that will help you utilize the psychological concepts you learn in this course to better understand and empathize with those around you and make smarter decisions throughout your life and career. These skills are:

- **Problem Solving** to identify and frame problems, explore ideas, and create effective, ethical, and evidence-based solutions based on psychological concepts and principles. Critical thinking skills, which you will read about this week, are an important part of effective problem solving.
- **Self and Social Awareness** to monitor the emotions of yourself and others, to distinguish among them, and to use information to receive feedback, reflect, and guide one's thinking.

As you practice these two skills throughout this course, you will gain personal insights into motivation, memory, emotion, depression, aging, and much more. You will learn how you can use these insights to help you make better decisions in every part of your life so you can achieve your personal and professional goals.

#### Introduction to Psychological Science

Psychologists study the mental and biological processes that drive human behavior with the goal of not only understanding such processes but also using that knowledge to improve people's lives. To learn more about psychology and its sub-fields, the connection between culture and mental processes and behaviors, and the methods and ethical concerns that inform psychological research, review the following resource:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395

- Chapter 1, "Introduction to the Science of Psychology," pages 3–39. Take note of the five questions that are part of the critical thinking process, which is a key part of problem solving.

#### **u01s3 - Prepare: Keeping A Reflection Journal**

Throughout this course you will have the opportunity to learn about fascinating topics, including the brain and nervous system, personality, emotions, motivation, and stress management. As you learn, you will gain insight into the factors that influence decision making and how you can apply that knowledge to make better decisions in your own life and career. Through your study of psychology you will also develop two essential employability skills:

- **Problem solving** to identify and frame problems, explore ideas, and create effective, ethical, and evidence-based solutions based on psychological concepts and principles.
- **Self and Social Awareness** to monitor the emotions of yourself and others, to distinguish among them, and to use information to receive feedback, reflect, and guide your thinking.

Each week of the course, make note of what you have learned and how you have practiced your problem solving and self and social awareness skill through your study of psychology. In Week 10, you will submit a reflection journal (using the Reflection Journal Template) that uses those notes to answer the following questions:

1. As a result of this class, how will you immediately apply your problem solving skill at home or work?
2. As a result of this class, how have you grown in terms of your own self and social awareness skill?
3. Of all of the activities and resources in the course, which one was most relevant for you? Why?
4. What is one psychological concept that you have learned in this class that was most helpful to you? How will you use this concept to succeed in your personal or professional life?

#### **u01d1 - Write Your Discussion Post**

### **What Can You Learn from Psychology?**

In this week's learning activities, you explored how the study of psychology can help you gain skills to reach your personal and professional goals. The skills that were discussed this week were:

- **Problem solving** to identify and frame problems in order to find evidence-based solutions
- **Self and social awareness** to better understand the behavior of yourself and others

Choose ONE of the skills above and address the following in your initial post:

1. Explain how developing that particular skill may contribute to your professional or personal goals.
2. What can you learn from psychology that will help you develop the skill you chose?

### **Response Guidelines**

Once you have completed your initial post, reply to one of your classmate's posts, sharing any commonalities between your classmate's perspective on the skills and your own.

Course Resources

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Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

#### **u01v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Stories: Introduction to the World of Psychology**

Psychology is more than just a field of study. It is an approach to how you see and understand yourself and the world around you.

In this week's Capella Stories you will meet Dr. Ryan Poirier, and over the next 10 weeks you will continue to hear real stories from real people who are using the same skills and concepts you are learning in this course to take control of their personal and professional futures!

#### Course Resources

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##### Capella Stories: Introduction to the World of Psychology

## Unit 2 >> Biology and the Mind

### Introduction

### Behavior and the Brain

To cope with the long hours she is working, Monica is having several cups of coffee and a jelly donut each morning to give herself a boost. But by midafternoon, she is wiped out. In the evening, once her kids are winding down, she has another cup of coffee to give her more energy to complete her school assignments. This makes it difficult to settle her brain so she can get a full night's rest. What alternative actions could Monica take to have the energy, stamina, and focus she needs to complete her daily tasks? How might Monica use self-awareness skill, in concert with an understanding of how body chemistry and the brain affect how we think and behave, to get her work done in a way that doesn't feel so draining?

The word *psychology* suggests a discussion of feelings, thought patterns, even dreams. So you may be surprised to start this course by studying biology. However, understanding the biological processes that affect who you are and how you think will help you be better equipped to make the best decisions for your future. This week, you will explore how your brain anatomy can affect the way you approach problems and make decisions. Understanding the makeup of your brain and the way in which your brain affects your thinking and behavior will help you improve your decision-making abilities in your everyday life and career.

#### To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Examine the links among biology, mind, body, and behavior.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about the biological aspects of psychology and the ways in which the nervous system and body chemistry affect behavior.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Talks: How It Works: The Human Brain media.

#### Course Resources

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##### Week 2 Hook Image

### Learning Activities

#### u02s1 - Activity Overview

### Discussion Overview

For this week's discussion you will examine the impact of brain chemistry on your behaviors and decision making ability.

## **u02s2 - What You Need to Know**

### **Mind-Body Connections**

Have you ever stayed up all night with a sick child only to find yourself short-tempered and edgy the next day? Or, have you used sugar or coffee to give yourself a mental boost when you are tired? If so, you already know that stimuli like sugar and caffeine or a lack of sleep can affect the ways we think and act in our personal and professional lives. And on a biological level, the anatomy of our brains and the chemical reactions that take place there have a direct impact on how we solve problems, make decisions, and approach the world around us.

Last week you learned how the study of psychology can enhance your problem solving and self and social awareness skill. This week you will discover why developing those same skills starts with an understanding of your biological roots. By exploring the connection between biology and psychology, you'll gain insight into how biological factors and brain anatomy can affect your ability to make decisions and solve the problems that you face every day.

To learn more about the connections between biology, the brain, and behavior, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapter 2, "Biological Aspects of Psychology," pages 41–74.
- Blakemore, S.J. (2018). Avoiding social risk in adolescence. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 27(2), 116–122.
  - This article explains how adolescents' fear of rejection by their peers creates a powerful influence over their behavior and choices.
- ASAPScience (2014). Your brain on coffee [Video]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/4YOwEqGykDM>
  - This video explains how caffeine stimulates your body to produce adrenaline and how it affects dopamine level.

## **u02d1 - Write Your Discussion Post**

### **Who's In Control?**

Do you have free will? Or does your brain chemistry make decisions for you?

This week you are learning about the electrochemical reactions that happen every time you think, feel, sense, or act. So does that mean you are not in charge? Does body chemistry direct your choices and eliminate your control?

After completing the reading and watching the video, Your brain on coffee, address the following in your initial post:

1. In the video, the specific ways caffeine affects your mood, alertness, and performance, all through your nervous system. Is free will, or brain chemistry, more important to shaping our thoughts, feelings, or actions? Explain your opinion.
2. Share your thoughts on how understanding the links between biology, mind, and behavior helps us make sense of the brain chemistry versus free will debate.

### **Response Guidelines**

Once you have completed your initial post, respond to a classmate's post, offering any additional insight for analyzing the brain/body/mind connection.

Course Resources

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Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

## **u02v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talks: How It Works: The Human Brain**

In this week's Capella Talks, you will get a VIP tour of the human brain—and how it affects everything you feel and do!

Each time you have a memory, feel a feeling, or make a decision, a physical event is also happening somewhere in your nervous system. You will be guided through the fascinating ways the brain's structure connects to all our thoughts and feelings. The video will also reveal just how that ice cream cone—or that Facebook "like"—makes you feel so good.

#### Course Resources

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##### Capella Talks: How It Works: The Human Brain

### Unit 3 >> Personality and Human Development

#### Introduction

### When Personalities Clash

As a mother of two, Monica often notices how personality differences lead to arguments between her teenage son Jordan and his younger sister Elena. Monica is learning about theories of personality in her psychology class, and she finds the five-factor personality model to be particularly helpful for understanding why her kids often clash. Jordan is more introverted and quiet, has just a few interests (mainly comic books), and often acts impulsively. Elena is more outgoing and talkative and has a wide range of interests, including acting in plays and running cross country. Will Jordan's and Elena's personalities remain the same as they grow into adulthood, or are these traits fixed? How might Monica use the psychological theories of personality and her self and social awareness skill to help her children better connect with each other?

Are you the same person as when you were eight years old? It is safe to say the answer is a resounding no. That is because as we grow and develop, what we see and experience alters our understanding of the world. It is a concept contained in the classic adage: to become older it to become wiser. Not only do we gain a better understanding of ourselves, but hopefully, we learn more about how each phase of life influences other people's needs and perspectives. This week, you'll continue working on your skills of self- and social awareness and problem-solving by diving into developmental psychology. How do our bodies, brains, and behaviors change as we age? And how can you use that knowledge to manage your own personal growth? You will also examine the turbulent period of adolescence—that rocky teenage transition from childhood to adulthood—and practice decision making by helping teens make better choices.

#### To-Do List:

- **Assignment:** Submit Case Study 1.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about personality and human development throughout the life span.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Talks: Is Screen Time Changing Who We Are? media.

#### Course Resources

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##### Week 3 Hook Image

#### Learning Activities

##### u03s1 - Activity Overview

### Assignment Overview

The first of three Case Study assignments are due this week. In this first case study, you will use your knowledge of brain development and peer influence on adolescent behavior to suggest solutions that Monica can use to help her teenage son.

## **u03s2 - What You Need to Know**

### **Understanding Human Development and Personality**

Have you ever been assigned to work on a team project and found that you just didn't jive with a member of the team? Or maybe you have a teenager at home making poor choices, putting a strain on your relationship. If so, you have already experienced how personality and human development can affect your interactions with those around you. Through each stage of our lives—before birth, in childhood, in adolescence, and all through adulthood—people are growing and changing.

Knowing more about these phases of change and development can help you master your self and social awareness skill, informing how you approach personal and professional situations. This knowledge will also help you "see" differently when making decisions in the future.

This week you will learn to apply your problem solving and self and social awareness skill to understanding and overcoming differences in personality and human development. By examining how we develop and make decisions in every stage of our lives, you will build greater awareness of yourself and others so you can resolve workplace conflicts and more effectively connect with those around you. This is vital information that will help you perform your best no matter what career you pursue.

To learn more about human development throughout the life span, personality traits, and approaches to understanding personality and human development, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapters 9, "Human Development," pages 337–380.
  - Chapter 11, "Personality," pages 416–443.
- Spiegel, A. (2016). [Invisibilia: Is your personality fixed, or can you change who you are?](https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/06/24/481859662/invisibilia-is-your-personality-fixed-or-can-you-change-who-you-are) Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/06/24/481859662/invisibilia-is-your-personality-fixed-or-can-you-change-who-you-are>
  - You can either listen or read about the research of psychologist Walter Mischel.

## **u03a1 - Case Study 1**

### **Overview**

Throughout this course you are learning how to use problem solving and self and social awareness skill to practice the key concepts of psychology. Discovering how self and social awareness and problem solving work together will help you understand the perspectives of others, examine situations objectively, and use evidence to develop and make decisions. With this case study assignment, you will have the chance to put your skills to work.

### **Preparation**

Read the case study below and use your problem solving and self and social awareness skill to help a co-worker work through a difficult situation. You may find it helpful to review the description of these skills in the Week 1 What You Need to Know. Download the [Case Study 1 Assignment Template \[DOCX\]](#) for this assignment.

### **Case Study**

Monica is a single mom to 16-year-old Jordan. Monica and Jordan used to be close. But recently, Monica has noticed that Jordan is only focused on what his friends think about him. Jordan recently snuck out of his bedroom window and went to a party when he was supposed to be studying for a big exam. Monica caught him coming home and smelled alcohol on his breath and marijuana on his clothes. Monica is shocked and appalled by her son's recent behavior and has grounded him for two weeks.

Monica comes to you because she needs some advice on how to handle her son's poor choices.

### **Instructions**

Using what you learned about the adolescent brain and social development during Weeks 2 and 3, answer the questions in the Case Study 1 Assignment Template to help Monica understand why her son is making such poor choices, and pose some recommendations to help her solve her problem. As you complete the template you will accomplish the following steps:

**Step 1:** Describe how the adolescent brain weighs risk and reward.

**Step 2:** Explain the psychological concepts or principles that account for the value Jordan places on his peers.

**Step 3:** Discuss specific strategies that Monica can implement to help her son make better decisions.

**Step 4:** Explain why an understanding of Monica's perspective can result in more constructive advice.

Once you have completed your work, save the file and upload it to the assignment submission area.

## Additional Requirements

Your submission should meet the following requirements:

- **Written communication:** Writing is free from errors that detract from the overall message. Each response must be paragraph-length (5–7 sentences).
- **Citations:** Cite each source both in-text and on a separate Works Cited page. Review current [APA Style and Format](#) guidelines for more on how to cite your sources.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.
- **Sources:** Two sources are required. One of these sources can be one of the course readings or videos. The second source must be obtained from the Capella Library databases.

As you complete research, it is important to cite your sources so that you can provide the original author with credit for their work. There are different citation formats. As you move forward, you will use APA in your coursework. You do not need to use APA formatting in this course, but it is important to learn the intent of this so that you have this foundation.

For this assignment, please provide the author's last name, and the year of the publication in the body of the paper. If there is a direct quote, use quotation marks and provide the page number, too.

Also, please provide a separate reference page that includes a list of the research you used for the assignment.

Review the Case Study 1 Scoring Guide for details on how your assignment will be graded.

## Competencies Measured

By successfully completing this assignment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Discuss the ways in which key concepts and principles of psychology explain thought and behavior.
  - Describe how the adolescent brain weighs risk and reward.
  - Explain the psychological concepts or principles that account for the value of Jordan places on his peers.
- Competency 2: Apply scientific principles and psychological concepts to recommend practical solutions to real-world problems.
  - Discuss specific strategies that Monica can implement to help her son make better decisions.
  - Explain why an understanding of Monica's perspective can result in more constructive advice.
- Competency 4: Apply in text the standard writing conventions for the discipline, including structure, voice, person, tone, and citation formatting.
  - Writes coherently with correct grammar, usage, mechanics, and citation of sources.

## u03v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talks: Is Screen Time Changing Who We Are?

Children in the United States spend about three hours watching television every day and another 2–4 hours each day on phones, tablets, and computers. That is a lot of screen time! In this week's Capella Talks, discover how screen time affects developing brains—especially in the crucial period of adolescence. You will also hear some practical tips for coping with social-media addiction at any age.

Course Resources

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Capella Talks: Is Screen Time Changing Who We Are?

## Unit 4 >> Memory

### Introduction

## Memory and Problem Solving

Monica is working on a plan to improve her study habits and better retain what she reads in the books and articles assigned in her courses. She has found mnemonic devices helpful for remembering important concepts. For example, she uses the mnemonic device "Some People Can Fly" to recall Piaget's stages of cognitive development (**Sensorimotor**, **Preoperational**, **Concrete operational**, **Formal operational**). What other psychological strategies can Monica use to remember complex ideas from her courses? How can Monica use these strategies to enhance her problem solving skills, too?

*"Memory is a way of telling you what's important to you."*

— **Salman Rushdie, novelist**

Why can you remember your third-grade teacher's name, but not where you put your keys ten minutes ago? The answer is memory – one of the most fascinating topics in psychology. Whether you are reminiscing about Mom's lemon pie from your childhood or trying to recall key facts during a big test, your brain stores different kinds of memories in different ways.

This week, you will learn how your brain forms and organizes memories, how you recall them, and why sometimes the way you remember the past is different from what actually happened. As you examine this phenomenon and learn how memory works, you will gain valuable knowledge that will help you identify and solve problems in your everyday life. You will also learn about techniques you can use to improve your memory – and by extension, your academic performance. This part of the course should be unforgettable.

### To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** After completing a memory test, you will reflect on and discuss your understanding of memory.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about memory: how information is stored in the brain, how it is retrieved, and how you can improve it.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Stories: A Meal Down Memory Lane media.

### Course Resources

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#### Week 4 Hook Image

### Learning Activities

#### u04s1 - Activity Overview

## Discussion Overview

In this week's discussion you will test how sharp your memory is and share what you have learned about memory.

#### u04s2 - What You Need to Know

## Memory

*"Memories are not just about the past. They determine our future."*

— **"The Giver," by Lois Lowry**

Have you ever had a fight with a friend, and later discovered you each remembered it very differently? Or obsessed over an embarrassing moment, only to realize that nobody else recalls it but you? The memories we form of our past influence the way we approach the future. But how do our memories actually work? And why do they vary so much from person to person?

Memory is learning that persists over time. It captures information about people, places, and things that you have acquired in your daily life and education, which your brain then stores for future use. Our memories are influenced by how our senses perceive the world. How we touch, taste, smell, hear, and feel our experiences impacts the way we recall them later. That is why the smell of a certain perfume can trigger the memory of a loved one, or a familiar song can remind us of an old friend. Memories are a way to capture our past, and understanding them is an essential step in controlling our future.

This week you will dig into how memory works and how you can apply what you have learned to make better decisions and solve problems in your everyday life. You will discover how to use mental techniques like "chunking" to retain and understand new knowledge, whether you are memorizing information for a test or a presentation at work. You will also gain insight into how your brain stores memories so you can avoid the tricks your brain plays on you as you try to retrieve those memories. This insight will help you access information more easily, strengthening your problem solving skill. Understanding where memories come from and how to separate truth from fiction is also a key part of your self and social awareness skill. By using your self and social awareness alongside your problem solving skill, you will be able to use your past to reach your professional dreams.

To learn more about how information turns into memories, the process of constructing and retrieving memories, and the reasons why we forget, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapter 6, "Memory," pages 200–235.
- National Geographic Video, [How well can you maintain your focus? \[Video\]](#) Retrieved from [https://www.kaltura.com/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner\\_id/956951/uiconf\\_id/39456672/entry\\_id/1\\_e22f7tfe/embed/iframe?](https://www.kaltura.com/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner_id/956951/uiconf_id/39456672/entry_id/1_e22f7tfe/embed/iframe?)
  - You will explore this video in this week's discussion.

#### **u04d1 - Write Your Discussion Post**

### **How Sharp Is Your Memory?**

It is time to practice your focus and memory! For this discussion, you are going to watch a video that has a memory and attention game. It is VERY important that you understand the instructions.

The memory game is going to test your memory of the alphabet and your attention. If you do not understand the instructions, then pause and replay from the start of the video before going on with the game. If you need to write out the alphabet and have that in front of you, then you can do that too.

First, watch the National Geographic Video, [How well can you maintain your focus?](#), and play along. Write down your results. In your initial post, address the following:

- Share what you learned about your memory. Start your discussion post by sharing how you performed. Did you get most of the words right, or not? Did you notice other details, or did you miss them? What did you learn about your memory from this experience?

### **Response Guideline**

Once you have completed your initial post, reply to one of your classmate's posts. How do your classmate's results compare to your own?

Course Resources

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Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

#### **u04v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Stories: A Meal Down Memory Lane**

Ever wonder why a favorite meal reminds us of home? Or why flavor can bring on such strong feelings? In this week's Capella Stories, celebrity chef Ashley Clay and neuroscientist Rachel Herz do a deep dive into the tastes that trigger our memories. You will discover why the foods we eat matter so much in our minds and explore the science behind this psychological phenomenon.

## Course Resources

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### Capella Stories: A Meal Down Memory Lane

#### Unit 5 >> Mental Health

##### Introduction

### Understanding Mental Health Issues

Monica's brother Paul has obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), and though she often hears jokes about people having OCD, Monica knows that having this disorder is a serious challenge to her brother's well-being. Monica is interested in discovering more about OCD and its causes and consequences, as well as treatment options that may help her brother. She is learning that Paul's condition is likely caused by a combination of biological, environmental, and psychological factors that trigger a compulsion to clean and organize his surroundings. In what way might Paul's OCD affect how he views problems and his ability to solve them?

*"We need, ultimately, to be able to view mental health with the same clear-headedness we show when talking about physical health."*

— Matt Hait, author

If you break your arm, everyone can see—and empathize with—your injury. Mental health conditions, on the other hand, can be more difficult to identify and understand. Yet statistics reveal that 1 in 5 Americans struggle with mental health each year. It is crucial that you develop an understanding of the conditions you may encounter in your personal and professional life.

Resources in this week explore the symptoms of various mental health challenges and how to fight the stigmas associated with them. This knowledge base can aid you in taking better care of yourself and appreciating how these issues might influence the behavior of others. By applying your problem solving and self and social awareness skill to understanding mental health challenges, you will become more adept at connecting and communicating in personal and professional situations.

##### To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Select a disorder and discuss the symptoms along with other aspects that pique your curiosity about it.
- **What You Need to Know:** Read about how our mental health affects how we solve problems and make decisions.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Stories: Rebounding with Chamique Holdsclaw media.

## Course Resources

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### Week 5 Hook Image

#### Learning Activities

##### u05s1 - Activity Overview

### Discussion Overview

In this week's discussion you will study and discuss disorders that impact mental health.

## **u05s2 - What You Need to Know**

### **Mental Health and Illness**

In sports, as with many other areas of life, showing pain—either mental or physical—is often treated like weakness. Society often encourages us to "push through" our pain if we want to succeed. However, this idea can be harmful to ourselves and the people around us. When it comes to mental health, keeping your pain hidden away can hurt more than just yourself; it also reinforces social stigmas. Arming yourself with accurate information about mental health conditions is a first step towards fighting these stigmas and taking better care of yourself. It can also help you navigate both your social and work life.

This week you will learn how our mental health also affects how we solve problems and make decisions. By knowing the facts about mental health, you can ask informed questions and empathize with those who may be facing a mental health challenge. You will also gain valuable perspective so that you can connect more skillfully with someone who is dealing with a mental health issue—a big step towards improving your self and social awareness skill.

To learn more about mental health and the psychological disorders that affect mental health, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapter 12, "Psychological Disorders," pages 449–491.
- Grohol, J. M. (2020). Symptoms & treatments of mental disorders. *PsychCentral*. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/disorders/>
  - This resource summarizes common psychological disorders and their symptoms and treatments.

## **u05d1 - Write Your Discussion Post**

### **What Will You Discover about Mental Health?**

For this week's discussion, we will explore common mental health disorders. Select a disorder from the list below that you are not familiar with, meaning you or another person you know does not have this disorder. In other words, select a disorder that you would like to know more about. In your initial post:

- Identify the disorder that you selected.
- Write about what characterizes that disorder. (For example, what are the symptoms?)
- Describe what makes you curious about this disorder.

Choose from this list of disorders:

- Substance Use Disorder.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD).
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- Insomnia Disorder.
- Agoraphobia.
- Dyslexia.
- Anorexia.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Learning about a disorder that you are not familiar with can help you to understand the range of disorders that are present in modern-day society. It can also give you an idea of the various ways in which psychological disorders affect others.

**Note:** If you are already familiar with these disorders, you can either choose one to research and learn more about, or you can choose a different disorder.

Choose from one on Psych Central's site: [Symptoms & Treatments of Mental Disorders](#).

### **Response Guideline**

Once you have completed your initial post, reply to one of your classmate's posts and discuss your thoughts on how a knowledge of that disorder can help us understand the way in which mental health can affect our decision making and problem solving abilities.

### **u05v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Stories: Rebounding with Chamique Holdsclaw**

WNBA All-Star and Olympic gold medalist Chamique Holdsclaw was a basketball powerhouse. But away from the game, she struggled privately with crippling depression. Though her sport provided some relief from her mental health, not even the basketball court could offer an escape when she lost a beloved family member. In this week's Capella Stories, hear how Chamique rebounded from her biggest off-court challenge yet to become a champion for mental health awareness!

#### Course Resources

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##### Capella Stories: Rebounding With Chamique Holdsclaw

### **Unit 6 >> Stress and Emotion**

#### **Introduction**

### **Stress and Emotions**

This week at work Monica's company announced that a round of job cuts would be coming soon due to a decline in revenue. Monica and her coworkers are stressed and worried about who will be fired and how the changes will affect those who remain on the payroll.

Monica notices that her coworker Bill seems especially distraught. Bill and his wife have four children, and one of their children has a disability that requires ongoing medical care. Bill is concerned about the impact that a job loss and the loss of health care coverage would have on his family. Using her self and social awareness and problem solving skills, what strategies might Monica offer to help Bill cope during this time of uncertainty?

*"I don't want to be at the mercy of my emotions. I want to use them, to enjoy them, and to dominate them."*

— Oscar Wilde, poet and playwright

My blood boiled with rage. I'm head over heels in love. I was shaking like a leaf. The English language provides us with hundreds of words and phrases to colorfully explain our emotional states—but it falls short on teaching us how to actually manage them. Emotions and stress are a complex interaction between the body and the mind—we need them to survive and, more importantly, to thrive. But learning how to manage your emotions and cope with stress, so they don't get the best of you, is not always easy. As we gain an understanding of human emotion and the stress response, we will be able to apply that knowledge to improve both our personal and professional lives.

This week you will explore how emotions work, how they affect you, and how you can learn to better manage them. You will discover how to recognize emotional responses in yourself and others — a key component of your self and social awareness skill. You will also learn how managing your emotions can help you solve problems and make smarter decisions so you can achieve your goals. Finally, you will explore how to cope with both good and bad stress so you can practice your problem solving skill to overcome stressful situations in the future.

#### To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Explore methods for responding to and managing stress.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about how emotions and stress impact your decision making.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Stories: Mastering Fears media.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Stories: Don't Live a Scripted Life media.

Week 6 Hook Image

**Learning Activities**

**u06s1 - Activity Overview**

## Discussion Overview

In this week's discussion you will examine ways to manage stress more effectively in your daily life.

**u06s2 - What You Need to Know**

## Emotions

Pounding heart. Clammy hands. Dry mouth. Have you ever given a presentation or performance in front of an audience and felt shaky and nervous? You knew you needed to do well, but that thought just seemed to make your heart pound faster.

Managing your emotions can be difficult, especially in stressful situations. If you let your feelings get the better of you, you can make impulsive decisions that are not in your best interest. On the other hand, if you tune certain feelings out when they are steering you right, you might miss an opportunity. Regulating your emotions can be a subtle balancing act, but it is also an essential part of enjoying your life and achieving your career dreams. This week you will learn about emotions and how they can impact various aspects of your life, including your problem solving skill that helps you make decisions. And you will take another step towards developing your self and social awareness skill as you discover strategies you can use to regulate your own emotions. Gaining insight into this fundamental aspect of human life is a significant step towards achieving your personal and professional goals.

To learn more about the nature of emotions and the psychological theories that explain how emotions work, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapter 8, "Motivation and Emotion," pages 315–327.
- Khazan, O. (2016). [The best headspace for making decisions](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2016/09/the-best-headspace-for-making-decisions/500423/). *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2016/09/the-best-headspace-for-making-decisions/500423/>
  - This article explores how to use the power of emotions to make effective decisions, which connects to the problem solving skill.

## Stress

At different points in your personal and professional life, you will feel the effects of stress, whether it is standing up for your first big presentation in front of your boss, racing to meet a deadline at work, receiving a surprise bill in the mail, or having a tough conversation with someone close to you. In these situations, you will feel your body physically respond to whatever challenge you face.

We have all been in situations where stress builds and builds until we feel too overwhelmed to perform productively. But stress can also be a good thing. That rush of adrenaline you feel is what drives you to react quickly, and can be the jolt you need for peak performance. So, how do you know whether your reaction is helpful or harmful? Understanding how your body reacts to stress is the first step to learning how you can best manage your response to it. It is also a critical part of practicing the two skills you are learning in this course.

This week, you will continue to develop your self and social awareness skill as you learn how your body reacts to stress and how it helps you to survive and thrive. You will also gain strategies to manage stress, so you can use your problem solving skill to address the challenges you will face in your day-to-day life.

To learn more about stress and stressors, the stress response mechanism, and the factors that mitigate stress, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapter 10, "Health, Stress, and Coping," pages 386–413.
- McQuaid, M. (2018). [Are you tougher than you think? An interview with Emilia Lahti](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/functioning-flourishing/201801/are-you-tougher-you-think). *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/functioning-flourishing/201801/are-you-tougher-you-think>

- This article features an interview with researcher Emilia Lahti, who discusses mental toughness in the face of stress. This mental toughness can help you more efficiently and effectively solve problems when you are faced with stressful situations.

#### **u06d1 - Write Your Discussion Post**

### **How Can You Manage Stress?**

Sisu is a concept that comes from Finland. And while there's no direct translation for this word in English, it means to persevere under stress in order to beat the odds. Challenges may come your way, but you're not going to give up.

1. Read [Are You Tougher Than You Think?](#) In this interview, Emilia Lahti offers five specific actions you can take to build up Sisu in your own life so that you can endure and even thrive in moments of extreme stress.
2. Pick one of the five actions and describe how you will work to build your capacity to do this. How will cultivating this specific action help you manage stress and improve your problem solving skill?

Once you have completed your initial post, reply to one of your classmate's posts. Provide an additional strategy that your classmate can use to manage stress.

Course Resources

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Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

#### **u06v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Stories: Mastering Fears**

Ever since she first saw an airshow as a child, Nicole Malachowski dreamt of flying military jets. In this week's Capella Stories, hear how this groundbreaking pilot achieved her dream of becoming the first female Thunderbird—the Air Force's elite air demonstration squadron—by tuning into her emotions and eventually mastering her fears.

Course Resources

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Capella Stories: Mastering Fears

#### **u06v2 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Stories: Don't Live a Scripted Life**

Your headset erupts with the urgent call: The enemy is closing in on troops on the ground, and they desperately need air cover. You have milliseconds to react and turn your F-15E fighter jet on its wing to their rescue. You feel your blood surge. Your breathing quickens. Your face flushes, and your skin gets damp.

Ace Air Force pilot Nicole Malachowski lived those dramatic moments again and again. That is why she knows one thing better than most — how to manage overwhelming stress. Nicole shares the gripping story of a dangerous mission, when her response to overwhelming stress meant life or death.

Course Resources

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Capella Stories: Don't Live a Scripted Life

## Unit 7 >> Motivation

### Introduction

#### Motivating Healthy Behaviors

As part of her plan to improve her physical and mental wellness, Monica began going to the gym a few days a week and running on weekends at the start of the year. With all the stress at work lately and the challenges of motherhood, she is struggling to find motivation to stick to her routine.

From her readings in her psychology course and from practicing her self and social awareness skill, Monica knows that emotions and motivations are often linked and that emotions can generate conflicting motivations. For example, she notices a conflict between her desire for leisure time and her motivation to achieve her health goals. What might Monica do to address this conflict and regain her motivation to continue her fitness routine and maintain her health?

*"Know what it is that drives you— motivates you—and pursue it."*

—Peggy Whitson, first female Commander of the International Space Station

It is Friday at 5 p.m. when your boss calls everyone into her office with some devastating news. Your branch is closing immediately—leaving you and your entire team without a job. What you do next is up to you. Do you let this set back crush your career dreams? Or do you use it to motivate you to push ahead and achieve your goals?

This week, you will discover how to harness your motivation—your desire or willingness to succeed—to overcome challenges in your personal and professional life. You will explore how your thoughts and beliefs influence your motivation and can help you succeed or fail. Ultimately, understanding what motivates you and how motivation works will help you hone your problem solving and self and social awareness skill so that even in the face of adversity, you can push through and make the best decisions for your future.

#### To-Do List:

- **Assignments:** Submit Case Study 2.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about motivation and the power of the growth mindset.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Stories: In A Blink of a Bite: Starting Over media.

#### Course Resources

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#### Week 7 Hook Image

#### Learning Activities

##### u07s1 - Activity Overview

#### Assignment Overview

The second of three Case Study assignments are due this week. In this second case study, you will use your knowledge of personality and emotion to help Monica resolve a challenging workplace scenario.

##### u07s2 - What You Need to Know

## Motivation

Imagine waking up one morning to find you are paralyzed. That was the grim reality Nicole Malachowski faced. All her life she had beaten the odds to rise up the ranks, from ace pilot to Air Force Thunderbird to White House Executive Director. Then, overnight, she hit rock bottom.

Fortunately, she knew she could rely on her motivation to see her through. Motivation is the internal desire you have that drives you to meet your goals. Think of motivation like the engine that keeps your plane flying high even in times of turbulence.

Motivation looks different for all of us, and it can be deeply personal. For instance, maybe you are motivated by helping others and enjoy working on projects and charity events that impact underserved communities. Or maybe self-improvement motivates you to take on difficult challenges, both at the gym and by learning new skills in the office. Whatever drives you, your motivation will influence your ability to achieve your goals in this psychology course and beyond. That is why understanding motivation is key to your success.

This week you will use your self and social awareness skill to discover what affects your motivation so that you can make choices that will help you reach your goals. You will learn the importance of metacognition to plan, monitor, and evaluate your own progress towards a specific goal. As you explore the psychological concepts that affect motivation, you will gain valuable insight into how you can use your problem solving skill to harness the power of your motivation and face personal and professional challenges head-on.

To learn more about the psychological aspects of motivation, theories of motivation, and the achievement motivation, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapter 8, "Motivation and Emotion," pages 288–315.
- Sprouts. (2016) [Growth mindset vs. fixed mindset \[Video\]](https://youtu.be/KUWn_TJTrnU). Retrieved from [https://youtu.be/KUWn\\_TJTrnU](https://youtu.be/KUWn_TJTrnU)
  - This video explores two mindsets that influence motivation and behaviors. Understanding mindset can help you improve both your self and social awareness skill and your ability to solve problems.
- Impraise. (n.d.). [How to develop a growth mindset in your team](https://blog.impraise.com/360-feedback/how-to-develop-a-growth-mindset-in-your-team-performance-review). Retrieved from <https://blog.impraise.com/360-feedback/how-to-develop-a-growth-mindset-in-your-team-performance-review>
  - Read this article for more on how the growth mindset motivates people to learn and improve.

## u07a1 - Case Study 2

### Overview

As you continue to practice the psychological concepts throughout this course, you are developing the problem solving and self and social awareness skill that will help you navigate social situations in your life and career. You are discovering how to apply these skills to understand the behaviors of others, improve your relationships, and make informed decisions based on reliable information. And no matter what kind of situation you encounter at school, home, or work, you're learning how to recognize and manage your emotions, so they do not get the best of you.

Now, it is time to practice the skills and concepts you are learning to help your friend Monica navigate a difficult workplace situation.

### Preparation

Review the case study below and download the [Case Study 2 Assignment Template \[DOCX\]](#) for this assignment.

### Case Study

Monica and Jennifer are coworkers assigned to work on a project together. Jennifer is very organized and wants them to do really well on this project. To get started, Jennifer took some initiative and prepared a list of to-do items along with due dates. She even color-coded the list to indicate which partner will do each item and sends an email to Monica with the to-do list. Jennifer wants her partner to know that she is serious about their success.

Monica is happy her teammate has shown such initiative but is surprised by Jennifer's to-do list and feels a bit uncomfortable as she is feeling like Jennifer is micromanaging her. Monica wants to do her part on the project but is feeling anxious because she doesn't know where she fits in, and it is making her worried about working on this project. She wonders how she can succeed in this project if Jennifer is already the leader. When working for a previous employer, Monica felt anxious about her ability to successfully complete a project and attempted to communicate her feelings with a co-worker; however, her co-worker didn't seem to understand Monica's concerns and said that she should just ignore her feelings and get the work done.

As Monica ponders having a conversation with Jennifer, she starts to feel overwhelmed and thinks it might just be easier to be removed from the project.

## Instruction

Using your problem solving and self and social awareness skill and what you have learned about personality traits and emotions, answer the questions in the Case Study 2 Assignment Template to help Monica calm her anxiety and find a solution to her problem. As you complete the template you will accomplish the following steps:

**Step 1:** Describe the "Big Five" personality traits.

**Step 2:** Discuss differences in the personality traits of Jennifer and Monica.

**Step 3:** Explain how one's experience or knowledge can resolve a similar workplace conflict.

**Step 4:** Describe specific strategies that Monica can use to manage her emotions and successfully complete the project.

Once you have completed your work, save the file and upload it to the assignment submission area.

## Additional Requirements

Your submission should meet the following requirements:

- **Written communication:** Writing is free from errors that detract from the overall message. Each response must be paragraph-length (5–7 sentences).
- **Citations:** Cite each source both in-text and on a separate Works Cited page. Review current [APA Style and Format](#) guidelines for more on how to cite your sources.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.
- **Sources:** Two sources are required. One of these sources can be one of the course readings or videos. The second source must be obtained from the Capella Library databases.

As you complete research, it is important to cite your sources so that you can provide the original author with credit for their work. There are different citation formats. As you move forward, you will use APA in your coursework. You do not need to use APA formatting in this course, but it is important to learn the intent of this so that you have this foundation.

For this assignment, please provide the author's last name, and the year of the publication in the body of the paper. If there is a direct quote, use quotation marks and provide the page number, too.

Also, please provide a separate reference page that includes a list of the research you used for the assignment.

Review the Case Study 2 Scoring Guide for details on how your assignment will be graded.

## Competencies Measured

By successfully completing this assignment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Discuss the ways in which key concepts and principles of psychology explain thought and behavior.
  - Describe the "Big Five" personality traits.
  - Discuss differences in the personality traits of Jennifer and Monica.
- Competency 2: Explain how psychological concepts and principles are used as part of a decision making process.
  - Explain how one's experience or knowledge can resolve a similar workplace conflict.
- Competency 3: Apply scientific principles and psychological concepts to recommend practical solutions to real-world problems.
  - Describe specific strategies that Monica can use to manage her emotions and successfully complete the project.
- Competency 4: Apply in text the standard writing conventions for the discipline, including structure, voice, person, tone, and citation formatting.
  - Writes coherently with correct grammar, usage, mechanics, and citation of sources.

## u07v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Stories: In A Blink of a Bite: Starting Over

In this week's Capella Stories, elite Air Force pilot Nicole Malachowski grapples with the unthinkable: after years of working hard to achieve her dreams, a catastrophic illness steals it all away from her. Grounded from flying and forced into bed rest, Nicole's life depends on the thing that has powered her through all along: motivation.

## Unit 8 >> Decision Making

### Introduction

### Evaluating Choices

During this week's meeting with her supervisor, Monica was offered a promotion to a new leadership role. The new position will be available once Monica completes her degree at Capella.

On the one hand, Monica is thrilled that she has been recognized for the contributions she has made to her company, and she is excited about the opportunity to earn more money. On the other hand, Monica is worried that the extra hours and responsibilities this new job would require might cause conflict at home and reduce the time she has to spend with her kids.

How can Monica use her problem solving skills, combined with her understanding of the psychological aspects of decision making, to make the choice that is best for her and her family?

*"Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try."*

—Gail Devers, Olympic track champion

Hold out or give in? Stay or go? Yes or no? Making the right decisions can feel incredibly daunting. Sometimes we become so overwhelmed by the fear of making the wrong decision that we avoid making one altogether. When we are bombarded almost every moment of every day with options, the key to choosing from the sea of possibilities is to better understand how decision making takes shape in our brains. This week, you will explore the psychology behind decisions and discover how you can use your problem solving skills to make the right choice no matter what you face. You will also learn the steps in the decision making process, and how you can apply your self and social awareness skill to decision making in your life and career.

#### To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Explore strategies for improving your decision making ability.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about the basic functions of thought and how to use the problem solving skill to make effective decisions.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Stories: From Fatherhood to Hollywood media.

#### Course Resources

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#### Week 8 Hook Image

### Learning Activities

#### u08s1 - Activity Overview

### Discussion Overview

In this week's discussion you will explore strategies you can use to improve your decision making skills.

## **u08s2 - What You Need to Know**

### **Making Good Decisions**

Why are some choices no-brainers while others can weigh so heavily on us? Choosing strawberry or vanilla ice cream might be easy, but picking a career path is far more challenging.

The truth is, you are fielding decisions nonstop every moment of the day. Some of those decisions are minor, like the flavor of ice cream you want to try. Other decisions are much more significant and can have a lifelong impact. To survive the onslaught of decision making, your brain is wired to use shortcuts that help deliver results. But those shortcuts can easily short-circuit and get you into trouble. For example, you might arrive at a conclusion hastily. Or you could make a decision based on a wrong assumption.

To avoid decision making danger, it is helpful to understand the psychology of the decision making process and how you can use your problem solving and self and social awareness skill to ensure the decisions you make are pointing you in the right direction. This week, you will improve your problem solving skill by examining the decision making process. You will discover what influences your thinking when you are faced with a decision. You will also continue to develop your problem solving skill as you identify the steps to consider when facing major choices in your life and career. Along the way, you will build greater self and social awareness of what drives decision making so you can better identify when to "trust your gut" and when to take a step back.

To learn more about the psychological factors that drive the decision-making process, thinking strategies, and problem solving, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapter 7, "Thought, Language, and Intelligence," pages 238–284.
- Purcell, M. (2020). Demystifying decision-making. *PsychCentral*. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/lib/demystifying-decision-making/>
  - This article discusses decision-making tips you can use to enhance your problem solving and self and social awareness skill.

## **u08d1 - Write Your Discussion Post**

### **What's Your Decision Making Strategy?**

The article Demystifying Decision-Making, by Maud Purcell, offers four steps in the decision making process:

1. Clearly define the problem.
2. Brainstorm possible choices.
3. List the pros and cons of each choice.
4. Engage your feelings as well as your intellect.

In this discussion, you will engage in the decision making process as it relates to earning your degree. In your post, focus on Step 1 (clearly defining the problem) and Step 2 (brainstorm possible choices) of the decision making process.

Answer these questions in your discussion post:

- What problem will earning your degree solve?
- Brainstorm three things that you can do today to start to prepare yourself for your future goals.

For example, maybe you are earning your degree at Capella to change your career from food service to business marketing. The problem that you are working to solve is how to gain the knowledge, skills, and credentials that will allow you to get a job in marketing.

Similarly, three things that you can do today to help with your goal might be:

- Create a profile on LinkedIn
- Network with marketing firms in my area to find out what they look for in new hires
- Research and join a professional association for accounting

If you need help brainstorming activities, check out Capella's Career Center resources.

### **Response Guideline**

Once you have completed your initial post, reply to one of your classmate's posts. What suggestions can you add to your classmate's ideas for achieving his or her goals?

## Course Resources

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### Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

#### **u08v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Stories: From Fatherhood to Hollywood**

Movie and television star Omar Epps grew up fatherless in the crime-ridden Brooklyn of the 70s and 80s. Haunted by the memories of his own fatherless upbringing, he decided to be the best father he could to his children, each and every day. In this week's Capella Stories, Omar explains how the lessons of his childhood play out in his choices—sometimes consciously, sometimes without him even realizing it. His every move as a parent offers a window into how you can use the skills you are learning in this course to make the right decisions for your own future.

## Course Resources

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### Capella Stories: From Fatherhood to Hollywood

#### **Unit 9 >> Learning and Behavior**

##### **Introduction**

### Positive Reinforcement

During a lunch break, Monica's friend and coworker Patrice is telling her about a few strategies she is using to help her young children learn the value of work and responsible behavior. She has created a chore list chart that includes positive reinforcement, rewarding each child with a gold star once a task is done and providing an allowance once all the tasks assigned for the week are completed. Failure to complete one or more of the tasks results in punishment, such as taking away the children's iPad time.

"That sounds like operant conditioning, a form of learning that I'm reading about in my psychology course," Monica informs Patrice. Patrice asks Monica if she has any other ideas for helping her kids develop positive habits. Based on Monica's knowledge of psychological processes associated with learning and her self and social awareness skill, what other suggestions might she offer?

*The capacity to learn is a gift; the ability to learn is a skill; the willingness to learn is a choice.*

—**Brian Herbert, Author**

Your brain is the most amazing and wondrous "machine" on Earth—so much so that science has yet to discover all that it is capable of. Now that you have learned the basics of how your miraculous mind stores and retrieves information, you will further explore how you might leverage that knowledge to increase your ability to learn. Learning how to learn will not only help you excel here at school, it will also help you achieve your career goals.

This week you will build your knowledge of learning and behavior. Discovering the way you learn and how that affects the choices you make will not only bolster your self and social awareness skill, it can help you apply your problem-solving skill to make better decisions in your personal and professional life. That means you will be better equipped to meet everyday challenges—whether it is leading a team or teaching your child to ride a bike.

#### To-Do List:

- **Assignment:** Submit Case Study 3.
- **What You Need to Know:** Discover the cognitive processes and modes of conditioning that shape how people learn.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** view the Capella Talks: Habits and Hacks With Omar Epps media.

## Course Resources

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### Week 9 Hook Image

#### Learning Activities

##### **u09s1 - Activity Overview**

### Assignment Overview

The last of three Case Study assignments is due this week. In this third case study, you will use your knowledge of mindset and learning to help Monica deal with a coworker who is struggling with test anxiety.

##### **u09s2 - What You Need to Know**

### Learning To Learn

Imagine if every day you had to start from scratch, relearning the basics for how to lead your life. That is what television and movie star Omar Epps has to do every time he tackles a new part. With each role, he has to come up with all the life lessons that explain his character's choices. The key to Omar's success? Understanding how we are able to learn.

Have you ever delivered a presentation and received praise and positive feedback from your audience or boss? Or maybe you took on a new role at work and observed others in that role so you could quickly learn the basics? If so, you have already experienced two different approaches to learning. We learn whenever we are rewarded for good decisions and reprimanded for poor ones. We also learn when we pay attention to how other people behave and connect the dots between a cause and its effects. Throughout the life course, we turn these lessons into knowledge that informs the actions we take in the future. For example, if a supervisor praises you for your great work, this might motivate you to continue working hard.

Understanding how we learn is an important aspect of your self and social awareness skill because it can give you insight into how you can gain the knowledge you need to be successful in your life and career. It can also have a tremendous impact on how we practice our problem solving skill. As you refine your problem solving skill, you will scan the world around you for reliable information and sometimes try solutions that may not work as you had hoped. But that is okay, because making mistakes is another way we learn. Not repeating past mistakes helps us to become better problem solvers, too.

This week you will discover how learning affects our behavior. You will explore how environment influences learning and how you can use reinforcements and feedback to produce results. As you identify the connections between learning and behavior, you will be able to choose the right learning approach to solve problems in your personal and professional life. Your life did not come with a user's manual, so think of this week as your go-to guide for learning success.

To learn more about the cognitive process that drive learning, operant and classical conditioning, and the research on what helps people learn, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395
  - Chapter 5, "Learning," pages 162–196.
- Baars, M., Wijnia, L., & Paas, F. (2017). [The association between motivation, affect, and self-regulated learning when solving problems](#). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2017(8).
  - This article from the Capella Library emphasizes the concept of self-regulated learning and the important role it plays in problem solving.

##### **u09a1 - Case Study 3**

## Overview

It can be hard to know how to handle a problem with a coworker or friend. That is why the psychological concepts you are learning in this course are so important. Understanding how the human brain works will help you master your problem solving and self and social awareness skill in your personal and professional life. And whether at work or home, you are learning how to read the social cues of others and recommend strategies based on psychological concepts and principles. This week you will use your problem solving and self and social awareness skill to look beyond the opinions of others and figure out a problem's cause so you can help a coworker make informed decisions. Review the scenario below to get started.

## Preparation

Review the case study below and download the [Case Study 3 Assignment Template \[DOCX\]](#) for this assignment.

## Case Study

Mark works with Monica and Jennifer. He is a friendly older man who often talks about his plans for retirement in five years. He likes to make people laugh but often jokes about his struggles to learn new programs and technology.

The company recently informed the team that there will be a compliance test on new safety policies, which employees will need to pass in order to keep their jobs. The company has provided materials to study as well as optional practice exams. Monica, Jennifer, and Mark are having lunch in the break room, and Monica and Jennifer mention that they have already signed up to take the first practice test. Mark comments about how hard it is for him to learn a different way of doing the jobs that he has already been doing for years, joking that "you can't teach an old man new tricks." However, later in the day, he stops by Monica's desk to find out how she is preparing for the test and asks for advice. Given that they have a month until the compliance test, Monica is confident that she can help Mark prepare.

## Instructions

Using your problem solving and self and social awareness skill and the information that you have learned about the plasticity of the nervous system (Chapter 2) and motivation and mindset (Week 7), answer the questions in the Case Study 3 Assignment Template to help Monica offer strategies to improve Mark's chances for doing well on the compliance test. As you complete the template you will accomplish the following steps:

**Step 1:** Describe the impact of mindset on success.

**Step 2:** Explain how mindset affects learning.

**Step 3:** Describe specific strategies that Monica can suggest to Mark to improve his memory and better prepare for the compliance test.

**Step 4:** Explain the importance of tailoring advice and strategies directly to Mark's situation.

Once you have completed your work, save the file and upload it to the assignment submission area.

## Additional Requirements

Your submission should meet the following requirements:

- **Written communication:** Writing is free from errors that detract from the overall message. Each response must be paragraph-length (5–7 sentences).
- **Citations:** Cite each source both in-text and on a separate Works Cited page. Review current [APA Style and Format](#) guidelines for more on how to cite your sources.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.
- **Sources:** Two sources are required. One of these sources can be one of the course readings or videos. The second source must be obtained from the Capella Library databases.

As you complete research, it is important to cite your sources so that you can provide the original author with credit for their work. There are different citation formats. As you move forward, you will use APA in your coursework. You do not need to use APA formatting in this course, but it is important to learn the intent of this so that you have this foundation.

For this assignment, please provide the author's last name, and the year of the publication in the body of the paper. If there is a direct quote, use quotation marks and provide the page number, too.

Also, please provide a separate reference page that includes a list of the research you used for the assignment.

Review the Case Study 3 Scoring Guide for details on how your assignment will be graded.

## Competencies Measured

By successfully completing this assignment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Discuss the ways in which key concepts and principles of psychology explain thought and behavior.
  - Describe the impact of mindset on success.
- Competency 2: Explain how psychological concepts and principles are used as part of a decision making process.
  - Explain how mindset affects learning.
- Competency 3: Apply scientific principles and psychological concepts to recommend practical solutions to real-world problems.
  - Describe specific strategies that Monica can suggest to Mark to improve his memory and better prepare for the compliance test.
  - Explain the importance of tailoring advice and strategies directly to Mark's situation.
- Competency 4: Apply in text the standard writing conventions for the discipline, including structure, voice, person, tone, and citation formatting.
  - Writes coherently with correct grammar, usage, mechanics, and citation of sources.

### **u09v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talks: Habits and Hacks With Omar Epps**

What do acting and fatherhood have in common? More than you might think. In this week's Capella Talks, film and TV star Omar Epps explains the challenges he faces in his life's two greatest roles: those of actor and father. The key to Omar's success? Understanding how we learn and using that knowledge to inform his craft and his caring approach to his children.

#### Course Resources

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##### Capella Talks: Habits and Hacks With Omar Epps

### **Unit 10 » Social Influences**

#### Introduction

### **Being a Strong Leader**

As Monica nears the end of her psychology class, she reflects on a hectic and eventful few months. She has enjoyed learning more about what makes people tick. One topic she finds fascinating is how people can influence others through their behavior and how a person's thoughts and feelings may be affected by the people around them. As she prepares for a new chapter that includes the job promotion she decided to accept, Monica considers what it will mean to be a good leader for her employees. She knows that her self- and social-awareness skills are important tools for understanding human interactions and how her actions will affect her coworkers. Going forward in her career and in her role as a mom, how can Monica apply the skills and knowledge she has gained in her psychology course to be an effective leader?

What a journey these 10 weeks have been. Everything you have learned so far has helped you better understand yourself, how you relate to others, and how they relate to you. You have explored your emotions and motivations, learned how to manage stress, and practiced good decision making in the face of challenges. In short, you have discovered more about what makes you tick. Now, it is time to check in on the people around you and how your social world can impact your future. This week, you will learn about social influences and discover how the quality of your relationships has an immense impact on your well being. You'll also explore the ways you can turn socializing into success in your personal and professional life.

#### To-Do List:

- **Assignments:** Submit your Reflection Journal.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about social psychology to gain insights on how individuals relate to the world.

- **Interactive Learning Module:** View the Capella Talks: Decisions to Thrive media.

## Course Resources

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### Week 10 Hook Image

## Learning Activities

### u10s1 - Activity Overview

## Assignment Overview

Submit the Reflection Journal assignment, which you began working on in Week 1.

### u10s2 - What You Need to Know

## Psychology and the Two Skills

*"When you make the right decision, it doesn't really matter what anyone else thinks."*

—Caroline Kennedy, Diplomat

Throughout this course, you discovered how your brain works, why food and delicious smells help you remember, and how emotions can hijack your decisions. You even learned how you learn. You have investigated the mysteries of the human mind in order to gain better decision making skills, which will help you move through your life with more confidence.

As you learned throughout this course, our ability to make decisions can determine our personal and professional success. Over the last 10 weeks, you have worked hard to hone two essential employability skills that will help you make smarter decisions:

- **Problem Solving** to identify and frame problems, explore ideas, and create effective, ethical, and evidence-based solutions based on psychological concepts and principles.
- **Self and Social Awareness** to monitor the emotions of yourself and others, to distinguish them, and to use the information to receive feedback, reflect, and guide your thinking.

Gaining mastery of these two skills will help you make objective decisions, empathize with others, resolve conflict, and accomplish critical tasks. The more you practice these skills, the easier they will become.

## Social Influences

In this week's reading, you will pull together everything you have experienced and consider how you show yourself to the world. When we socialize with others, we offer up our best selves and gauge their reactions to us. With each interaction, we regroup and decide how to take that next step outward. Are you a challenger or a conformer? Do you crave standing out from the crowd, or would you rather go with the flow? How you get along with others says a lot about who you are, and vice versa.

This week you will work on your self and social awareness skill as you learn how your sense of self influences—and is influenced by—the people around you. Understanding how you interact with others is a critical part of how you apply your problem solving skill in social situations at school and work.

To learn more about social psychology, the branch of psychology that focuses on how our thoughts and feelings influence how we act toward others and how our thoughts and feelings are affected by other people's behavior, review the following resources:

- Bernstein, D. (2019). *Essentials of psychology* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN:9781337612395.
  - Chapter 14, "Social Psychology," pages 534–577.

## **u10a1 - Reflection Journal**

### **Overview**

Since you started PSYC1100, Smarter Decisions through Psychology, you have had the opportunity to learn about fascinating topics, including the brain and nervous system, emotions, motivation, and stress management. As you learned the psychological concepts and principles covered in this course, you gained insight into what influences decision making and how you can apply that knowledge to make better decisions in your own life and career. Through your study of psychology, you have also started mastering two essential employability skills:

- Problem solving to identify and frame problems, explore ideas, and create effective, ethical, and evidence-based solutions based on psychological concepts and principles.
- Self and social awareness to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to receive feedback, reflect, and guide one's thinking.

In this journal assignment you will reflect on what you have learned about psychology and these two skills and how you can apply what you have learned to your life.

### **Preparation**

Throughout the course you have been making note of what you have learned and how you have practiced your problem solving and self and social awareness skill through your study of psychology. Refer to your notes and download the [Reflection Journal Template \[DOCX\]](#) to complete this assignment.

### **Instructions**

Answer the questions in the Reflection Journal Template, including the following in your responses:

**Step 1:** Discuss how principles of psychology can be applied to problem solving at home or work. As a result of this class, how will you immediately apply your problem solving skill at home or work?

**Step 2:** Explains how principles of psychology can be used to understand one's own self and social awareness. As a result of this class, how have you grown in terms of your own self and social awareness skill?

**Step 3:** Describes an activity or resource (in this course) that was most relevant to one's own individual development. Of all of the activities and resources in the course, which one was most relevant for you? Why?

**Step 4:** Discusses one psychological concept that can be applied towards personal or professional life. What is one psychological concept that you have learned in this class that was most helpful to you? How will you use this concept to succeed in your personal or professional life?

Use the Reflection Journal Template to record your responses. Once you have completed your work, save the file and upload it to the assignment submission area.

### **Additional Requirements**

Your submission should meet the following requirements:

- **Written communication:** Writing is free from errors that detract from the overall message. Each response must be paragraph-length (5–7 sentences).
- **Citations:** Cite each source both in-text and on a separate Works Cited page. Review current [APA Style and Format](#) guidelines for more on how to cite your sources.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.
- **Sources:** Two sources are required. One of these sources can be one of the course readings or videos. The second source must be obtained from the Capella Library databases.

Review the Reflection Journal Scoring Guide for details on how your assignment will be graded.

### **Competencies Measured**

By successfully completing this assignment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Discuss the ways in which key concepts and principles of psychology explain thought and behavior.
  - Discusses how principles of psychology can be applied to problem solving at home or work.
- Competency 2: Explain how psychological concepts and principles are used as part of a decision making process.
  - Explains how principles of psychology can be used to understand one's own self and social awareness.
- Competency 3: Apply scientific principles and psychological concepts to recommend practical solutions to real-world problems.
  - Describes an activity or resource (in this course) that was most relevant to one's own individual development.

- Discusses one psychological concept that can be applied towards personal or professional life.
- Competency 4: Apply in text the standard writing conventions for the discipline, including structure, voice, person, tone, and citation formatting.
  - Writes coherently with correct grammar, usage, and mechanics.

#### **u10v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talks: Decisions to Thrive**

In this week's Capella Talks, Dr. Ryan Poirier offers some inspiring thoughts on taking what you have learned about the inner workings of the mind and body out into the wider world with you.

Course Resources

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Capella Talks: Decisions to Thrive