Introductory Psychology Applied Assignment Credit (AAC) Guidelines

Purpose: This assignment is an opportunity for you to see how psychology can be applied.
Requirements: You will need to earn **eight** applied assignment credits (AACs) which will count as 10% of your grade for Introduction to Psychology (PSY 1001). You may earn AACs in the three different ways outlined below by doing one or more of these options. *If you fail to complete the applied assignment by the due date your instructor sets, you will lose up to 10% of your grade.* Each AAC is worth 1.25% of your grade.

Ways to Earn AACs:

A. Sign up to **participate in psychology research**. Participation in research studies typically earns **1 to 4 AACs per study**; credits vary depending on how much of your time the study will take, but you'll know how many credits a study is worth before you sign up to participate. See below for the specific procedures to complete this option.

B. Attend (in-person or digitally) a lecture approved by the psychology department chair relating to psychology and **write a paper about the lecture.** In the paper you are to summarize the lecture and connect its content to what you've learned in Introduction to Psychology. The paper must be 2-3 double-spaced pages with 1-inch margins. Going to an approved talk and writing a paper about that talk earns **3 AACs**.

Options A & B will likely be unavailable during the winterim and summer sessions. If studies are available and approved lectures are taking place, students may certainly pursue these options for AACs; however, students in these sessions will likely need to rely on the options C & D.

C. **Write a paper summarizing an article** from *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. To complete this option you will go to the library or the library website (http://library.auraria.edu/) and select any article published **during the last 12 months** in the journal *Current Directions in Psychological Science* (papers on articles from other journals or publication dates will not fulfill this assignment). You will then write a 2-3 page paper (typewritten, double spaced, with 1-inch margins) reviewing the findings of the article. If your instructor requests this assignment be submitted in hardcopy format, you must staple a photocopy of the first page of the article to your paper. If your instructor request this assignment be submitted digitally, attach a full-text copy of the article with your submission. This option earns **2 AACs**.

D. **Write a paper reacting to a SET of (i.e. multiple) online lectures** from respected psychological experts via TED Talks. You will watch a set of online lectures about a related psychological topic, all delivered by trusted psychological experts. You should watch *ALL the videos in the approved themed set*, then write a 2-3 page paper about the set of videos. In the paper, you should briefly summarize the content, explain what you learned from the overall set (this will require that you integrate the information from the videos), and apply what you've learned back to concepts covered in class. If this option is completed satisfactorily, you will earn 3 AACs. See below for details about these approved video sets and how to access them.

Guidelines for Research Participation (Option A)

Faculty and undergraduate students in the Department of Psychology conduct various research projects in different areas of psychology, and they need volunteers to participate in their studies. This is where you come in. If you choose to earn AACs by participating in a research study, you are agreeing to volunteer at least 30 minutes of your time.

Rights: You have the right to be treated with respect by the researcher. You have the right to a consent form before and a debriefing after the study. You have the right to leave a study at any time without credit or penalty. Please address any complaints to research pool coordinator, Dr. Garris (cgarris@msudenver.edu).

Policy Regarding Minors: If you are under 18, you must obtain and submit written permission from a guardian in order to take advantage of this option. See the minor permission form at the end of this document for more details. If you would like to participate in research, have that form signed by a guardian and submit a copy (in person or by email) to Dr. Garris (cgarris@msudenver.edu).
Policy Regarding Studies Recruiting Child Participants: Some researchers study questions about children and require child participants. If you are a parent of children, you have the opportunity to participate in studies recruiting child participants. Accompanying your child to a study will also earn AACs.

How do you find an appropriate project?

- To participate in an experiment go to: http://msudenver.sona-systems.com
- If you log in from home, set your browser to accept cookies and allow pop-ups for this site.
- **Your User ID is your msudenver email name** (the part of your email address that comes before @msudenver). For example, if sjones@msudenver.edu is your email address, then your User ID is sjones. If you use another email address, you must still sign in with the msudenver user ID. You may not change your User ID, but you can provide an alternate email address.
- **Your password is msudenver** (no spaces).The first time you log in, please go to Profile and change your password. Once you have logged in you will be prompted to answer a few demographic questions. You may decline to answer but that will affect the studies that will be available to you. You will then be able to see all the research studies and select one.
- Sign up online to participate by clicking on "View Available Studies." You will then be able to see all open time slots. All you need to do is click Sign Up.
- You may log in at any time to check and/or cancel studies for which you have signed up.
- Some studies may have certain restrictions, so please read the requirements carefully.
- Please make sure that your name is on the list of participants for each study. **If you are not on the list, you will not get credit for the study.**

If you cannot log in:

- Check whether your instructor has sent in the class list. If the list has in fact been sent, then please contact Thai Intara at tintarak@msudenver.edu or Dr. Garris at cgarris@msudenver.edu. **Send an email from your MSU Denver email address, and include your full name, the name of your instructor and the section of your class (e.g., PSY 1001-022).** Please do not email during the first two weeks of the semester, as it may take that long to enter class lists into the system.

How to assure that you get credit for your participation:

- Because research studies are often difficult to plan and rooms are hard to schedule, if you sign up for a time to participate in a study you must show up or **cancel at least 24 hours before the appointment** on the Sona website. If you miss an appointment you are considered an unexcused no-show.
- **If you miss two studies, you will no longer be able to sign up and participate in studies, and you will be canceled out of any future studies for which you had already signed up.**
- **If you are late for a study—**even by a few minutes—you may not be allowed to participate and may be counted as an unexcused no-show.
- **Please make sure that you are at the right room.** The rooms are clearly labeled. If you go to the wrong room you will likely receive a no-show.
- Some projects will require only 30 minutes of your time, while others will require an hour or more, and, therefore, participation will be worth more. Additionally, some studies can be conducted completely online, while other studies require in-person participation. In-person participation is worth more AAC credit. The researchers will determine, in advance, the time commitment and AAC credits associated with each study.
    - **Online Studies**: Each half hour of time spent as a research participant will equal 1 AAC.
    - **In-Person Studies**: Each half hour of time spent as a research participant will equal 2 AACs.

- You may participate in each study only once. You will not receive credit if you participate in a study more than one time.
- After you participate in a study, the researcher will give you a Debriefing Form. The researcher will assign the appropriate number of AAC credits through the Sona website. If the researcher hasn't given you credit with 48 hours of your participation, please email the researcher. If you do not receive credit within 24 hours of contacting the researcher, please email Dr. Garris (cgarris@msudenver.edu).
- If a researcher fails to show up for a scheduled appointment (within 10 minutes), you will still receive credit for participation provided you contact the Psychology Department administrative assistants **immediately** and this information is verified at the time of the scheduled session. After hours, please immediately email Dr. Garris (cgarris@msudenver.edu).You will not receive credit if you do not contact the main office or Dr. Garris **immediately.**
- Studies will be posted at various times during the semester, so if you don't find one that is being conducted at a convenient time, check back every couple of days. Your instructor will not be able to tell you when new studies are going to be posted; you just have to keep checking.
- The Psychology Department is not responsible for offering enough studies for every student to participate. **Please note that there are very few studies available in the last two weeks of the semester.** You are encouraged to sign up early in the semester.

Contact information: For general questions, please contact the research pool coordinator, Dr. Garris (cgarris@msudenver.edu)**.** For specific questions about a specific study, please contact the researcher.

Instructions for Watching Online Lecture Sets (Option D):

Again, you should watch *ALL the videos in the approved themed set*, then write a 2-3 page paper about the set of videos. In the paper, you should briefly summarize the content, explain what you learned from the overall set (this will require that you integrate the information from the videos), and apply what you've learned back to concepts covered in class. If this option is completed satisfactorily, you will earn 3 AACs.

Set One: Sleep (How We Sleep and the Value of Sleep) (4 Lectures; 42 min)
https://www.ted.com/talks/jeff_iliff_one_more_reason_to_get_a_good_night_s_sleep The brain uses a quarter of the body's entire energy supply, yet only accounts for about two percent of the body's mass. So how does this unique organ receive and, perhaps more importantly, rid itself of vital nutrients? New research suggests it has to do with sleep.

https://www.ted.com/talks/russell_foster_why_do_we_sleep Russell Foster is a circadian neuroscientist: He studies the sleep cycles of the brain. And he asks: What do we know about sleep? Not a lot, it turns out, for something we do with one-third of our lives. In this talk, Foster shares three popular theories about why we sleep, busts some myths about how much sleep we need at different ages — and hints at some bold new uses of sleep as a predictor of mental health.

https://www.ted.com/talks/jessa_gamble_how_to_sleep In today's world, balancing school, work, kids and more, most of us can only hope for the recommended eight hours of sleep. Examining the science behind our body's internal clock, Jessa Gamble reveals the surprising and substantial program of rest we should be observing.

https://www.ted.com/talks/arianna_huffington_how_to_succeed_get_more_sleep In this short talk, Arianna Huffington shares a small idea that can awaken much bigger ones: the power of a good night's sleep. Instead of bragging about our sleep deficits, she urges us to shut our eyes and see the big picture: We can sleep our way to increased productivity and happiness — and smarter decision-making.

Set Two: Positive Psychology/Happiness (3 lectures; 62 min)
https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_asks_why_are_we_happy Dan Gilbert, author of "Stumbling on Happiness," challenges the idea that we'll be miserable if we don't get what we want. Our "psychological immune system" lets us feel truly happy even when things don't go as planned.

https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_on_flow Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi asks, "What makes a life worth living?" Noting that money cannot make us happy, he looks to those who find pleasure and lasting satisfaction in activities that bring about a state of "flow."

https://www.ted.com/talks/martin_seligman_on_the_state_of_psychology Martin Seligman talks about psychology — as a field of study and as it works one-on-one with each patient and each practitioner. As it moves beyond a focus on disease, what can modern psychology help us to become?

Set Three: Brain Repair and Plasticity (3 lectures; 45min)
https://www.ted.com/talks/jocelyne_bloch_the_brain_may_be_able_to_repair_itself_with_help Through treating everything from strokes to car accident traumas, neurosurgeon Jocelyne Bloch knows the brain's inability to repair itself all too well. But now, she suggests, she and her colleagues may have found the key to neural repair: Doublecortin-positive cells. Similar to stem cells, they are extremely adaptable and, when extracted from a brain, cultured and then re-injected in a lesioned area of the same brain, they can help repair and rebuild it. "With a little help," Bloch says, "the brain may be able to help itself."

https://www.ted.com/talks/michael_merzenich_on_the_elastic_brain Neuroscientist Michael Merzenich looks at one of the secrets of the brain's incredible power: its ability to actively re-wire itself. He's researching ways to harness the brain's plasticity to enhance our skills and recover lost function.

https://www.ted.com/talks/sandrine_thuret_you_can_grow_new_brain_cells_here_s_how Can we, as adults, grow new neurons? Neuroscientist Sandrine Thuret says that we can, and she offers research and practical advice on how we can help our brains better perform neurogenesis—improving mood, increasing memory formation and preventing the decline associated with aging along the way.

Set Four: Body Language (3 lectures; 48 min)
https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are Body language affects how others see us, but it may also change how we see ourselves. Social psychologist Amy Cuddy shows how "power posing" — standing in a posture of confidence, even when we don't feel confident — can affect testosterone and cortisol levels in the brain, and might even have an impact on our chances for success.

https://www.ted.com/talks/ron_gutman_the_hidden_power_of_smiling Ron Gutman reviews a raft of studies about smiling, and reveals some surprising results. Did you know your smile can be a predictor of how long you'll live — and that a simple smile has a measurable effect on your overall well-being? Prepare to flex a few facial muscles as you learn more about this evolutionarily contagious behavior.

https://www.ted.com/talks/pamela_meyer_how_to_spot_a_liar On any given day we're lied to from 10 to 200 times, and the clues to detect those lie can be subtle and counter-intuitive. Pamela Meyer, author of Liespotting, shows the manners and "hotspots" used by those trained to recognize deception -- and she argues honesty is a value worth preserving.

Set Five: Errors in Memory (3 lectures; 53 min)
https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_loftus_the_fiction_of_memory Psychologist Elizabeth Loftus studies memories. More precisely, she studies false memories, when people either remember things that didn't happen or remember them differently from the way they really were. It's more common than you might think, and Loftus shares some startling stories and statistics — and raises some important ethical questions.

https://www.ted.com/talks/scott_fraser_the_problem_with_eyewitness_testimony Scott Fraser studies how humans remember crimes — and bear witness to them. In this powerful talk, which focuses on a deadly shooting at sunset, he suggests that even close-up eyewitnesses to a crime can create "memories" they could not have seen. Why? Because the brain abhors a vacuum.

https://www.ted.com/talks/steve_ramirez_and_xu_liu_a_mouse_a_laser_beam_a_manipulated_memory Can we edit the content of our memories? It's a sci-fi-tinged question that Steve Ramirez and Xu Liu are asking in their lab at MIT. Essentially, the pair shoot a laser beam into the brain of a living mouse to activate and manipulate its memory. In this unexpectedly amusing talk they share not only how, but — more importantly — why they do this.

Set Six: Mental Illness (3 lectures; 60 min)
https://www.ted.com/talks/andrew_solomon_depression_the_secret_we_share "The opposite of depression is not happiness, but vitality, and it was vitality that seemed to seep away from me in that moment." In a talk equal parts eloquent and devastating, writer Andrew Solomon takes you to the darkest corners of his mind during the years he battled depression. That led him to an eye-opening journey across the world to interview others with depression — only to discover that, to his surprise, the more he talked, the more people wanted to tell their own stories.

https://www.ted.com/talks/eleanor_longden_the_voices_in_my_head To all appearances, Eleanor Longden was just like every other student, heading to college full of promise and without a care in the world. That was until the voices in her head started talking. Initially innocuous, these internal narrators became increasingly antagonistic and dictatorial, turning her life into a living nightmare. Diagnosed with schizophrenia, hospitalized, drugged, Longden was discarded by a system that didn't know how to help her. Longden tells the moving tale of her years-long journey back to mental health, and makes the case that it was through learning to listen to her voices that she was able to survive.

https://www.ted.com/talks/thomas_insel_toward_a_new_understanding_of_mental_illness Today, thanks to better early detection, there are 63% fewer deaths from heart disease than there were just a few decades ago. Thomas Insel, Director of the National Institute of Mental Health, wonders: Could we do the same for depression and schizophrenia? The first step in this new avenue of research, he says, is a crucial reframing: for us to stop thinking about "mental disorders" and start understanding them as "brain disorders."

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PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

Please return a copy of this signed form to Dr. Christopher Garris in the Department of Psychological Sciences.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As part of the educational experience here at MSU Denver, we invite all students who are enrolled in our Introductory to Psychology course to participate in psychology studies during the course of the semester. This option is one of many that students can pursue in earning eight applied assignment credits (AACs), which will count as 10% of the student's overall grade. Other activities include attending professional talks on campus or writing summary papers of empirical articles. If your MSU Denver student is **under 18 years of age** and wishes to participate in the research studies, **your permission is required.**

Students can see a list of available studies in the Department of Psychological Studies on our research management website (https://msudenver.sona-systems.com). From this site, students can read descriptions of studies and sign up for available times. When they participate in studies, students can earn course credit or sometimes other incentives (like gift cards or small amounts of cash). Once this form has been received, the Introductory Psychology Coordinator will create an account for the student, allowing them to view and sign up for studies.

Participation is completely voluntary, and there is no penalty if a student does not want to participate in a study. Furthermore, if a student agrees to participate, he or she may discontinue participation at any time without penalty. All studies have been reviewed by MSU Denver's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

With your approval, your minor may choose to participate in the following kinds of studies:

- Surveys, interviews, and studies that use questionnaires or other verbal or behavioral measures.
- Studies that use sensors (e.g., a blood pressure device) or bodily fluids (e.g. saliva) to measure physiological and psychological reactions.
- Studies with minor deception in which participants are not told everything about the study until it is over.
- Studies in which information about the hypothesis and the experimental situation is revealed to the student after participation is completed. In this way, we seek to enhance students' learning experience by providing detailed information about Psychology as a social science.

Your minor ***may not*** participate in the following kinds of studies:

- Procedures that entail a risk of physical or emotional harm that is not experienced in their daily lives

Please enter your name and your child's name below to give them permission to participate in studies when the age requirement includes individuals under 18 years of age. Your child may **not** participate in studies when the age requirement is 18 or older.

_____ _____

(PRINT) Your Child's Name **Today's Date**

_____

(PRINT your name) Parent or Legal Guardian

_____

(SIGN your name) Parent or Legal Guardian

Questions or problems? Contact the **Introductory Psychology Coordinator** at cgarris@msudenver.edu