

**“What Matters in Psychology?” Colloquium**  
**Psychology 4085/5085, Sec. 04**  
Spring, 2019  
Melson Hall 218, 2:00 – 3:15

“A collaborative consideration of various topics in psychology, selected by course participants as significant and worth taking up together as things that ‘matter.’”

Instructors: Mark Kunkel, and our guest presenters  
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Office Hours: As posted  
Text: To be distributed and negotiated, week-to-week

CourseDen: Although we will meet each designated class hour, and I have designed the class to maintain attendance and participation as the centerpiece of learning, we’ll also take advantage of the CourseDen platform to assist in the class process. Use of this format will allow:

1. Non-paper dissemination of handouts and other class information
2. Posting of your weekly responses to the readings and presentations, and to each others’ work
3. Outside of class interaction via the bulletin board in which we might post or respond to questions around the class content and process.

You may get to the CourseDen page for this class via the “My UWG” portal (<http://myuwg.westga.edu/cp/home/loginf>) using your UWG user name and password (if you don’t know what these are or how to get them, please follow the instructions at [www.westga.edu](http://www.westga.edu)). You may then follow the links to our class to have access to the materials that will be posted there (see above) and to contribute to discussion and to gather virtually.

Course Objective: At the conclusion of the course you will know if you have gotten your money’s worth if you have participated in a psychologically informed conversation about what matters, in psychology. I hope that in the process you have found yourself becoming clearer, kinder, and more curious about what matters in psychology, and more aware of the ways that you are keeping and are kept company.

Course Requirements:

1. **Class attendance and participation.** I expect to attend and participate, and I expect you to attend and participate along with me, in each class meeting. For each class gathering, beginning with our first meeting **next Tuesday**, 1-8, please come to having prepared a written question on a 3X5 card with your name on it. This question should be something you want to talk about during our gathering for that day, and should reflect your sense-making of our gatherings, the readings, the presentations, and other things. You may earn up to 50 points for attendance and participation. There will be other, more worthy and powerful, reinforcers as well!
2. **Response papers.** At three junctures in the semester I’ll assign and post a response paper topic and rubric. In general, these will be opportunities for you to explore in depth some of your and our emerging sense of what matters in psychology. Each paper will be worth 25 points, and will broadly emphasize an informed (experiential and research-based) response to the way in which psychological knowledge and experience are becoming new gifts to you.
3. **Take-home exam.** Toward the end of our work I’ll give you six or seven questions to answer that will allow you to integrate your knowing and bring it to an evaluation surface. This exam will be worth 100 points.
4. **Presentation.** This course will have the wonderful benefit of including upper-level undergraduate students and their Master’s program colleagues. I have in mind that we will benefit from the graduate

students' intense passion and curiosity in all kinds of ways, during every class gathering. And each group of undergraduates, under the guidance of their graduate student mentor, will also be responsible for preparing and presenting to the class their best answer to the "What Matters?" question. This will be very cool, and we'll talk about it in detail as our work progresses. The presentation will be worth 50 points as well.

Grading Procedure: I'll make every effort to ensure that your grades reflect adequately the quality of your work and the breadth of your involvement in the course. I'll give you lots of shaping feedback along the way, to apprise you of your level of performance. A summary of course activities, points, and corresponding grades follows:

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Participation:   | 50  |
| Response papers: | 75  |
| Exam:            | 100 |
| Presentation:    | 50  |
| Total:           | 275 |

|   |           |                  |
|---|-----------|------------------|
| A | 90 – 100% | 248 – 275 points |
| B | 80 - 89 % | 220 – 247 points |
| C | 70 - 79%  | 193 – 219 points |

Etc.

I support and honor various gifts and challenges people bring to academic work. Any student with a recognized disability requiring accommodations of any sort should feel free to contact me and we will discuss your circumstances. Please see also the material in this link, considered part of the syllabus for the course:

<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php>

#### Schedule:

Jan 8 "What matters in psychology?" introduction, and "Sacred Shaping" around it  
Jan 10 continued

The remaining class meetings will include visits by departmental and other university faculty, films, consideration of readings, and group presentations. I'll create and distribute a schedule as it unfolds, okay?