

EXAM CODE **101**

CATALOG NUMBER **PSYx101**

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Introduction to Psychology

CREDIT HOURS

3

LEVEL

LOWER

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SECTION ONE

Preparing for the Exam

Before You Choose This UExcel Exam

Uses for the Examination

- Excelsior College, the test developer, recommends granting three (3) semester hours of lower-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination.
- Other colleges and universities also recognize this exam as a basis for granting credit or advanced standing.
- Individual institutions set their own policies for the amount of credit awarded and the minimum acceptable score.

Examinees who have applied to Excelsior College should ask their academic advisor where this exam fits within their degree program.

Examinees **not enrolled** in an Excelsior College degree program should check with the institution from which they wish to receive credit to determine whether credit will be granted and/or to find out the minimum grade required for credit. Those who intend to enroll at Excelsior College should ask an admissions counselor where this exam fits within their intended degree program.

For more information on exam availability and actual testing information, see the [Exam Registration and Information Guide](#).

Examination Length and Scoring

This examination consists of 120 multiple choice and other type questions. You will have two (2) hours to complete the exam. Your score will be reported as a letter grade. Questions are scored either correct (1) or incorrect (0). There is no partial credit. Each credit-bearing exam contains pretest questions, which are embedded throughout the exam. They are indistinguishable from the scored questions. It is to your advantage to do your best on all the questions. Pretest questions are being tried out for use in future versions of the exam.

The UExcel exams do **not** have a fixed grading scale such as A = 90–100%, B = 80–90%, and so forth, as you might have seen on some exams in college courses. Each UExcel test has a scale that is set by a faculty committee and is different for each exam. The process, called standard setting, is described in more detail in the [Technical Handbook](#). Excelsior puts each exam through a standard setting because different test questions have different levels of difficulty. To explain further, getting 70% of the questions right on the exam when the questions are easy does not show the same level of proficiency as getting 70% of questions correct when the questions are hard. Every form of a test (a form contains the test questions) has its own specific grading scale tailored to the particular questions on each exam form.

Please also note that on each form, some of the questions (referred to as pretest questions) count toward the score and some do not; the grading scale applies only to those questions that count toward the score. The area with percentage ratings on the second page of your score report is intended to help identify relative strengths and weaknesses and which content areas to emphasize, should you decide to take the examination again. Your grade

is **based on only the scored questions**. Therefore, the percentage ratings do not necessarily reflect the total percentage that counted toward your grade.

For the best view of the types of questions on this exam, see the sample questions in the back of this guide. Practice, practice, practice!

Score Reporting

For most of our examinations, based on performance, an examinee is awarded a letter grade of A, B, C, or F. A letter grade of D can be given, but credit is awarded for A, B, and C letter grades only. The letter grades reported to examinees indicate that their performance was equivalent to the performance of students who received the same letter grade in a comparable, on-campus course.

More specifically, the letter grade indicates the examinee's proficiency relative to the learning outcomes specified in the exam content guide. Following are general descriptions of examinee performance at each level:

Letter Grade Description

- A Highly Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates an advanced level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- B Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates a good level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- C Marginally Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates a satisfactory level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- D Not Competent (no credit recommended): Examinee's performance demonstrates weak knowledge of the content and minimal skill relative to the learning outcomes.^①
- F Fail (no credit recommended): Examinee's performance demonstrates no knowledge of the content and no skill in the subject relative to the learning outcomes.

Credit is transcribed by Excelsior College for examinees who achieve letter grades of C or higher.

We encourage colleges and universities to use the Excelsior College letter grades of A, B, and C as acceptable standards for awarding credit.

^① In general, two-hour exams do not award a D letter grade.

See page 26, at the back of this content guide, for a sample UExcel Grade Report for Examinations.

Excelsior College Bookstore

The Excelsior College Bookstore offers recommended textbooks and other resources to help you prepare for UExcel exams.

The bookstore is available online at (login required): www.excelsior.edu/bookstore

Excelsior College Library

Library services are available to students enrolled in a degree program at Excelsior College. Created through our partnership with the Sheridan Libraries of The Johns Hopkins University, the library provides access to journal articles, books, websites, databases, reference services, and many other resources. To access the Excelsior College Library, visit www.excelsior.edu/library (login is required). Access to the library is available 24/7.

Take Charge of Your Own Learning

At Excelsior College, independent, self-directed study supported by resources we help you find is not a new concept. We have always stressed to students who take exams that they are acting as their own teacher, and that they should spend as much time studying for an exam as they would spend in a classroom and on homework for a corresponding college course in the same subject area.

Begin by studying the content outline contained in this content guide, at its most detailed level. You will see exactly which topics are covered, and where chapters on those topics can be found in the Recommended Resources. You will see exactly where you might need to augment your knowledge or change your approach.

The content outline, along with the learning outcomes for this exam and recommended textbooks, will serve as your primary resources.

How Long Will It Take Me to Study?

Study for a UExcel exam is comparable to an equivalent college-level course. As an independent

learner, you should study and review as much as you would for the same subject in a campus-based college course. If you already have a background in the subject, you may be able to pass the exam successfully with fewer hours of study. It depends upon the learner as well as the subject, the number of credits (for example, a 6- or 8-credit exam will require more hours of study than a 3-credit exam), and the length of the exam. We strongly encourage you to create a long-term action or study plan, so that you have a systematic approach to prepare for the exam. We've included guidelines for creating such a plan.

How Can I Create an Effective Long-Term Study Plan?

1. Determine the time you will require to complete your preparation for this exam. If you have not studied the subject before, you should plan to budget approximately 45 hours of study time for every credit: 135 hours for 3 credits, 180 hours for 4 credits, 270 hours for 6 credits, and 360 hours for 8 credits. These hours are rules of thumb based on expectations for a student taking a course in the subject; it may take you more or less time, depending on how familiar you are with the material and how easily you absorb the information studying on your own. Aside from the content review, you should then factor in time to search for and use other resources, and to complete any projects and assignments in the study materials that will clarify your understanding of the topics in the content outline (that part in the content guide where the specific areas of study are spelled out). Spend more time on concepts and areas in which you feel you are weak. Totaled, this is approximately the amount of time you should expect to devote to a three-credit, campus-based course. The actual amount of time you require depends on many factors, and will be approximate. If your background is weak, you may need to set aside substantially more than 135–150 hours. If your background is strong, you may budget less time.

Take a few minutes to review the content outline to assess your familiarity with the content. Then, in the space below, write the number of hours you will allocate to complete preparing for the exam.

Hours Required =

2. Determine the time you will have available for study.

In self-study, you need structure, as well as motivation and persistence, and a methodical approach to preparation. There is no set class to keep you on task. You have to do that yourself. Construct a time-use chart to record your daily activities over a one-week period. The most accurate way to do this is to complete the chart on a daily basis to record the actual amount of time you spend eating, sleeping, commuting, working, watching television, caring for others and yourself, reading, and everything else in an adult's life. However, if your schedule is regular, you might prefer to complete the chart in one sitting and, perhaps, by consulting your appointment book or planner.

After you have recorded your activities, you will be ready to schedule study periods around these activities or, perhaps, instead of some of them. In the space below, write the number of hours you will be able to set aside for study each week.

Hours Required =

3. Divide the first number by the second number.

This will give you the number of weeks you will need to set aside for independent study. For example, if you think you will require 170 hours of study and you have 10 hours available to study each week, divide 170 hours by 10 hours and you will get 17. This means that you will need about 17 weeks to complete this course of study. However, you will also need to allow about a week for review and self-testing. Moreover, to be on the safe side, you should also add two weeks to allow for unforeseen obstacles and times when you know you will not be able to study (e.g., during family illnesses or holidays). So, in this case, you should allot a total of 18 to 19 weeks to complete your study.

4. Schedule your examination to coincide with the end of your study period.

For example, if you plan to allow 18 weeks for study, identify a suitable examination date and begin study at least 18 weeks before that date. (The date you begin study assumes that you will have received all of your study materials, particularly textbooks, by that time.)

5. Format a long-term study plan.

You will need to use a calendar, planner, or some other tool to format and track your long-term study plan. Choose a method that is convenient and one that keeps you aware of your study habits on a daily basis. Identify the days and exact hours of each day that you will reserve for study throughout your whole independent study period. Check to see that the total number of hours you designate for study on your long-term study plan adds up to the number of hours you have determined you will need to complete this course of study (Step 1).

6. Record in your long-term study plan the content you plan to cover during each study period.

Enter the session numbers, review, and examination preparation activities you will complete during each study period. While it is suggested that approximately 160–170 hours of study is required for this exam, each and every student may require different timelines based on their comfort with, and comprehension of, the material.

You now have a tentative personal long-term study plan. Keep in mind that you will have to adjust your study plan, perhaps several times, as you study. It is only by actually beginning to work systematically through the material, using the content outline, that you will be able to determine accurately how long you should allow for each unit.

What Learning Strategy Should I Use?

The following guidelines are intended to help you acquire the grounding in the knowledge and skills required for successful completion of this examination.

1. Approach learning with a positive attitude.

Most students are capable of learning subject content if they devote enough time and effort to the task. This devotion will give you a positive edge and a feeling of control.

2. Diligently complete the exact work you specified in your study plan.

Your study plan is being designed for the specific purpose of helping you achieve the learning outcomes for this exam.

3. Be an active learner.

You should actively engage in the learning process. Read critically, take notes, and continuously monitor your comprehension. Keep a written record of your progress, highlight content you find difficult to grasp, and seek assistance from someone in your learning community who can help you if you have difficulty understanding a concept.

4. Be patient: you may not understand everything immediately.

When encountering difficulty with new material, be patient with yourself and don't give up. Understanding will come with time and further study. Sometimes you may need to take a break and come back to difficult material. This is especially true for any primary source material (original letters, documents, and so forth) that you may be asked to read. The content outline will guide you through the material and help you focus on key points. You will find that many concepts introduced in earlier sessions will be explained in more detail in later sessions.

5. Apply your learning to your daily life.

Use insights you gain from your study to better understand the world in which you live. Apply the learning whenever you can. Look for instances that support or contradict your reading on the subject.

6. Accommodate your preferred way of learning.

How do you learn best? Common ways to learn are reading, taking notes and making diagrams, and by listening to someone (on video or live). Others learn by doing. Do any of these descriptions apply to you? Or does your learning style vary with the learning situation? Decide what works for you and try to create a learning environment to accommodate your preferences.

Study Tips

Become an active user of the resource materials. Aim for understanding rather than memorization. The more active you are when you study, the more likely you will be to retain, understand, and apply the information.

The following techniques are generally considered to be active learning:

- **preview or survey** each chapter

- **highlight or underline text** you believe is important
- **write questions or comments** in the margins
- **practice re-stating content** in your own words
- **relate what you are reading** to the chapter title, section headings, and other organizing elements of the textbook
- **find ways to engage** your eyes, your ears, and your muscles, as well as your brain, in your studies
- **study with a partner or a small group**
- **prepare your review notes** as flashcards or create recordings that you can use while commuting or exercising

When you feel confident that you understand a content area, review what you have learned. Take a second look at the material to evaluate your understanding. If you have a study partner, the two of you can review by explaining the content to each other or writing test questions for each other to answer. Review questions from textbook chapters may be helpful for partner or individual study, as well.

Study smart for your UExcel exam! Success starts with establishing a relationship with your advisor.

Using UExcel Practice Exams

The official UExcel practice exams are highly recommended as part of your study plan. They can be taken using any computer with a supported web browser such as Google Chrome.

The practice exam package comes with two sets of questions. Please be aware that there will be fewer questions on the practice exams than there will be on the exam you take for credit. Generally, the practice questions will not be the same as the ones you will see when you take the actual exam for credit. They are intended to expose you to the types of questions you'll encounter in the actual exam. Practice questions are a tool, and do not provide a full exam experience. For example, the practice question sets do not have time limitations. Begin with the Content Guide, especially the detailed content outline. Memorizing specific questions and answers on the practice sets is not as effective as using the questions to practice, along with the content outline, to see which concepts you may need to study further. To register for the practice exam, visit www.excelsior.edu and log into your MyExcelsior

account. **Please note: You must be registered for the corresponding credit-bearing exam before you can register for the practice exam.**

Practice exams are not graded. Rather, they are intended to help you make sure you understand the subject and give you a sense of what the questions will be like on the exam for credit. Ideally, you would check any questions you got wrong, look at the explanations, and go back to the textbook to reinforce your understanding. After taking both forms of the practice exam, you should feel confident in your answers and confident that you know the material listed in the content outline.

Practice exams are one of the most popular study resources. Practice exams are typically shorter than the credit-bearing exam. Since the questions are drawn from the same pool of questions that appear on the credit-bearing exam, what you will see when you sit for the graded exam will be roughly the same. Used as intended, these practice exams will enable you to:

- Review the types of questions you may encounter on the actual exam.
- Practice testing on a computer in a timed environment.
- Practice whenever and wherever it is convenient for you.

Take two different forms of a practice exam within a 180-day period. (We highly recommend that you take the first form of the practice exam as a pretest, early in the study period. Use the results to identify areas to further study and carry out a plan. Then take the second form as a post-test and see how much you have improved.)

Although there is no guarantee, our research suggests that exam takers who do well on the practice exams are more likely to pass the actual exam than those who do not take advantage of the opportunity. Note that since the practice exams are not graded (calibrated) the same way as the scores on the credit-bearing exam, it will be hard for you to use the practice exams as a way to predict your score on the credit-bearing exam. The main purpose of the practice exams is for you to check your knowledge and to become comfortable with the types of questions you are likely to see in the actual, credit-bearing exam.

About Test Preparation Services

Preparation for UExcel® exams and Excelsior College® Examinations, though based on independent study, is supported by Excelsior College with a comprehensive set of exam learning resources and services designed to help you succeed. These learning resources are prepared by Excelsior College so you can be assured that they are current and cover the content you are expected to master for the exams. These resources, and your desire to learn, are usually all that you will need to succeed.

There are test-preparation companies that will offer to help you study for our examinations. Some may imply a relationship with Excelsior College and/or make claims that their products and services are all that you need to prepare for our examinations.

Excelsior College does not endorse the products and services of any tutorial or test preparation firm. We do not review the materials provided by these firms for the content or compatibility of their material and resources with UExcel® exams or Excelsior College Examinations®. No test preparation vendor is authorized to provide admissions counseling or academic advising services, or to collect any payments, on behalf of Excelsior College. Excelsior College does not send authorized representatives to a student's home nor does it review the materials provided by test preparation companies for content or compatibility with Excelsior College examinations.

To help you become a well-informed consumer, we suggest that before you make any purchase decision regarding study materials provided by organizations other than Excelsior College, you consider the points outlined on our website at www.excelsior.edu/testprep.

Exam Preparation Strategies

Each learner is different. However, all learners should read the content outline in the exam's Content Guide and ensure that they have mastered the concepts. For someone with no prior knowledge of the subject, a rule of thumb is 135 hours of study for a 3-credit exam—this number is just to give you an idea of the level of effort you will need, more or less.

Content Guides

This content guide is the most important resource. It lists the outcomes, a detailed content outline of what is covered, and textbooks and other study resources. It also has sample questions and suggestions for how to study. Content guides are updated periodically to correspond with changes in particular examinations and in textbook editions. Examinees can download any of the latest free UExcel content guides by visiting the individual exam page or from the list at www.excelsior.edu/contentguides.

Using the Content Outline

Each content area in the content outline includes the most important sections of the recommended resources for that area. These annotations are not intended to be comprehensive. You may need to refer to other chapters in the recommended textbooks. **Chapter numbers and titles may differ among textbook editions.**

This content outline contains examples of the types of information you should study. Although these examples are many, do not assume that everything on the exam will come from these examples. Conversely, do not expect that every detail you study will appear on the exam. Any exam is only a broad sample of all the questions that could be asked about the subject matter.

Using the Sample Questions and Rationales

Each content guide provides sample questions to illustrate those typically found on the exam. These questions are intended to give you an idea of the level of knowledge expected and the way questions are typically phrased. The sample questions do not sample the entire content of the exam and are not intended to serve as an entire practice test.

Recommended Resources for the UExcel Exam in Introduction to Psychology

The resources listed below were selected by the faculty members on the examination committee for use in developing this exam.

Resources listed under “Strongly Recommended” were used by the committee to verify all the questions on the exam. Please refer to the Content Outline to see which parts of the exam are cross-referenced to these resources.

Resources listed under “Optional” provide additional material that may deepen or broaden your understanding of the subject, or that may provide an additional perspective on the exam content. Textbook resources, both Strongly Recommended and Optional, may be purchased from the Excelsior College bookstore at www.excelsior.edu/bookstore.

You should allow ample time to obtain the necessary resources and to study sufficiently before taking the exam, so plan appropriately, with an eye towards your own personal learning needs. See the sections in this guide on the Excelsior College Bookstore and the Excelsior College Library, and under Reducing Textbook Costs, to help you secure the Strongly Recommended resources successfully.

Textbook Editions

Textbook editions listed in the UExcel content guides may not be the same as those listed in the bookstore. Textbook editions may not exactly match up in terms of table of contents and organization, depending upon the edition. However, our team of exam developers checks exam content against every new textbook edition to verify that all subject areas tested in the exam are still adequately available in the study materials. If needed, exam developers will list additional Strongly Recommended resources to ensure that all topics in the exam are still sufficiently covered. Public libraries may have the textbooks you need, or may be able to obtain them for you through interlibrary loan to reduce textbook costs. You may also consider financial aid, if you qualify, to further help defray the steep cost of textbooks. A section on open educational

resources (OER) has been included in this guide to help you locate additional, possibly free resources to augment your study.

Strongly Recommended

Wade, C., Tavis, C., & Garry, M. (2020). *Psychology* (text only) (13th ed.). Upper Saddle River NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

There is an enhanced product for the Wade textbook -- but no stand-alone e-text. The only way for students to get the e-text is to get Revel:

Revel for Psychology (with Access Card) by Wade, Carole; Tavis, Carol; Sommers, Samuel R.; Shin, Lisa M. Edition: 13th

The study materials may be purchased from the [Excelsior College Bookstore](#).

Optional Resources

The examination development committee did not identify any specific optional resources for this exam. If you would like to explore topics in more depth, we encourage you to refer to available Open Educational Resources (OER).

Reducing Textbook Costs

Many students know it is less expensive to buy a used textbook, and buying a previous edition is also an option. The Excelsior College bookstore includes a buyback feature and a used book marketplace, as well as the ability to rent digital versions of textbooks for as long as students need them. Students are encouraged to explore these and the many other opportunities available online to help defray textbook costs.

Open Educational Resources

There are many resources available online free of charge that may further enhance your study for the exam. Known as Open Educational Resources (OER), these may be textbooks, courses, tutorials, or encyclopedias. Any additional OER that you find independently should be used to augment study— not as replacements for the Strongly Recommended resources.

Most sites for university-based OER can be searched through www.ocwconsortium.org and/or www.oercommons.org.

Sites that specialize in web courses designed by college professors under contract with the website sponsor, rather than in web versions of existing college courses, include:

www.education-portal.com

www.opencourselibrary.org (abbreviated as OCL)

We have included specific courses that cover material for one or more UExcel® exams from the sites in the listings above. It's worth checking these sites frequently to see if new courses have been added that may be more appropriate or may cover an exam topic not currently listed.

Sites like Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.com) and iTunes U feature relatively brief lessons on very specific topics rather than full courses. Full courses are also available on iTunes U (<http://www.apple.com/education/ipad/itunes-u/>). We have chosen a few courses and collections for this listing.

Open Online Textbooks

BookBoon

<http://bookboon.com/en/textbooks-ebooks>

Flatworld Knowledge

<http://catalog.flatworldknowledge.com/#our-catalog>

College Readiness

Khan Academy

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

Hippocampus

<http://www.hippocampus.org/>

Open Course Library

<http://opencourselibrary.org/collg-110-college-success-course/>

Study Aids

Education Portal

<http://education-portal.com/>

Khan Academy

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

Annenberg Learner

<http://www.learner.org/>

OpenCourseWare

<http://ocwconsortium.org/en/courses/search>

OER Commons

<http://www.oercommons.org/>

Open Course Library

<http://www.opencourselibrary.org/>

To achieve academic success, rate yourself at Excelsior College's Self-Regulated Learning Lab. Visit the Diagnostic Assessment & Achievement of College Skills site at <https://srl.daacs.net/>

It's free!

SECTION TWO

Content Outline

General Description of the Examination

The UExcel Introduction to Psychology examination is based on material typically taught in a one-semester, three-credit, introductory course in psychology.

The examination measures knowledge and understanding of the theories and principles of general psychology, including biological influences on behavior, sensation and perception, consciousness, learning and memory, motivation and emotion, cognition and intelligence, human development, personality, psychological disorders and therapy, and social psychology, and the ability to apply this information to everyday life examples.

No prior knowledge of psychology is required before beginning study for this exam.

Learning Outcomes

After you have successfully worked your way through the recommended study materials, you should be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the history, methods, and specialized fields of psychology. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the structure and functions of the nervous system. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
3. Describe the processes of sensation and perception. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the various states of consciousness. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
5. Describe the processes of classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and memory. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
6. Examine theoretical perspectives on motivation and emotion. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
7. Describe various forms of cognition and theories of intelligence.
8. Describe the various theoretical perspectives on social, moral, and cognitive development from infancy to old age. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
9. Describe the various approaches to the study of personality. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
10. Describe the major psychological disorders and approaches to treatment. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
11. Demonstrate an understanding of social influences on the individual. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)

General Education Career Competencies Addressed in this Exam

GECC-2: Mathematical and Scientific Problem Solving: Apply scientific knowledge and reasoning to make evidence-based decisions.

Content Outline

The content outline describes the various areas of the test, similar to the way a syllabus outlines a course. To fully prepare requires self-direction and discipline. Study involves careful reading, reflection, and systematic review.

The major content areas on the Introduction to Psychology examination, the percent of the examination, and the hours to devote to each content area are listed below.

Content Area	Percent of the Examination	Hours of Study*
I. The Science of Psychology	10%	14
II. Biological Influences on Behavior	8%	11
III. Sensation and Perception	5%	7
IV. Consciousness	5%	7
V. Learning and Memory	14%	19
VI. Motivation and Emotion	8%	11
VII. Cognition and Intelligence	8%	11
VIII. Human Development	8%	11
IX. Personality	8%	11
X. Psychological Disorders and Therapy	16%	22
XI. Social Psychology	10%	14
Total	100%	

*Approximate: For those examinees who know the topic well, less time may be needed to learn the subject matter. For those who are new to the subject matter, more time may be required for study.

NOTE: Occasionally, examples will be listed for a content topic to help clarify that topic. However, the content of the examination is not limited to the specific examples given.

I. The Science of Psychology

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 1, What is Psychology?

Ch. 2, How Psychologists Do Research

- A. Definition and goals of psychology (for example: explain, predict, understand behavior)
- B. History of psychology
 1. Wundt and structuralism
 2. James and functionalism
 3. Gestalt psychology
 4. Pavlov and classical conditioning
 5. Watson, Skinner, and behaviorism
 6. Freud and the psychodynamic perspective
 7. Humanistic psychology
 8. Biological perspective

- 9. Evolutionary psychology
- 10. Cognitive perspective
- 11. Sociocultural perspective
- C. Research methods**
 - 1. Case study
 - 2. Naturalistic observation
 - 3. Correlational research
 - 4. Survey research
 - 5. Experiment
 - 6. Tests
- D. Statistical methods**
 - 1. Descriptive
 - a. Measures of central tendency
 - b. Variability
 - 2. Inferential
 - a. Null hypothesis
 - b. Alternative hypothesis
 - c. Statistical significance
- E. Psychological specialties (for example: clinical, psychometrician, basic vs. applied)**

- d. Universal traits (for example: language)
- e. Courtship and mating
- 3. Environmental influences
 - a. Nature vs. nurture
 - 1) Personality
 - 2) Intelligence
- B. Nervous system**
 - 1. Neurons
 - a. Components of the neuron
 - b. Synapse
 - c. Neural impulse
 - 2. Neurotransmitters
 - 3. Endorphins
 - 4. Central nervous system
 - a. Brain
 - 1) Research methods (for example: EEG, MRI, split-brain, etc.)
 - 2) Hemispheres
 - 3) Parts of the brain
 - (a) Cortex
 - (b) Medulla
 - (c) Corpus callosum
 - (d) Pons
 - (e) Reticular formation
 - (f) Cerebellum
 - (g) Limbic system
 - i. Thalamus
 - ii. Hypothalamus
 - iii. Hippocampus
 - iv. Amygdala
 - (h) Lobes
 - i. Occipital
 - ii. Frontal
 - iii. Parietal
 - iv. Temporal
 - b. Spinal cord
 - 5. Peripheral nervous system
 - a. Somatic nervous system
 - b. Autonomic nervous system
 - 1) Sympathetic division

II. Biological Influences on Behavior

8 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 3, Genes, Evolution, and Environment

Ch. 4, The Brain and Nervous System

- A. Genes, evolution, and environment**
 - 1. Genetic influences
 - a. Genes and heritability
 - 1) Individual differences
 - 2) Group differences
 - b. DNA
 - c. Genome
 - 2. Evolution
 - a. Charles Darwin
 - b. Natural selection
 - c. Instincts/mental modules

- 2) Parasympathetic division

C. Hormones

1. Melatonin
2. Oxytocin
3. Adrenal hormones
4. Sex hormones

III. Sensation and Perception

5 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch 5, Sensation and Perception

A. Psychophysics and thresholds

B. Sensory adaptation

C. Vision

1. The visual stimulus
2. The eye (structure, function)
3. Color vision

D. Hearing

1. The auditory stimulus
2. The ear (structure, function)

E. Taste

F. Smell

G. Skin senses

1. Touch and temperature
2. Pain

H. Basic perceptual phenomena

1. Patterns
2. Constancies
3. Depth perception
4. Gestalt principles of organization (for example: figure-ground, proximity, closure, similarity, continuity)
5. Illusions

I. Influences on perception (psychological, cultural)

J. Subliminal perception

K. Extrasensory perception (ESP)

IV. Consciousness

5 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 6, Consciousness and Sleep

A. Biological rhythms (circadian, long-term)

B. Sleep

1. Stages of sleep
2. REM sleep and dreaming
3. Functions of sleep
4. Sleep disorders

C. Hypnosis

1. Hypnotic phenomena
2. Theories of hypnosis

D. Psychoactive drugs

1. Physiology of drug effects
2. Psychology of drug effects
3. Classes of drugs (for example: stimulants, depressants, opiates, psychedelics)

V. Learning and Memory

14 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 7, Learning

Ch. 10, Memory

A. Learning

1. Classical conditioning
 - a. Unconditioned stimulus
 - b. Unconditioned response
 - c. Conditioned stimulus
 - d. Conditioned response
2. Operant conditioning
 - a. Reinforcement
 - 1) Positive reinforcement
 - 2) Negative reinforcement

- 3) Primary reinforcement
 - 4) Secondary reinforcement
 - b. Punishment
 - 1) Positive punishment
 - 2) Negative punishment
 - 3) Consequences
 - c. Schedules of reinforcement
 - 1) Continuous
 - 2) Intermittent
 - 3. Generalization
 - 4. Discrimination
 - 5. Extinction
 - 6. Spontaneous recovery
 - 7. Behavior modification
 - 8. Observational learning
- B. Memory**
- 1. Memory as a reconstructive process
 - a. Eyewitness testimony
 - b. Flashbulb memories
 - c. Confabulation
 - 2. Stages of Memory
 - a. Sensory
 - b. Short-term
 - c. Long-term
 - 3. Memory Aids
 - a. Encoding
 - b. Rehearsal
 - c. Mnemonic devices
 - 4. Forgetting
 - a. Decay
 - b. Replacement
 - c. Interference
 - d. Repression
 - e. Cue dependent

VI. Motivation and Emotion

8 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 11, Emotion, Stress, and Health

Ch. 10, The Major Motives: Food, Love, Sex, and Work

A. Specific motives

- 1. Hunger
 - a. Genetics and set-point
 - b. Influences of culture and gender
 - c. Eating disorders (for example: anorexia nervosa, bulimia)
 - d. Obesity
- 2. Love and sex
 - a. Attachment
 - b. Biological influences
 - c. Psychological influences
- 3. Achievement
 - a. Approach/avoidance
 - b. Self-efficacy

B. Maslow and the hierarchy of needs

C. Emotion

- 1. Physiology
 - a. Face
 - b. Brain
 - c. Role of hormones
 - d. Deception and the polygraph
- 2. Cultural influences
 - a. Display rules
 - b. Body language

VII. Cognition and Intelligence

8 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch 9, Thinking and Intelligence

A. Cognition

1. Elements of cognition (for example: concept, prototype, schema)
2. Thinking and consciousness (for example: subconscious and nonconscious thinking, mindlessness)
3. Types of reasoning
 - a. Algorithmic
 - b. Deductive
 - c. Inductive
 - d. Heuristic
 - e. Dialectical
4. Cognitive biases
 - a. Affect heuristic
 - b. Availability heuristic
 - c. Avoiding loss
 - d. Fairness bias
 - e. Hindsight bias
 - f. Confirmation bias
 - g. Mental sets
5. Cognitive dissonance

B. Intelligence

1. History of measurement
2. IQ testing
3. Cultural influences and stereotype threat
4. Cognitive approaches
 - a. Triarchic theory
 - b. Metacognition
 - c. Emotional intelligence
5. Animal intelligence

C. Creativity

VIII. Human Development

8 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 12, Development over the Life Span

A. Theoretical perspectives

1. Piaget's stages of cognitive development
 - a. Sensorimotor stage
 - b. Preoperational stage
 - c. Concrete operations stage
 - d. Formal operations stage
2. Current views of cognitive development
3. Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural influences
4. Erikson's stages of development
5. Kohlberg's theory of moral development

B. Early development

1. Prenatal
2. Infancy
 - a. Attachment

C. Cognitive development

1. Language
- ### D. Influences on gender development
1. Biological
 2. Cognitive
 3. Learning

E. Adolescence

F. Adulthood

G. Old age

IX. Personality

8 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 14, Theories of Personality

A. Psychodynamic approaches

1. Id, ego, and superego
2. Defense mechanisms
3. Psychosexual stages
4. Jungian theory
5. Object-relations

B. Humanistic approaches

C. Genetic approaches (for example: temperament)

D. Environmental influences

1. Social learning
 - a. Parents
 - b. Peers
2. Cultural influences

E. Modern perspective/trait approach

1. Factor analysis
2. The Big Five
 - a. Openness
 - b. Conscientiousness
 - c. Extroversion
 - d. Agreeableness
 - e. Neuroticism

X. Psychological Disorders and Therapies

16 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 11, Emotion, Stress, and Health

Ch. 15, Psychological Disorders

Ch. 16, Approaches to Treatment and Therapy

A. Stress

1. Physiology
2. Optimism and pessimism
3. Control
4. Coping methods

B. Abnormal behavior

1. Definition and diagnosis
2. DSM-IV-TR
3. Projective testing
4. Objective tests

C. Disorders

1. Anxiety disorders (for example: generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, panic disorder, phobias, obsessive compulsive disorder)
2. Mood disorders
 - a. Major depression and its causes
 - b. Bipolar disorders
3. Personality disorders (for example: antisocial, narcissistic, borderline, paranoid)
4. Drug abuse and addiction (biological and cultural influences)
5. Dissociative identity disorder
6. Schizophrenia (symptoms, origins)

D. Approaches to therapy

1. Biological treatments (for example: drug therapy, psychosurgery, electroconvulsive shock therapy)
2. Psychotherapy
 - a. Psychodynamic therapy
 - b. Behavior therapy

- c. Cognitive therapy
- d. Humanistic and existential therapy
- e. Family and couples therapy

XI. Social Psychology

10 PERCENT OF EXAM

Wade, et al.

Ch. 8, Behavior in Social and Cultural Context

A. Social roles

1. Milgram's obedience study
2. Zimbardo's prison study
3. Why people obey

B. Social cognition

1. Attributions
 - a. Attribution theory
 - b. Fundamental attribution error
 - c. Self-serving bias
 - d. Just-world hypothesis
2. Attitudes and attitude change

C. Group behavior

1. Asch's study on conformity
2. Groupthink
3. Diffusion of responsibility
4. Altruism

D. Social identities

1. Acculturation
2. Ethnocentrism
3. Stereotypes
4. Prejudice
 - a. Measuring prejudice
 - b. Implicit vs. explicit prejudice
 - c. Reducing prejudice

SECTION THREE

Sample Questions

The sample questions give you an idea of the level of knowledge expected in the exam and how questions are typically phrased. They are not representative of the entire content of the exam and are not intended to serve as a practice test.

Rationales for the questions can be found on pages 20–22 of this guide. In that section, the correct answer is identified and each answer is explained. The number in parentheses at the beginning of each rationale refers to the corresponding section of the content outline. For any questions you answer incorrectly, return to that section of the content outline for further study.

1. Which topic would a cognitive psychologist examine?
 - 1) how a peer group affects motivation to study for a test
 - 2) thought processes used to understand an unfamiliar word
 - 3) how boys and girls differ in the way in which they form relationships
 - 4) whether the ability to remember large amounts of information is a genetically inherited trait
2. A psychologist is interested in studying how a person's family and heritage influence her opinions about people of different races. What best represents this psychologist's approach to examining human behavior?
 - 1) biological
 - 2) cognitive
 - 3) psychodynamic
 - 4) sociocultural
3. What helps regulate daily biological rhythms?
 - 1) cortisol
 - 2) melatonin
 - 3) epinephrine
 - 4) progesterone
4. A scientist is studying the genetic basis of people's heights in two groups of people. One group comes from an affluent country (A), the other from an impoverished country (I). After observing that individuals from Country A are taller than their counterparts in Country I, the scientist concludes that the Country A group must have inherited genes that make its people taller. What should the scientist have considered before drawing this conclusion?
 - 1) Heritability estimates apply to individuals.
 - 2) Heritability estimates do not apply to individuals.
 - 3) Heritability estimates apply to variation across different groups.
 - 4) Heritability can be applied to groups living in different environments.
5. What is the smallest amount of energy that a person can perceive reliably?
 - 1) signal-detection
 - 2) absolute threshold
 - 3) sensory deprivation
 - 4) difference threshold

6. Which branch of psychology studies extrasensory perception?
- 1) biopsychology
 - 2) geropsychology
 - 3) neuropsychology
 - 4) parapsychology
7. A trusting person volunteers to be hypnotized at a show, having done it multiple times before. While apparently under hypnosis, the person tells vivid stories of long-forgotten memories. When asked to tell a story that would embarrass a loved one in the audience, however, the person refuses. What is the best reason someone should be skeptical that this person is actually hypnotized?
- 1) Because the person has a trusting personality, the person would not have been susceptible to hypnosis.
 - 2) The person would not have refused to tell the embarrassing story because hypnotized people will do things against their will.
 - 3) The person would not have been susceptible to hypnosis because hypnotic attempts are ineffective after a couple of successes.
 - 4) The person would not have been able to report forgotten experiences because hypnosis does not increase the accuracy of memory.
8. Which term describes the process in which a neutral stimulus becomes a conditioned stimulus by being paired with an already established conditioned stimulus?
- 1) extinction
 - 2) discrimination
 - 3) stimulus generalization
 - 4) higher-order conditioning
9. Which is true about emotions?
- 1) When a person is under stress, the person's pupils decrease in size.
 - 2) The patterns of brain activity are the same for all basic emotions.
 - 3) During emotional times, a person's body prepares for a quick response.
 - 4) Intense emotions trigger the parasympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system.
10. What constellation of symptoms are people with bulimia most likely to exhibit?
- 1) abusing steroids and lifting weights
 - 2) binge eating and the use of laxatives
 - 3) sedentary lifestyle and a lack of willpower
 - 4) eating too little and becoming dangerously thin
11. Which behavior has been interpreted as evidence for animal intelligence rather than conditioning?
- 1) An animal avoids places where it has received a foot shock.
 - 2) An animal stops a blind person from crossing a street when a car is coming.
 - 3) An animal deceives another animal to get sole access to food that is available.
 - 4) An animal gains a reward for pushing a button with a circle, but not with an oval.
12. People tend to believe incorrectly that there are more words that begin with the letter k than there are words that have k as the third letter. This error in judgment is most likely the result of what?
- 1) fairness bias
 - 2) hindsight bias
 - 3) affect heuristic
 - 4) availability heuristic
13. At the beginning of which week of gestation does an embryo become a fetus?
- 1) fourth
 - 2) ninth
 - 3) sixteenth
 - 4) twenty-fourth

14. Which best represents a current view of cognitive development?
 - 1) Preschoolers are more egocentric than Piaget thought.
 - 2) Children understand less than Piaget gave them credit for.
 - 3) Cognitive development is not affected by a child's culture.
 - 4) Cognitive abilities develop in continuous, overlapping waves.
15. Which dimension of personality encompasses the effort a person gives to being dependable and organized?
 - 1) agreeableness
 - 2) conscientiousness
 - 3) neuroticism
 - 4) openness
16. Which scenario best illustrates object-relations theory?
 - 1) A man represses his feminine side, leading to several mental health problems.
 - 2) A child breaks several toys out of anger after being ridiculed by a parent for crying in public.
 - 3) A young child is encouraged to be independent and separate from her parents, so she will develop her own identity.
 - 4) A 10-year-old child, upset about his parents' divorce, begins to suck his thumb and play with his 3-year-old sibling's toys.
17. A person who demonstrates impulsive, reckless behavior and a lack of guilt or empathy would be diagnosed with which personality disorder?
 - 1) paranoid personality disorder
 - 2) antisocial personality disorder
 - 3) passive-aggressive personality disorder
 - 4) obsessive-compulsive personality disorder
18. Which disorder is characterized by persistent, disturbing thoughts accompanied by uncontrollable behaviors?
 - 1) agoraphobia
 - 2) social phobia
 - 3) panic disorder
 - 4) obsessive-compulsive disorder
19. A baseball fan watches a player strike out. The fan then explains this failure to herself by concluding that the batter's hitting skills are poor. This is an example of which phenomenon?
 - 1) familiarity effect
 - 2) self-serving bias
 - 3) self-fulfilling prophecy
 - 4) fundamental attribution error
20. Which condition is most likely to result in altruism?
 - 1) There are no allies present.
 - 2) The cost of behavior is high.
 - 3) Dissenting behavior is likely to be rewarded.
 - 4) A person has not yet taken the initial step of getting involved.

SECTION FOUR

Rationales

1.(I.B.10)

- 1) This is what a social psychologist might study.
- *2) This is what a cognitive psychologist might study.
- 3) This is what a developmental psychologist might study.
- 4) This is what a biologically oriented psychologist might study.

2.(I.B.11)

- 1) See 4).
- 2) See 4).
- 3) See 4).
- *4) Interest in how a person's social environment affects their behavior is best explained by the sociocultural perspective.

3.(II.C)

- 1) This is a stress hormone.
- *2) Melatonin is associated with regulating biological rhythms.
- 3) This is a stress hormone.
- 4) This is a sex hormone.

4.(II.A.1a)

- 1) Heritability estimates do not apply to individuals; they apply to groups.
- *2) This is correct and what the scientist should have considered.
- 3) Heritability estimates apply to variation among members of the same group.
- 4) Heritability can be applied to groups living in the same environment.

*correct answer

5.(III.A)

- 1) This refers to a psychophysical theory that divides the detection of a sensory signal into a sensory process and a decision process.
- *2) This refers to the smallest amount of energy that a person can detect reliably.
- 3) This refers to the absence of normal levels of sensory stimulation.
- 4) This refers to the smallest difference in stimulation that can be reliably detected when two stimuli are compared.

6.(III.K)

- 1) See 4).
- 2) See 4).
- 3) See 4).
- *4) Parapsychology refers to the study of paranormal phenomena such as extrasensory perception, psychokinesis, and hauntings.

7.(IV.C.1)

- 1) Personality traits are unrelated to hypnotic susceptibility.
- 2) Hypnosis cannot make people do things against their will.
- 3) Hypnotic attempts continue to be effective after initial successes.
- *4) There is no evidence to suggest that hypnosis can increase the accuracy of memory.

8.(V.A.1)

- 1) See 4).
- 2) See 4).
- 3) See 4).
- *4) Higher-order conditioning occurs when a neutral stimulus, such as a flash of bright light, is paired with an already established conditioned stimulus, such as a food dish.

9.(VI.C.1)

- 1) When a person is under stress, the pupils dilate, or increase in size.
- 2) Each emotion is associated with different patterns of brain activity.
- *3) The body prepares itself for a quick response to danger or threat.
- 4) Intense emotions trigger the sympathetic division, not the parasympathetic division.

10.(VI.A.1c)

- 1) These are symptoms accompanying body image distortion in men.
- *2) These are the symptoms of bulimia.
- 3) These are behaviors associated with obesity.
- 4) These are the symptoms of anorexia.

11.(VII.B.5)

- 1) This is an example of classical conditioning.
- 2) This learning is due to training and operant conditioning.
- *3) Deception is thought to rely on a theory of mind.
- 4) This is an example of discrimination in operant conditioning.

12.(VII.A)

- 1) This is the tendency to assume that everything people do is fair.
- 2) This is the tendency to overestimate one's ability to have predicted an event once the outcome is known.
- 3) This is a tendency to consult one's emotions instead of estimating probabilities objectively.
- *4) It is much easier to recall words that begin with k than words that have k as the third letter. Thus words in the former category are more "available."

13.(VIII.B.1)

- 1) See 2).
- *2) After eight weeks the embryo becomes a fetus.
- 3) See 2).
- 4) See 2).

14.(VIII.A.2)

- 1) Preschoolers are less egocentric than Piaget had thought.
- 2) Children understand more than Piaget gave them credit for.
- 3) Cognitive development is affected by a child's culture.
- *4) This is a current view of cognitive development.

15.(IX.E.2)

- 1) See 2).
- *2) Conscientiousness has to do with being thoughtful and responsible.
- 3) See 2).
- 4) See 2).

16.(IX.A.5)

- 1) This corresponds to Jung's anima/animus archetypes.
- 2) This describes displacement.
- *3) This describes object-relations theory.
- 4) This describes regression.

*correct answer

17.(X.C.3)

- 1) This refers to unreasonable, excessive mistrust of others.
- *2) These traits correspond to antisocial personality disorder.**
- 3) This refers to passive resistance to instructions or requests.
- 4) This refers to obsessive thoughts and related compulsions.

18.(X.C.1)

- 1) This refers to a fear of being in large places such as shopping malls.
- 2) This is a fear of being scrutinized.
- 3) This refers to intense physiological reactions in the absence of an emergency.
- *4) This is a disorder characterized by persistent thoughts along with irresistible behaviors.**

19.(XI.B.1)

- 1) This is the tendency to have positive attitudes toward things that are familiar.
- 2) This is the tendency to take credit for one's good actions and rationalize one's mistakes.
- 3) This is the tendency for a person to act in a way that brings about an expectation.
- *4) This is the tendency to overestimate personality factors and underestimate the influence of the situation in explaining other people's behavior.**

20.(XI.C.4)

- 1) Altruism is more likely when allies are present.
- 2) The higher the cost of altruism, the less likely one is to behave altruistically.
- *3) A situation that rewards dissent gives rise to altruism.**
- 4) The likelihood of altruism increases once a person has taken the initial step of getting involved.

*correct answer

SECTION FIVE

Taking the Exam

Registering for Your Exam

Register Online

www.excelsior.edu/examregistration

Follow the instructions and pay by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover Card.

Examination Administration

Pearson Testing Centers serve as the administrator for all Excelsior College computer-delivered exams.

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Excelsior College is committed to the principle that every individual should have an equal opportunity to enroll in an Excelsior College degree program, to register for courses or examinations in order to demonstrate their knowledge and skills under appropriate conditions, and to complete a degree.

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The UExcel exams are delivered by computer. You can take this exam either in a [Pearson VUE testing center](#) or at your home or office with an online proctor. If you are interested in remote proctoring, visit [PearsonVUE OnVUE online proctoring](#).

The system is designed to be as user-friendly as possible, even for those with little or no computer experience. On-screen instructions are similar to those you would see in a paper examination booklet. You will use either the keyboard or the mouse to submit your answers, depending upon the type of question.

Before taking your exam, we strongly encourage you to go on a virtual tour of the testing center. To access this tour, click the What to Expect in a Pearson VUE test center at the following link: home.pearsonvue.com/test-taker/security.aspx

You also will receive a small, erasable whiteboard if you need one.

Breaks

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As of spring 2021, Excelsior is offering an [online delivery option](#) for UExcel exams, using OnVUE, Pearson VUE's online delivery and proctoring service.

You must use a personal (vs. an employer's) computer if you want to take the exam online and not in a testing center, so the exam can be effectively delivered to you.

Breaks are not allowed during an exam taken online from home. You may not leave your seat during an online-proctored exam, so be prepared to sit for two or three hours. If you need extra time, the exam will have to be taken at a PearsonVUE Testing Center, and an accommodation formally requested.

NOTE: English Composition, Spanish, Music, and College Writing will NOT be available for online proctoring.

On the Day of Your Exam

Important Reminders

On the day of your exam, remember to:

- dress comfortably: the computer will not mind that you're wearing your favorite relaxation outfit
- arrive at the test site rested and prepared to concentrate for an extended period
- allow sufficient time to travel, park, and locate the test center
- be prepared for possible variations in temperature at the test center due to weather changes or energy conservation measures
- bring your ID, but otherwise, don't weigh yourself down with belongings that will have to be kept in a locker during the test.

Academic Integrity Nondisclosure Statement

- All examinees must agree to the terms of the Excelsior College Academic Integrity Policy before taking an examination. The agreement will be presented on screen at the Pearson VUE Testing Center before the start of your exam.
- Once the examinee agrees to the terms of the Academic Integrity Nondisclosure Agreement (NDA), the exam will begin.

If you choose not to accept the terms of the agreement

- your exam will be terminated
- you will be required to leave the testing center
- you will not be eligible for a refund. For more information, review the Student Policy Handbook at www.excelsior.edu/studentpolicyhandbook.

Student behavior is monitored during and after the exam. Electronic measures are used to monitor the security of test items and scan for illegal use of intellectual property. This monitoring includes surveillance of Internet chat rooms, websites, and other public forums.

UExcel Grade Report

After you complete the exam, you will be issued a UExcel Grade Report for Examinations. See the [sample UExcel Grade Report](#) in this content guide.

Grade Appeals

If you believe that your score grade is incorrect, you may appeal your grade to examcredit@excelsior.edu. Details about the appeals process are in the [Student Handbook](#).

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If you don't cancel or reschedule your testing appointment 24 hours before your test appointment, you will have to pay the full fee of the exam, even if you don't show up.

Late Arrivals

You will also forfeit the exam fee if you arrive to the test center more than 15 minutes late.

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Excelsior College, the test developer, recommends granting three (3) semester hours of lower-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination.

Introduction to Psychology

Exam Development

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Sample Grade Report

Excelsior College
GRADE REPORT FOR EXAMINATIONS

Contact ID:

Test Date: 11/21/2020

Letter Grade: C

Examination Code and Title: 210 Statistics

Recommended Credit:
3 Lower Level

Your examination results are expressed as a Letter Grade of A, B, C, or F. Your results are automatically verified when they are received at Excelsior College. If an error is detected, you will be notified immediately.

Recommended Credit is the number of semester hours credit that Excelsior College awards and recommends for your grade. Excelsior College awards and recommends credit for letter grades of C or better.

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