Welcome! My name is Dr. Jason Lyons. I will be the professor for this online section of **PSY 502**. This document was put together to help everyone (especially those new to online courses) get ready for Day 1. You should be able to access the course at this time.

This file will contain a lot of information. If you have any questions I suggest you contact me ASAP. If you have troubles getting started on Blackboard, I suggest you contact the help desk as soon as possible. Their web page is [http://www.tarleton.edu/technology/](http://www.tarleton.edu/technology/). Some of you will need to contact them anyway to be sure that you have activated your student email account to be sure it is listed in my class roster on duck trax. Do this now.

**MY WEBSITE**

My expectations about this course and more of the specifics can be found on my website: [http://faculty.tarleton.edu/lyons/Graduate%20Courses/AdvSocOnline.html](http://faculty.tarleton.edu/lyons/Graduate%20Courses/AdvSocOnline.html)

This page will serve as the course syllabus and can be copied and pasted directly into a word document. I suggest you bookmark it or copy/paste it before going further. You will also find a little information about me on this site, including contact information. Under Course Links to the right of the page you will see ‘Schedule’ and ‘Grades’. I will maintain your grades and any changes to the schedule through these links. You will be able to access this information directly through the provided link, or by following the links provided on the course page within blackboard itself.

**REQUIRED TEXTS FOR THIS COURSE:**


*NOTE: campuses other than Tarleton’s Stephenville campus may not have the same textbook available. Look before you buy as they often list the same section numbers for their courses.*

Sometime during the first week, there will be a quiz to make sure each and every one of you has read, and understands the syllabus so please do not disregard anything in this letter nor anything written on the class website.
BLACKBOARD

If this is your first online course, and/or you are not familiar with Blackboard, you should read the Blackboard Student Handbook: [http://online.tarleton.edu/students/CE6handbook/home.htm](http://online.tarleton.edu/students/CE6handbook/home.htm). Blackboard is the online course management system used by Tarleton and is the system through which this course will run. It is your responsibility to be sure you understand how it works. The handbook will explain the procedures for logging into the system. On the course page within blackboard you will find a tutorial available for you within the Learning Modules link to the left of the page. I strongly suggest you work through this tutorial if you are new to blackboard and have not yet done so.

To log in on the first day of class (it is important that you log in on this date)

1) Go to: [http://online.tarleton.edu/Dual/DualLoginPage.htm](http://online.tarleton.edu/Dual/DualLoginPage.htm) or click the blackboard link at the top of my webpage.
2) Click on the Log-In link
   Blackboard ID: Ducktrax ID (UID)
   Password: Ducktrax pin (6 digits)
3) Click Ok - You will be redirected to a home page. Any course using online components that you currently take will be listed here.
4) Click on the link for this course. This will take you to the specific content for this course. When you are able to access the course.

In the main body of the course content page on blackboard (the home screen for the course) you will see three folders: Course Material, Exams, and Assignments. Inside the Course Material folder you will find PowerPoint files, once I upload them, that will help you with your reading assignments. Keep in mind that these PowerPoint files are provided from the publishers and have not been edited by me. They are outlines only. You will need to read your texts and use them to fill in the missing info.

Inside the Assignments folder you will find your discussion assignments (which will be graded) as well as blogs, which are select responses I make to your discussions. I will not always post blogs, but you should keep a look out for them. These can also be accessed through the Discussions link under Course Tools on the left.

The exam folder will be self-explanatory and likewise, the exams can also be accessed under Course Tools through assessments.

It is YOUR responsibility to check this site often (at least 1x/day) to get new assignments and their due dates. You will have frequent discussion questions to which you must respond, in addition to possible quizzes, essays, and of course, the scheduled exams. The discussions themselves will be explained further in the course syllabus, but be aware that I will require an original response to my question from you by Thursday at 11:59pm of the week the question was assigned and a minimum of two replies to other student’s posts by that Sunday at 5pm. The course schedule should clear up any confusion you have with when these two components of the
assignments are due. Since you may not have a lot of time to answer these questions, which will be detailed, I suggest you stay ahead of your readings.

You may notice that the course tools include a mail option. Blackboard’s mail system, is in my opinion, lacking and prevents me from responding in any way except through blackboard. Since I am out of my office more than I am in it, this is not a good means of communication. **I WILL NOT RESPOND TO THESE EMAILS THROUGH THE BLACKBOARD SYSTEM.** I only make the tool available so that you can contact a classmate if you need to. Therefore at the top on the course content page you will see a link to my actual email address (complete contact information is available on my website. In addition, I will typically communicate with the class through blackboard’s announcement function. Again, it is your responsibility to check for announcements and assignments frequently.

I have had issues with students not checking / reading the class announcements in past semesters which always leads to confusion and extra work on my part to try to clear it up. Don’t let this happen.

**DISCUSSIONS**

The following information is detailed in the course syllabus but I would like to be sure you see it as often as possible.

Every week you will be asked to complete readings and answer a series of long discussion questions. For the discussion questions, you will all be required to make one original post in response to every topic. The topics will appear in the designated folder every Monday morning. You will notice that the discussion questions themselves are very detailed. I expect detailed original posts from you in return. I suggest you write all of your posts out on a word document so you can save it (to avoid losing it to some internet error) and to be sure it meets the requirements. You can then copy/paste the responses back into the dialogue boxes within blackboard. Do not post attachments. **THESE ORIGINAL POSTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY THURSDAY AT 11:59PM OF THE WEEK ASSIGNED** or you will not receive credit.

In addition to the one original post per assignment, you will also be required to reply to a minimum of 2 original posts made by other students. **THESE REPLIES ARE DUE BY SUNDAY AT 5PM.** These replies do not need to be a full page but one line responses (ex: Good point!) will not be accepted.

Note that the assignments detailed above are per assignment. Not per week. You will have more than one assignment to complete each week, with the exception of week one.

Discussion questions will be drawn from the assigned texts, or from additional sources. It is my hope that you do more than the minimum so that we can all get as much as possible from these posts. The dates the discussions will be assigned, as well as the due dates for the corresponding original posts and replies are listed in the course schedule. After the final due date for an assignment has past, the discussion will be pulled down from the system. At this point I will
assign grades and then I will make the assignments available to view only. They will be locked so you will not be able to respond to the assignment, but you make start a dialogue with a classmate through other methods if you wish.

Online courses pose their own challenges, such as extra writing/reading. In addition, you may not always have direct access to me and it will require considerable self discipline and self directed learning to successfully complete this course. In order to be successful you MUST follow directions and read any emails or messages you get from me as soon as you get them.

Since the main avenue of dialogue we have in class is through the assigned discussions, every student is required to read the majority of the original posts made by the other students, just like you would hear their comments if we were all in a classroom together. Since I am able to view all of your online activity within this course, I will be monitoring all activity and grades will reflect this participation. Since there are ways to read all posts without accessing links, I suggest you get in the habit of directly accessing the links representing each individual response. It only takes a second or two longer to do it this way, but it will ensure you get credit for reading all responses. I will give you an exact number of posts I expect you to read once I know final enrollment.

A common drawback to online courses is the tendency for students to develop a habit of copying and pasting their responses to discussions from other sources. This is plagiarism and will not be tolerated. All answers MUST be original. If I feel this is becoming a problem I will employ addition measures, such as Turn-it-in.com and/or extensive references.

As graduate students I do not expect this to be a problem, but be aware that I don’t accept excuses as a substitution for work.

So everyone get ready, I am hoping for a great semester!