

PSY 200, Section 201: COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY
Summer 2007 – Michigan State University
Prerequisite: PSY 101 or equivalent

Course syllabus

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday. 1:10pm-2:10pm; and by appointment.
Time and location: MTuW from 10:20am to 12:10pm in room #120 Psychology Building

Course Materials

Textbook: Goldstein, E.B. (2005). *Cognitive Psychology: Connecting Mind, Research, and Everyday Experience*. Belmont, CA: Thompson Wadsworth.

Your textbook covers more topics than will be possible to cover in lecture, but I strongly recommended that you keep up with reading assignments. Reading before lecture may cut down on the amount of notes you need to take during lecture, and can alert you to topics that you may want to ask questions about in class. In addition, being present for and learning the lecture material will be as important to your success in the class as reading the textbook.

Webpage: A course webpage on ANGEL will be maintained where class announcements and materials will be posted.

Course Content

Course description: This course will cover topics related to cognition including perception, attention, memory, language production/comprehension, problem solving, and decision making. We will be focusing on current theories and experimental research in cognitive psychology.

Course objectives: When you finish this course you should be able to:

- Explain current theories of perception, attention, memory, language, problem solving, decision making within a cognitive psychology framework.
 - Given the name of a cognitive psychology theory and a direct question about one of its terms, elements, or principles, you will be able to give an informed answer based on the text or class explanation.
 - Given an example of cognitive psychology phenomena (e.g. following a conversation while reading a menu in a restaurant), you will be able to correctly name the phenomena, recognize principles associated with that phenomenon, and give a current theoretical explanation of the phenomenon.
- Describe research findings in cognitive psychology relating to perception, attention, memory, language comprehension and production, problem solving, decision making.

- Given a brief description of an experiment, you should be able to identify the variables in the experiment, determine what the conclusions of the experiment should be, and how the experiment contributes to current knowledge in cognitive psychology.

Methods of learning the course material

Study strategies: Overviews of study strategies are presented on pages 19-21 and 216-219 of your textbook. All of the strategies presented in this section are supported by cognitive psychology research. The basic theme suggests that effective learning requires that you be *actively involved* in studying the material. Answering the conceptual questions in your textbook is one way of doing this, and another is writing practice exam questions.

Study time estimate: In general, the rule of thumb for college courses is to spend 2 hours outside of class studying for every hour spent in class. Since this class meets for almost 6 hours a week, you should plan on spending 10-12 hours studying outside of class each week. This is a summer course, so it follows a compressed schedule, making it all the more important that you stay on top of reading and studying.

Classroom code of conduct:

Class participation: Student participation is an important part of learning. It is beneficial to the entire class for you to ask questions and make comments which relate to the material. At no time is it acceptable for a student to be embarrassed, intimidated, or mistreated in any way by anyone in the classroom. Mutual respect and civility are expected in the classroom as well as in any communication (mail, email, telephone, etc.) between students, and between students and the instructor.

I would appreciate it if you would turn off your cell phone during class. Also I would appreciate it if you could be on time because arriving late tends to be disruptive. If you know you must leave early, it would be nice if you could sit near the door and leave as quietly as possible.

Academic Integrity: Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report (www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the Psychology Department adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, *Protection of Scholarship and Grades*; the all-University Policy on *Integrity of Scholarship and Grades*; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See *Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide* at www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm and/or the MSU Web site at www.msu.edu.)

Therefore, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including papers and exams without improper assistance from any source.

Examples of cheating:

1. Assisting anyone or being assisted by anyone on an exam
2. Using the textbook, notes, or other unauthorized aides during an exam.

Examples of plagiarism:

1. Submitting work that is not your own.
2. Passing off words or information that is not your own, this includes not using citations appropriately.

If you violate MSU rules, you may receive a penalty including, a zero for the exam, or a zero for the course (See also www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html).

Evaluation:

Your grade for the class will be compiled from 3 exams, and 1 written assignment.

Assignment	Total Points	Percentage of Grade
Exam 1: <i>Chapters 1-4</i>	100	~29%
Exam 2: <i>Chapters 5-7</i>	100	~29%
Exam 3: <i>Chapters 8-12</i>	100	~29%
Paper 1: <i>Article review</i>	50	~13.5%
Totals	350	100%

Exams: Exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The exams will cover the material in the textbook and from lectures. The three exams make up 86% of your total grade. Exams will be administered in class promptly at 10:20 on the exam date, and you must have a photo ID, either MSU student ID card or driver’s license. If you arrive after other students have finished, then you will not be allowed to take the exam.

Exam make-up policy: There are two circumstances under which you may take a makeup exam: (1) a family, medical, or personal emergency, and (2) an inflexible conflict that you know about in advance (for a list of inflexible conflicts, see [University-Addressed Absences](http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/excuses.html) section of the Ombudsman webpage at www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/excuses.html). Vacation plans and conflicts with job schedules are NOT considered inflexible conflicts.

In the event of an inflexible conflict, please email me at least a week before the normal exam date and identify the conflict. In the event of an unexpected emergency, please contact me as soon as you learn that you will be unable to attend the exam and be prepared to document the cause of your absence (e.g. police report of incarceration, or Olin report of medical emergency). In either circumstance, you may take the exam at another time on the exam day, or at the soonest possible date thereafter. Make-up exams will likely consist entirely of essay questions. If you have an unexcused absence you will get a score of zero on the exam.

Writing Assignment: The writing assignment is designed to give you first-hand experience reading a research article from a major journal in cognitive psychology. For this assignment, you will need to locate one published research article on a cognitive psychology topic that will be covered in the class. Published research articles can be located either by looking at the citations appearing in “References” section or your textbook (beginning on page 501), or by conducting a search using the electronic database PsychInfo (available through the library’s webpage on electronic resources).

You must hand in a typed copy of your paper at the beginning of the class on the specified due date. Late papers will be penalized by 5-points for every day the paper is late.

Writing assignment requirements: Understanding research in cognitive psychology (DUE: Monday 8/6 in class)

Your paper will build on your understanding of one area of cognitive psychology. The paper should be a typed double-spaced 5-7 page paper, not including the title page. At the beginning you should put your name, the date, and the title of the original paper. The following sections and information should be included to receive full credit:

1. A 1-2 page **Introduction** which indicates the underlying theory (4 pts.), gives some background (i.e. discuss 2 results from previous studies reviewed in the original paper – 4 pts.), and states the hypotheses for the experiment (2 pts.). (10 pts. Total)
2. A **Methods** section that describes the basic task that the experiment used to examine the questions of interest. (8 pts.)
3. A **Results** section that includes a description of the main effects and interactions using words. (10 pts.)
4. A **Conclusion** section that states whether the results match what was predicted by the theory and/or hypotheses. Be sure to be specific and elaborate where necessary. (12 pts.)
5. A **Discussion** section that suggests a follow-up study and/or notes what could have been done better. (10 pts.)

Note that you must restate content from the article in your own words, otherwise it's plagiarism. Also you might want to clear your article choice with me before you begin writing. If you choose an article that is not directly related to cognitive psychology, then you may receive a zero for the assignment. In addition, you should choose an article from the primary source literature, acceptable journals include: Journal of Experimental Psychology, Journal of Memory and Language, Psychological Review, Cognitive Psychology, Cognition, Memory and Cognition, etc. Brief reports and non-experimental articles will be subject to deductions, or possibly a zero for the assignment.

<u>GPA</u>	<u>%</u>
4.0	90-100
3.5	85-89
3.0	80-84
2.5	75-79
2.0	70-74
1.5	65-69
1	60-64
0	0-59

Extra Credit: Research Participation or 2nd article review:

1. Research participation gives you a first hand look at psychology research that is currently being conducted at Michigan State University. You can earn up to ~6% extra credit (20 points) by participating in up to 10 credits (2 points per credit) worth of psychology experiments. You can sign up for experiments through the MSU Psychology website. Research participation is available until 8/13/2007.

2. If you choose not to participate in research, then you can earn ~6% extra credit (20 points) by doing a second article review. The same criteria and restrictions as outlined under “writing assignment” apply. (Note the same 50 point grading scale will be used. Your point total will be used to determine a percentage, which will then be multiplied by 20 to determine the number of extra credit points.) Papers are due by 8/13/2007.

Course Calendar:

Date	In-Class	Assigned Reading (Due before class)	Writing Assignments
M 7/2	Introduction		
Tu 7/3	Cognition and the brain; Research methods	Chapters 1 & 2	
W 7/4	4 th of July--No class		
M 7/9	Cognition and the brain continued	Chapter 2	
Tu 7/10	Perception	Chapter 3	
W 7/11	Attention	Chapter 4	
M 7/16	Attention continued		
Tu 7/17	Exam 1		
W 7/18	Sensory, STM and, WM	Chapter 5	
M 7/23	Sensory, STM and, WM continued		
Tu 7/24	LTM	Chapter 6	
W 7/25	LTM and Memory error	Chapter 7	
M 7/30	Exam 2		
Tu 7/31	Knowledge	Chapter 8	
W 8/1	Knowledge and Visual Imagery	Chapter 9	
M 8/6	Language	Chapter 10	Paper Due
Tu 8/7	Language		
W 8/8	Problem Solving	Chapter 11	
M 8/13	Reasoning and Decision Making	Chapter 12	
Tu 8/14	Class wrap-up (evaluations and review)		
W 8/15	Exam 3		

NOTE: The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. You are responsible for keeping informed of any changes to this syllabus that are announced in class and/or on the course website on ANGEL.

Attendance: If your name does not appear on the official class list for this course, you may not attend this class. If you fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, you may be dropped from the course.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a disability specialist, call 353-9642 (voice), 355-1293 (TTY), or visit MyProfile.rcpd.msu.edu.