

Cognitive Psychology 380
Spring term 2023
Credits: 3

Monday/Wednesday/Friday
9:10-10:10 (002C)
11:30 – 12:30 (003C)

Instructor	Justyna Olszewska
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Office	Clow F026
Cognitive Lab	040 Clow basement
Office Hours (Clow F026 or Cognitive Lab 040 Clow basement)	M: 12:30 – 14:30 or/and by appointment and also online
Class meetings	M/W/F: 9:10-10:10 Sage 4221 section: 002C and M/W/F: 11:30-12:30 Sage 4221 section: 003C

Course description

A survey course that examines how people process information. Topics include perception, attention, short and long-term memory, spoken and written language comprehension, concept formation, and artificial intelligence. The course emphasizes cognitive neuroscience and introduces students to brain scanning techniques and functional imaging data. In-class exercises demonstrate basic research methods. Prerequisites: Psych 101, 102, 104, 110, or consent of instructor.

More specifically this course provides an overview on the field of cognitive psychology trying to answer an important question: how does the mind work? Although cognitive psychology as a formal branch of study has only been around since the late 1960s, it has been studied for decades as an area of interest in psychological inquiry and has its roots in philosophy. Trying to understand our own minds is a very ambitious project in all of science and requires tools from various fields including experimental psychology, computer science, linguistics, vision science, philosophy, anthropology, behavioral economics as well as neuroscience. My goals for this course are to help students in:

- recognizing and recalling major concepts in cognitive psychology
- describing and explaining major methods and theories
- evaluating major studies in terms of their methods, results, conclusions and implications
- applying theories or findings to real world situations

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course students should be able to:

- describe the historical development of cognitive psychology.
- recognize and explain major terms and concepts in cognitive psychology.
- explain how different methods of cognitive research can be used as tools to understand mental processes
- discuss the classic experimental findings relating to various cognitive processes such as attention and consciousness, perception, memory, imagery, language, thinking, problem solving, and decision making
- generate and explain examples that demonstrate or test theories or concepts within various cognitive domains
- apply theories or findings to real world situations and to one's own cognitive processes.

Text: Sternberg, R.L. (2012). *Cognitive Psychology, 6th ed.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
(*I recommend this book although most of material will be covered during classes*)

Evaluation

Exams: There will be three exams throughout the semester. The three exams constitute 75% of your grade (25% each). The first exam is scheduled for March 1st, the second is scheduled for April 7th, and the third will be given on May 12th. The exams will have an objective, multiple-choice format and will cover material from lectures, text readings, and articles given during the semester. Each exam will focus on material from the corresponding one-third of the course. Nevertheless, the exams assume the course is cumulative, and questions may require knowledge acquired earlier.

Missed Exams: It is not possible to devise make-up exams that are comparable to the actual exams and that will test you fairly if you miss an exam. Only in **extraordinary** circumstances for a well-documented reason a second option will be given if you miss an exam.

Surprise quizzes: (25%): Between five and seven surprise quizzes will be administered throughout the semester. Each quiz will contain 5-7 multiple choice questions from the previous 5-7 classes. This way assures that students will be prepared for each class. Moreover, being prepared for each quiz makes studying for every exam easier and more effective.

Weekly Discussion: Some classes will be run like a discussion section so students will have an opportunity to review and discuss the material from the lectures and readings and to have their questions answered. During some classes, I will be demonstrating the most famous experiments so students can experience various significant findings. I may ask students to volunteer in demo experiments.

Expectations

What students can expect from me: I take teaching seriously and devote a significant amount of time to teaching this course. You can expect that I will be helpful in and outside the classroom in order to help in your intellectual growth. I encourage you to see me or e-mail if you would like to talk about the course material, discuss study strategies, and everything else which is related to the course.

What I expect from students: All students should take primary responsibility for their learning. I expect students to come to class on time and be prepared to participate actively and productively. Students are encouraged to ask questions in class, answer questions that I pose during lectures, and offer their own perspective and ideas. I expect students will be respectful to each other and to different ideas and perspectives. I also expect students to turn off/silence their cell phones (no texting) and keep them away for the entire class period. The use of any type of electronic equipment, not involved directly in a teaching process (smart phones, mp3 players, laptops, etc.) will cause deduction of 0.5% from a final grade. It is not recommended to use laptops during lectures unless you use them to make notes. However, remember that laptops have many distractors (internet, communicators, games, etc.), which may interfere in taking notes. I expect students to keep conversations with other students limited to before or after class. I also expect students to monitor their overall learning and performance in the course (I will give feedback, e.g., with quizzes) and to see me if they are concerned with their grade. This means that students are responsible for their grades. After each exam (or quiz), I can go over every question individually with students so please use this opportunity if necessary. I am available during my office hours as well as by appointment (see office hours section).

Classroom Courtesy

Please turn off all cell phones before class and keep them away for the entire class period. Every use of any type of electronic equipment, not involved directly in a teaching process (smart phones, mp3 players, laptops, etc.) will cause deduction of 0.5% from a final grade (except from taking notes). Please come on time to class. Sometimes I may start class with a surprise quiz therefore, I expect every student to be in class. Being late may result in not taking the quiz. Moreover, being late may interrupt in learning process of other students.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty of any sort will not be tolerated. The giving or receiving of assistance on any exam or the misrepresentation of someone else's work as own is considered as a cheating.

Course grading

Final grade is composed of: **3 exams – 25% each and 5 -7 surprise quizzes – 25% = 100%**

Grade	Max	Min	Grade	Max	Min
A	≤ 100%	> 93%	C+	≤ 80%	> 77%
A-	≤ 93%	> 90%	C	≤ 77%	> 73%
B+	≤ 90%	> 87%	C-	≤ 73%	> 70%
B	≤ 87%	> 83%	D	≤ 70%	> 60%
B-	≤ 83%	> 80%	F	≤ 60%	> ☹

Schedule of classes (subject to change with notice)

Week 1: Introduction and History of Cognitive Psychology

Week 2: History of Cognitive Psychology and Methodology

Week 3: Perception part 1

Week 4: Perception part 2

Week 5: Exam 1 (March 1st); Physiology of Vision

Week 6: Pattern Recognition and Face Recognition

Week 7: Attention and consciousness

Week 8: Memory (sensory memory, short-term memory, working memory)

Week 9: Memory (long-term memory)

Week 10: Exam 2 (April 7th) False memory in various paradigms

Week 11: Imagination – mental images

Week 12: Decision, heuristics, biases & risk

Week 13: Problem solving

Week 14: Applied cognitive psychology and Final Exam (May 12th)