

PSYCHOLOGY 309a
Cognitive Processes

Section 001 Winter 2007-08, Term 1
Tu-Th 11:00-12:30, Swing 221

Instructor

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Readings

Readings for the course will consist of one popular trade book, several research papers, and a number of short media articles mostly drawn from *The New York Times*. The book is inexpensive and can be purchased either at the UBC bookstore or through a web vendor such as Chapters.ca or Amazon.com:

Gladwell, M. (2005). *Blink*. New York: Little, Brown & Co.

All assigned articles and papers are available for free download from the course website in pdf format.

Exams

There are three non-cumulative exams for the course. Each exam will be worth 40 points. Dates for the exams can be found on the lecture schedule below. The first two exams will take place during the regularly-scheduled lecture time. The third exam will take place during the final exam period at the end of the term, with the time, date, and location TBA.

The following points should be noted regarding exams:

1. Each exam will consist of 6 essay questions, of which you must choose 4 to answer. Each question is worth a maximum of 10 points.
2. For each exam, you are required to bring a photo ID.
3. Exams will begin 5 minutes after the start of the class period.
4. No extra time will be given to those who are late for an exam.
5. Make-up exams will only be considered for students facing exceptional emergency circumstances that are responsibly communicated to the instructor in a timely manner. Make-up exams will consist of 3

essay questions that must all be answered (i.e., there is no option of choosing which questions to answer).

6. Cheating on exams will not be tolerated. Please see the UBC Calendar for information regarding academic offences and penalties.
7. UBC accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled examinations. Please let me know by email no later than Thursday, September 13 if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss their commitments with the instructor before the drop date.
8. Exam marks will be posted on the course website as soon as scoring is complete, but exams will not be handed back. However, students have the right to view their marked examinations with their TA, providing they apply to do so within one month of receiving their final grades. This review is for pedagogic purposes. The examination remains the property of the university.

Course Marks

Marks for the term will be based on a total of 120 points (3 exams x 40 points each). However, if the grade distribution for the final course marks fails to meet the Psychology Department's norms, scaling will be applied to final course marks. For details on scaling course marks, please see the next section of the syllabus.

Psychology Department's Policy on Grade Distributions and Scaling

In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology courses are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions for final course marks. According to departmental norms, the mean course mark in a 300-level class is 70 for a good class, 68 for an average class, and 66 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 13. Final course marks may be scaled up or down as necessary by the professor or department in order to comply with these norms.

For official UBC policy on grade scaling, please see:

<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,42,96,0>

Contacting the Instructor

After Class: On most days I am available for brief questions immediately following the lecture.

Office Visits: Because many students' schedules inevitably conflict with a set weekly office hour, all office meetings for this course will be by appointment only. Scheduling must be done in advance via email.

Email: to avoid having your emails automatically deleted as spam, the subject header must read "Psych 309." The answers to questions regarding lecture/reading content may often be useful for the entire class to hear. As a consequence, questions may be answered in class at the beginning of lecture rather than via email. Please also note that while I try to be responsive to student emails, there are limits that must be put in place when dealing with large classes. I can not respond to students who (1) generate excessive/frequent emails, (2) generate long lists of questions, and (3) ask questions that can be answered by consulting the course web page, the syllabus, the Department of Psychology web page, and/or the UBC web page.

Outside Resources

If you run into trouble and need information on effective studying, preparing for exams, how to take notes, or manage your academic time, free workshops and advice are available from the Student Resources Center, which can be reached through the School and College Liaison Office at 822-4319.

Lecture Notes and Slides

On the day of each lecture, notes and slides for that day's lecture will be posted for download on the course website in Adobe PDF format. Note, however, the following three caveats: (1) notes and slides will typically not be posted until shortly before class time, (2) I can not guarantee that posted slides will always contain exactly the same content as the slides shown in class, and (3) this service is a privilege that can be revoked at any time for any reason (e.g., complaints about timing of posting, content, etc.).

Date	Lecture/Topic	Reading
9/4	1 Introduction	
9/6	2 Mental Representation	NYT: reclaimed senses
9/11	3 Body/Motor Representation	NYT: denying paralysis
9/13	4 Visual Representation	NYT: face blind
9/18	5 Motion/Space/Time Representation	NYT: out of body1 NYT: sense of time
9/20	6 Emotional Representation	NYT: hysteria SciCent: emotion blind
9/25	7 Memory/Language Representation	NYT: deja vu
9/27	8 Self Representation	NYT: out of body2 NYT: words on tongue NYT: sensory disorder
10/2	Exam 1	On Lectures 1-8
10/4	9 Thinking and reasoning	Blink: Introduction NYT: the voices
10/9	10 Cognitive Awareness	Blink: Introduction NYT: unconscious mind
10/11	11 Attentional Selection	Blink: Chapter 1 NYT: product packages

10/16 12 Multi-Tasking

NYT: walk and talk
NYT: brave multitasker

10/18 13 Unconscious Priming

Blink: Chapters 2.1, 3.2, 3.3
NYT: minding the mind

10/23 14 Decision Awareness

Blink: Chapter 2.2
NYT: don't think twice

10/25 15 Decision Strategies

Blink: Chapter 4

10/30	16	Decision Biases	Blink: Chapter 5 NYT: stingy mind
11/1	Exam 2		On Lectures 9-16
11/6	17	Social "Feeling"	NYT: cells read minds NYT: small brain part
11/8	18	Social "Thinking"	Blink: Chapter 5.4 NYT: finding out
11/13	19	Reading Emotions	Blink: Chapter 5.2, 5.3
11/15	20	Reading Intentions	Blink: Ch. 5.0, 5.1, 5.5-5.8 NYT: flame first
11/20	21	Social Spacing	NYT: two's a crowd NYT: excuse me
11/22	22	Moral Influences	NYT: casting stones NYT: moral judgment
11/27	23	Cultural Influences	Blink: Chapter 3.0, 3.3-3.5 NYT: oblivious rich NYT: what's so funny?
11/29	24	Technological Influences	NYT: overconnecteds NYT: grapevine withers
TBA	Exam 3		On Lectures 17-24

Note:
 NYT = The New York Times (<http://nytimes.com/>)

SciCent = Sciencentral News (<http://www.sciencentral.com/>)