

Psychology 309 - Section 2 Syllabus

Course Meetings

Tuesday and Thursday in BUCHANAN A106 14:00 – 15:20

Instructor and TA contact information

Instructor: Dr. Scott Sinnett
Office: Kenny 3010
Phone: 604-822-0069
Email: ss@psych.ubc.ca
Office hrs: M 2:00 – 3:00

TA: Lisa Jefferies
Office: Kenny 3508
Email: ljefferi@gmail.com
Office hrs: TBA

Course Materials

Cognitive Psychology: Connecting Mind, Research, and Everyday Experience (2nd Edition) by E. Bruce Goldstein.

This book comes packaged with the CogLab Online Manual, which will be used throughout the course.

CogLab website: <http://coglab.wadsworth.com/>

Various journal articles: Throughout the semester I will post various short journal articles that will highlight a topic that will be discussed in lecture. Exams may contain questions from these articles.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce you to a wide variety of topics in the domain of human cognition. Basically, I will cover a multitude of topics related to how we make sense of our outside world. The course will focus mainly on attention, perception, memory, cognition and the brain, and cognitive disorders related to brain injury. However, other important topics such as language, decision-making and problem solving will also be discussed. As much as possible, I will try to highlight each topic with current views and research be carried out in the field today. Upon completion of this course you should have an understanding of cognitive psychology in general, and have surveyed representative research in experimental psychology dealing with human cognition.

Student's Responsibilities

You will be responsible for all the material covered in both the assigned readings and the lectures. You will notice a degree of overlap between the assigned readings and lectures. Having said that, you are responsible for material that is not covered in class, but is in the assigned reading. Likewise, there will be much material in the lectures that is not covered in the textbook, in addition to supplementary material and examples that will clarify some of the more difficult material in the textbook. Thus, if you would like to obtain a good grade in this course, it is imperative that you come to class. It is highly recommended that you read the reading assignments before class, as this will help you to more clearly understand the lecture.

Evaluation

Your grade will be based on 3 examinations (2 midterms and a final). The exams will be non-cumulative (i.e., you will be responsible for only the material that you have not been tested on yet). The midterms will be given in class time (one in February, the other in March) and the final during the scheduled exam period in April. The three exams will account for 95% of your grade and will be equally weighted (i.e., 31.67% each). Each exam will consist of 50-70 multiple-choice, fill in the blank and/or short answer questions.

When you arrive for an exam, make sure you have your student number and a dark lead (2HB) pencil. On days when there is an exam, no lecture will be given. Make sure you arrive on time, as no extra time will be given. This is especially important for the midterms, as you will have only the allotted class time to complete the exam.

Five percent of your grade will come from the CogLab. Throughout the course I will assign different experiments for which you can participate in using the CogLab. You will get ½% for each experiment you participate in, for a maximum of 5%.

Psychology Department's policy on Grade Distribution 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. According to departmental norms, the mean grade 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). The corresponding figures for 100- and 200-level Psychology courses are 67, 65, and 63, with a standard deviation of 14. Scaling is likely to be used in order to comply with these norms; grades may be scaled up or down as necessary by the professor or department.

Make-up exams

Let us first begin by saying that there will absolutely be NO make-up exams. If you fail to come to an exam, you will be given a zero. The only exception to this rule is if you have a valid written medical excuse. The student health centre will provide them for the End-of-year exams. A note from a physician must state the date of your illness.

Extra Credit

You have the opportunity to earn up to 2 extra credit points by participating in research being conducted in the Psychology Department. This is a good way to not only earn extra credit, but to also participate in psychological experiments that highlight how psychologists experimentally investigate behaviour. These bonus points will be added to your scaled score. The rate of credit is ½ credit for every ½ hour of participation. The human subject pool website is <http://hsp.psych.ubc.ca>.

More information on the subject pool, including guidelines for participants, researchers, and instructors can be found at <http://www.psych.ubc.ca/resguide.psy>. Additional information will be given in class.

Psychology Department's Position on Academic Misconduct

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them. In the first place, the Department has implemented software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple-choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students' responses. In addition, the Department subscribes to *TurnItIn*--a service designed to detect and deter plagiarism. All materials (term papers, lab reports, etc.) that students submit for grading will be scanned and compared to over 5 billion pages of content located on the Internet or in TurnItIn's own proprietary databases. The results of these comparisons are compiled into customized "Originality Reports" containing several, sensitive measures of plagiarism; instructors receive copies of these reports for every student in their class.

In all cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript.

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently by individuals. Do **not** use Google/Yahoo/MSN Search/etc. to find articles for assignments in this course. **Do** use any of the indexes and databases listed under Indexes and Databases, Subject Resources, OneSearch or Metasearch on the Library's website at <http://www.library.ubc.ca>. (Not sure which index to use? Click HELP on the library homepage at www.library.ubc.ca or try Subject Resources.)

If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is even a borderline case of academic misconduct, please consult your instructor. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>).

Physical or Learning Disabilities

UBC is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with documented learning or physical disabilities. If you have a disability that affects your performance on exams or in the classroom, please contact the disability resource centre in Brock Hall 1040, 1874 East Mall, Phone: 604-822-5844.

*Approximate Class Dates, Required Readings and Topics

Week	Beginning	Required Reading	Topic
Week 1	Jan 8	Chapter 1	Introduction – what is Cognitive Psychology?
Week 2	Jan 15	Chapter 2	Cognition and the brain
Week 3	Jan 22	Chapter 3	Perception
Week 4	Jan 29	Chapter 4	Attention
Week 5	Feb 5	Chapter 5	Midterm 1 this week. Introduction to memory
Week 6	Feb 12	Chapter 5/6	Memory
Week 7	Feb 19		Reading week – no classes
Week 8	Feb 26	Chapter 7	Memory
Week 9	March 4	Chapter 8/10	Categories and language
Week 10	March 11	Chapter 10	Midterm 2 this week. Continuation of language
Week 11	March 18	Chapter 11	Problem solving
Week 12	March 25	Chapter 12	Reasoning and decision making
Week 13	April 1	TBA	Brain injury related problems in human cognition
Week 14	April 8	TBA	Brain injury related problems in human cognition

*This schedule is tentative and may change throughout the course of the semester.