

Psychology 315: Cognition Spring 2011

Instructor:	Dr. Sarah Johnson	When:	M/W 11:45-12:55pm
Phone:	610-625-7013	Where:	PPHAC 117
Office:	224 PPHAC	Office hours:	Mon 3:30-5:30pm
Email:	skjohnson@moravian.edu		Wed & Fri 9:30-10:30am
Website:	http://blackboard.moravian.edu/ (Pwd: mind)		or by appt.

Overall Course Goal: This course will explore mental processes. We will read about and discuss research examining a variety of areas in cognition, esp. memory and language. This course will give you a deeper understanding of your mind (be afraid!) and the way it interprets the information it receives from the world. Feel free to turn back now...

Specific Course Objectives: By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Discuss important theories and findings from major subdivisions of cognitive psychology—e.g., perception, attention, memory, language—including knowing some of the important researchers in these areas.
2. Understand the major themes of cognitive psychology as put forth by Matlin and be able to discuss how research from different areas within this field applies to those themes.
3. Discuss how research in areas of cognitive psychology is relevant to everyday life and understanding of oneself and others, esp. in terms of how we learn in an educational setting.
4. Take a topic in an area of psychology, esp. cognitive, and use electronic databases such as PsycInfo and PubMed to find articles pertinent to a particular question in that area.
5. Use the principles of scientific method to design and conduct an experiment on a particular topic within cognitive psychology. Write up your experimental research following the conventions in the field of Psychology.
6. Communicate to others the gist of a piece of research and provide explanation regarding what that research means in relation to everyday concerns.
7. Present your scientific work to others in a professional manner/setting.

Attendance: Attending class will benefit you for multiple reasons: learning how to learn and think critically, discussions of specific learning- and memory-related tips, participation in a variety of activities designed to promote active learning and integration of information, gaining a better idea of my expectations for assignments or exams, and promoting my recognition of you as one of my students. That said, you will be given up to 3 absences (excused or unexcused), and starting with the fourth absence, your **final grade will be reduced by 20 points (~2%) for each additional absence**. Apart from this policy, there are several days for which attendance is required in conjunction with the experiment project; these dates are indicated in *italics* the schedule and will be on the handout for that assignment.

Lateness: A legitimate reason for being late can happen to anyone now and then, but repeated lateness is disrespectful to me and to your classmates. Come see me if you have a reason for repeated lateness or absence.

Textbook: *Cognition*, 7th ed., by Margaret Matlin.

Additional readings will be journal articles, provided via Blackboard or researched and obtained by you in conjunction with the experiment project.

Course Evaluation:

Exams: There will be three exams during the course of the semester (third exam during finals). Exam format will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer/identification, and essay. Exams can include questions on anything in the assigned text chapters, handouts, or readings even if not discussed in lecture. Study guides will be posted on Blackboard as each exam approaches. The study guides will include important terms to know for the exam as well as sample exam questions.

Missed exams: If you have a legitimate, documentable excuse for missing an exam, contact me as soon as possible and we will plan to have you take a make-up. If you know in advance that you will be absent during an exam (e.g., because of travel for a sports team or an interview) then you need to let me know as soon as possible before the exam. You may not take a make-up exam if you skipped the exam without legitimate reason for absence.

Experiment project: Working in small groups, you will be assigned a topic for which you will research a basic learning/memory effect and create an experiment that will replicate that effect based on the designs from other studies. Data will be collected using your peers in class as participants. This project has multiple components, including an APA-style paper written individually by each member of the group and a group presentation. More info on the components and grading of these assignments will be given in a separate handout. Some aspects of the project will be group grades (denoted as G in the grade break-down), but a larger proportion will be individually graded (denoted as I in the grade break-down).

Interactive webpage design: You may choose to work in your experiment project group or individually. If you stay in your project group, you must keep the topic you were assigned. If you decide to go it alone, you can stick with your topic or switch to a different basic learning/memory effect related to studying that interests you, but you must work completely independently. This project involves designing an interactive web-page working off of a basic memory effect to help others learn about how they can improve their studying. More info on the components and grading of these assignments will be given in a separate handout.

Late policy: Late assignments/papers will be accepted for up to four days after the due date and, unless otherwise noted, will result in **a reduction in points equivalent to one letter grade (10%) for every calendar day late** beginning at 5pm on the day the assignment is due. After the four-day period, a paper will not be accepted and a grade of 0 will be applied. No exceptions will be made for minor technical difficulties (printer or email mishaps), but other circumstances may allow for exceptions as determined by me on a case-by-case basis.

I accept work by email only if you have arranged with me to do so for that particular assignment.

Extra credit: There will be two main opportunities to earn extra credit: 1) by participating in experiments outside of class; 2) by submitting your project for presentation at Scholars Day or the LVAIC Undergrad Psych Conference (the latter opportunity is contingent upon discussion with me regarding the quality of your group's project). Info about these opportunities will be made available partway through the semester.

Overall grades- breakdown:

Exams (3 @ 100 pts each)	300
Perception article critique	75
Experiment project:	
Article critique (I)	100
Experiment design/carry-out (G)	100
APA-style paper (I)	150
Project presentation (G)	75
Webpage design (G or I)	100
Total	900 points

Note that it is within my purview as instructor to use qualitative judgments in determining grades for assignments, papers, participation, or other aspects of the course (e.g., exam essays).

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

Letter	Grade range	Letter	Grade range	Letter	Grade range
A	95-100	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-94	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	0-59

Plagiarism and cheating: Any work that you turn in for this class must be entirely your own work. Any sources used must be properly documented, and I will ask you **not to use any direct quotes** in assignments or papers. This means PARAPHRASING—i.e. putting all info into your own words. For more information on plagiarism and cheating, refer to the Student Handbook and the following website regarding academic responsibility at Moravian College: <http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic2.htm>. As this site clearly explains, the consequences for cheating or plagiarism can range from failing the assignment to receiving an F for the final course grade to expulsion, depending on the severity of the case and prior history of offenses. Although I am not generally opposed to your discussing assignments with fellow students from the class, all of the work you submit to me must be entirely your own, and in some cases I may ask you not to collaborate with fellow students.

For the group experiment project, in which collaboration is a key component, I will ask you to indicate of the extent to which each member of the group participated. You will explain how work was divided between the group members and whether any group member shouldered an unfairly large or small portion of the work. I will spend class time discussing ways to avoid plagiarizing, but apart from this it is your responsibility to come see me if you have any questions about your use of sources or when/in what way it is okay to collaborate with other students in the class.

Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides for some accommodations to be made for students with certain disabilities. If you have such a disability and are willing to disclose it, you may take advantage of such accommodations. In order to do so, you are required to meet with Mr. Joseph Kempfer in the Office of Learning Services. Accommodations cannot be provided until I have received authorization from Mr. Kempfer. You should also consider taking advantage of the Learning Services Office if you are having difficulty academically in this (or any other) class. The office is located at 1307 Main St. (phone: 610-861-1510).

Class Schedule (The schedule is tentative; changes will be announced in class and on Blackboard):

Week:	Class topic/activities:	Text Chs/Assignments:
1		
Jan 16 M	Introduction and course overview	
Jan 18 W	Cont'd	Ch. 1
2		
Jan 23 M	Visual and Auditory Perception	Ch. 2
Jan 25 W	Cont'd	
3		
Jan 30 M	Attention	Ch. 3; <i>Article reading & article summary</i>
Feb 1 W	Cont'd	
4		
Feb 6 M	Memory: Classic Model	
Feb 8 W	Exam 1	
5		
Feb 13 M	<i>Experiment planning day</i>	<i>Read assigned seed article & summary</i>
Feb 15 W	Memory: Working Memory	Ch. 4
6		
Feb 20 M	Long-term Memory	Ch. 5; <i>Experiment designs due</i>
Feb 22 W	Amnesia	
7		
Feb 27 M	General Knowledge	Ch. 8
Feb 29 W	<i>Data collection day 1</i>	
8		
Mar 5-9	NO CLASSES – SPRING BREAK	
9		
Mar 12 M	<i>Data collection day 2</i>	
Mar 14 W	General Knowledge/LTM cont'd	
10		
Mar 19 M	<i>Data collection day 3</i>	
Mar 21 W	LTM cont'd	

Week:	Class topic/activities:	Text Chs/Assignments:
11		
Mar 26 M	Exam 2	
Mar 28 W	Language	Ch. 9
12		
Apr 2 M	Language cont'd	
Apr 4 W	<i>Group meetings</i>	
13		
Apr 9 M	No Class – Easter recess	
Apr 11 W	Language cont'd	Ch. 10; <i>Webpage materials due</i>
14		
Apr 16 M	<i>Project presentations</i>	
Apr 18 W	Language development	Ch. 13 (esp. pp. 467-479) <i>Experiment paper due Friday by 5pm</i>
Sat, Apr 21	<i>LVAIC Psychology Undergraduate Conference at Cedar Crest College</i>	
15		
Apr 23 M	Language development cont'd	
Apr 25 W		
Finals wk	Exam 3	Wed. May 2 nd at 1:30pm

Exam 1 – Chs. 1-3, Simons & Levin article

Exam 2 – Chs. 4-5, 8

Exam 3 – Chs. 9-10, 13