

# Psychology 315: Cognition Spring 2015

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Sarah Johnson	<b>When:</b>	M/W 1:10-2:20pm
<b>Phone:</b>	610-625-7013	<b>Where:</b>	PPHAC 232
<b>Office:</b>	224 PPHAC	<b>Office hours:</b>	M/W 10:30am-12:00pm, R 1:00-2:00pm, or by appt.
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:skjohnson@moravian.edu">skjohnson@moravian.edu</a>		
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://blackboard.moravian.edu/">http://blackboard.moravian.edu/</a> (Pwd: mind)		

**Textbook:** *Cognitive Psychology*, by Sternberg.

Additional readings will be chapters and journal articles, provided via Blackboard or researched and obtained by you in conjunction with the experiment project. Lectures or mini-lectures may also be made available via Blackboard.

## *Course Goals*

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This course will explore how we think. We will read about and discuss research examining a variety of areas in cognition, including, perception, attention, memory, and language. This course will give you a deeper understanding of your mind (be afraid!) and the way it interprets, stores, and uses the information it receives from the world.

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

1. Use the principles of scientific method to further your understanding of primary research, to critique that research, and to design and conduct an experiment on a particular topic related to memory and studying. You'll also practice your skills at analyzing data using SPSS and writing up experimental research following the conventions in Psychology.
2. Enhance your skills for working in groups to achieve goals, either for creating a concrete product (such as a paper, presentation, demonstration, etc.) or for learning more abstractly. This includes the ability to communicate to others the gist of theory or piece of research and provide explanation regarding what that research means in relation to everyday concerns.
3. Extract from our readings and class discussions some of the major themes of cognitive psychology and be able to discuss how research from different areas within this field applies to those themes (in other words, noting key points across topics).
4. 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.
5. Take a topic in an area of psychology, esp. cognitive, and use electronic databases such as PsycInfo and PubMed to find sources pertinent to a particular question in that area.
6. Discuss important theories and findings from major subdivisions of cognitive psychology—perception, attention, memory, language, problem-solving, and executive function—including knowing some of the important researchers in these areas.
7. Present your scientific ideas and work to others in a professional manner/setting.

## Course Policies

**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, and gaining a better idea of my expectations for assignments or tests. In addition, your presence will be vital to the complete functioning of your group.

That said, you will be given 2 free absences (no differentiation between excused or unexcused), and starting with the third absence, there will be a deduction of 6% to your **class participation grade** (see below). In addition, there are several days for which attendance is required in conjunction with the experiment project; these dates are indicated in italics on 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, to your classmates, and especially to your group-mates and will affect your participation grade. Come see me if you have a reason for repeated lateness/absence.

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

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., test essays).

**Late policy:** Late larger 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 the time 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 ARRANGE IT WITH ME FOR THAT PARTICULAR ASSIGNMENT.** If you arrange to email an assignment, you are still responsible for getting a hard copy to me by the next day.

**Plagiarism and cheating:** You will be working with peers for many of the assignments for this class; for each assignment, you will be explicitly told whether you are expected to work in collaboration or independently. 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 at the website listed below. As this site explains, the consequences for cheating or plagiarism include receiving a zero for the assignment or receiving an F for the final course grade. <http://www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic/academic2.html>.

For the group projects/assignments, 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.

**Extra credit:** There will be an opportunity to earn extra credit by participating in experiments outside of class. Info about these opportunities and the amount of extra credit you can earn will be made available partway through the semester.

**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. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic & Disability Support, located on the first floor of Monocacy Hall (extension 1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic & Disability Support office.

**Electronics:** Electronic devices may be used in class for note-taking but may not be used for texting, emailing, or surfing the internet, unless as part of a proscribed activity. I prefer you use laptops or tablet devices where possible for note-taking purposes and turn off your cell phones.

**Group work etiquette?** Key points to be generated and agreed upon as a class

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### *Course Evaluation*

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**Readiness assessment quizzes (RAQs)** – An RAQ will be given for every class when a reading is assigned. There are two facets to your RAQ grade: the first is your submission of three appropriate potential quiz questions prior to the class period, and the second is a readiness assessment taken each day when a chapter is listed. These will be very short quizzes (7 short-answer/multiple-choice questions). They will sometimes be taken individually, sometimes in a group, and sometimes both. Good questions submitted by students will be used as often as possible. **You are expected to turn in three [3] quiz questions based on the assigned readings via Blackboard by 8pm the evening before the class.** Grading for these questions will follow a 3 point ✓ system (from ✓+, 3 pts to ✓-, 1 pt, or 0 pts if no questions are submitted). More points will be earned for questions that capture key concepts and that promote understanding of subtle points about the material in a clear way.

**Participation:** You will be graded for your participation by your group-mates at the end of each group activity. An average will be taken across these ratings over the semester, as well as one rating by me for the whole semester, to determine your final participation grade. The unadjusted peer rating evaluations have an average of 100%, but they are adjusted to create an average between 90% and 80%, with the exact adjustment depending on my assessment of the overall class participation (note that the adjustment affects everyone in class equally). I reserve the right to leave the peer ratings unadjusted (i.e., average of 100%) if the class participation is outstanding throughout the semester.

I also reserve the right to intervene if I believe that an individual's group members are not evaluating that person's participation fairly. However, this will be a rare and may never occur. Across different activities and different groups, these ratings typically even out appropriately (i.e., one negative experience with a group will not have a drastic effect on your grade).

**Tests:** There will be three tests during the course of the semester (the third test will occur during finals, will be longer, and will contain at least one cumulative question). Test format will be predominantly short- to middle-length essay. Tests can include questions on anything in the assigned text chapters, handouts, or readings even if not discussed in class, but will favor information used in class. Study guides containing important terms to know for the test, as well as sample test questions, will be created with class input and will be posted on Blackboard as the test approaches. Collaborative studying with other students in our class is encouraged.

**Missed tests:** You may arrange for a make-up only if you have a legitimate, documentable excuse for missing the test; do this by contacting me ASAP. If you know in advance that you will be absent during a test then you need to let me know before the test.

**Experiment project:** Working in groups, you will choose a topic within a range of options relating to a cognitive topic and you will create an experiment that will replicate and extend that effect based on previous literature. Data will be collected using your peers in class as participants. This project has multiple components, including an APA-style paper written individually (with the exception of methods and results) 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 semester will be group grades (denoted as G in the grade break-down) and some will be individually graded (denoted as I in the grade break-down). Those grades left unspecified in terms of percentages will be voted on by the class.

<b>Overall grades- breakdown:</b>	<b>% of final grade</b>	
Class/Group participation		___% (20-40)
Pre-class questions & RAQs (I/G)	___% (20-50)	
Peer assessments (I)	___% (20-50)	
Class/group reports (G)	___% (20-50)	
Studying activities		15%
Photojournal (I)	50%	
Study diary (G)	50%	
Article summary/critique (I/G)		5%
Tests (first two @ 5% each, final @ 10%) (I)		20%
Experiment project:		___% (20-40)
Experiment design (G)	20%	
Experiment carry-out (I/G)	15%	
APA-style paper (I)	50%	
Project presentation (G)	15%	
		Total 100%

## Class Schedule

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

Week:	Class topic/activities:	Text Chs/Assignments:
<b>1</b>	Jan 19 M Introduction and course overview	
	Jan 21 W	Sternberg Ch. 1 (practice RAQ)
<b>2</b>	Jan 26 M Perception	Sternberg Ch. 3
	Jan 28 W	
<b>3</b>	Feb 2 M Attention	Sternberg Ch. 4
	Feb 4 W Article discussion	Attention Primary source (group selected)
<b>4</b>	Feb 9 M	
	Feb 11 W <b>Test 1</b>	
<b>5</b>	Feb 16 M Memory	Sternberg Ch. 5 <i>Attention article summary/critique</i>
	Feb 18 W	
<b>6</b>	Feb 23 M Memory	Sternberg Ch. 6-7
	Feb 25 W	
<b>7</b>	Mar 2 M *Studying activity: Photojournal*	
	Mar 4 W <i>Experiment discussion</i>	Primary source for experiment project
<b>8</b>	Mar 9-13 <b>NO CLASSES – SPRING BREAK</b>	
<b>9</b>	Mar 16 M Memory	Sternberg Ch. 8
	Mar 18 W <i>Experiment planning</i>	
<b>10</b>	Mar 23 M Amnesia	
	Mar 25 W	
<b>11</b>	Mar 30 M <b>Test 2</b>	
	Apr 1 W Language	Sternberg Ch. 9-10
<b>12</b>	Apr 6 M <b>NO CLASS – EASTER RECESS</b>	
	Apr 8 W <i>Experiments in class</i>	

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Class topic/activities:</b>	<b>Text Chs/Assignments:</b>
<b>13</b>		
Apr 13 M	*Studying activity: Diary* <i>Experiments in class</i>	
Apr 15 W	<b>DR. J OUT OF TOWN</b> <i>Experiments during class time</i>	
<b>14</b>		
Apr 20 M	Language cont'd	
Apr 22 W	Class choice unit: Problem solving or Decision making	Sternberg Ch. 11 or 12 Work on exp'ts/papers
<b>15</b>		
Apr 27 M	<i>Group presentations</i>	
Apr 29 W	<i>Group presentations</i>	<i>Experiment paper due Friday by 5pm</i>
<b>Finals wk</b>	<b>Test 3</b> on Wed, May 6 at 1:30pm	