

Cognitive Psychology
Psychology 208-001

Syllabus
Fall 2009

Location: Founders Hall, Rm. 0116
Time: 2:00-3:15; Tues and Thurs
Instructor: Dr. Thad Meeks

Office: Alumni Hall, Rm. 0122
Office Hours: M-Thurs, 3:30-4:30 and by appointment
Email: jmeeks@siue.edu

Required Texts: (Note: Heavy highlighting may result in you having to purchase the book).

Goldstein, E.B. (2007). *Cognitive psychology: Connecting mind, research, and everyday experience* (2nd ed.). Thompson-Wadsworth.

Overview. This course is a survey of cognitive psychology. You should have several goals in taking this course, and it will be my responsibility as the instructor to help you achieve them. First, you should learn the important findings in contemporary cognition and the conceptual frameworks used to think about them. Second, you should learn how those findings and knowledge are acquired; that is, how cognitive research is conducted. Third, you should begin to think more critically about what you read and hear with the specific aim of proposing new research in the various subdisciplines of cognitive psychology. Lastly, you should be able to take the principle learned in this class and apply them to what you experience on a daily basis.

To these ends, you will participate in several modes of learning: read a textbook, listen to lectures, do in-class assignments, and participate in class discussions. For those pursuing careers as cognitive psychologists, you will receive more in-depth information in specialized classes and seminars (e.g., perception, neuropsychology, human learning and memory). There will be several informal discussions throughout the semester about the topics we cover. I hope to provide you with the foundational principles in cognitive psychology so that you may put the more contemporary findings in perspective.

Formal requirements and grading. There will be four closed-book, closed-note exams (the dates can be found on the class schedule below). All exams are multiple-choice. The first three exams will cover three chapters each and will count 21.5% apiece (215 points each). The last exam (final exam) will cover three new chapters and a small part will be cumulative. The final exam will be worth 25.5% (255 points). The exams will cover material presented in lectures and in the book. Note that some material will come from both book and lecture, but some will come from lecture only and some will come from book only. I will announce this distribution in class. I generally try to have a review before each test and I will announce the date and time of these in class. I will also post study and review material. If you miss an exam, your opportunity to make up the missed exam will be during the final exam session at the end of the semester (immediately after you complete the last exam). However, you must inform me in advance if you intend to make up an exam during the final exam period. If you miss the last exam for any reason not previously approved, you will earn a zero on the final. Please note that the last exam will be given on the date scheduled by the university for final exams, and you may not take the last exam at any other time without a pre-approved excuse.

There will also be 4 quizzes during the course of the semester which will cover recent lectures and readings (the dates of the quizzes can be found on the schedule below). You will have to be present in class to take these quizzes unless the absence is excused. If you do have an excused absence, I will reschedule a time for you to take another quiz. These quizzes will help you in two key ways. First, it will help motivate you not to wait until the last minute to begin studying. Second, research in memory has demonstrated that taking quizzes is a better strategy than study alone (McDaniel, Andersen, Derbish, & Morrisette, 2007). Each quiz grade will be worth 25 points each for a total of 100 points (10% of your final grade).

There will also be random in-class writing exercises that are aimed at you getting hands-on experience with the material learned in the class. I will explain these assignments more in class. Completing these assignments will earn you 5 extra credit points apiece. All you will have to do to receive credit is to be present in class and complete the exercise satisfactorily. If you miss class without a legitimate excuse, you will not receive extra credit for that assignment.

The breakdown of grading is as follows:

Exam 1	215 points	21.5%
Exam 2	215 points	21.5%
Exam 3	215 points	21.5%
Exam 4 (Final)	255 points	25.5%
Quizzes	100 points	10%
Total	1000 points	100%

The official letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

TOTAL: 1000 points (100%)

Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent	Points Equivalent
A	90%-100%	896-1000
B	80%-89%	796-895
C	70%-79%	696-795
D	60%-69%	596-695
F	<60	0-595

Please note that a strict policy will be adopted regarding extensions, missed exams and quizzes etc.: all will be penalized unless a clear and pressing case can be made for medical reasons. Moreover, you may not submit work for this course that has been submitted, or is to be submitted, for credit in another course (some exceptions to this rule exist and you should consult the instructor(s) if you have any doubt).

Grading problems: If you feel there has been an error in working out your grade please let me know as soon as possible. Work out your grade as described above and specify the reason for your concern when contacting me. I want you to get every point you have earned. If you are unhappy with your final grade but agree that it has been worked out correctly as described above, please don't ask for a better grade, or extra opportunities to make a better grade, as a "favor" at the end of the semester. The answer to such unfair requests must always be "no".

Attendance: Although I will not explicitly take attendance, I strongly recommend coming to class. There will often be material presented in class that is not presented equivalently in the book. I will also go into more detail than is presented in the notes. I will post notes on Blackboard but I suggest you do not rely on those because they are only meant to serve as an outline of what we have discussed in class. I will go into much more detail on the notes in class. Also, you will have to be present in class to complete the quizzes and receive the class exercise points. Absences MUST be accompanied by a documented excuse or must be explained well in advance to the professor in order to get credit for these assignments.

Blackboard: I will utilize Blackboard for several different purposes. The syllabus will be posted as well as the lecture outlines before the relevant class period. I will also put up study and review material. In addition, I will post grades and any relevant announcements. **The bottom line is that you should check Blackboard frequently.**

Accommodations for Disabilities: Notify the professor immediately of any needed accommodations for documented disabilities at the beginning of the course. If you are expecting accommodations at any time in this class, you must speak Disability Support Services in the Student Success Center in Rm 1270 (650-3726) before you need accommodations. Also, According to SIUE safety and procedures policies, students with disabilities have the option of developing a written plan for evacuation in the unlikely event of an emergency that requires evacuation. If any student with a disability would like to develop a written evacuation plan for this class, please contact the instructor.

The Psychology Department's Policy on Incomplete Grades: It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw from a course by the dates set by the University if the student is not intending to complete the course. Students who do not withdraw and have not completed the course will receive an F. Only under special circumstances a faculty member may agree to give a student an Incomplete (INC) grade in order to allow the student to complete the remaining work for the course not later than the end of the following semester. An INC is never automatic but must be approved by the professor. If a professor agrees to give a student an INC grade, the professor and the student will fill out a form (Memorandum of Incomplete Grade) indicating why an INC is being given. One copy of the completed form will be given to the student, one copy will be given to the professor, and the Department of Psychology secretary will keep one copy. If the work is not completed by the time specified on the Memorandum of Incomplete Grade form, the grade will be changed from INC to F.

The Psychology Department's Policy on Plagiarism: Plagiarism includes either presenting someone else's words without quotation marks (even if you cite the source) or presenting someone else's ideas without citing that source. If you plagiarize, your instructor cannot evaluate your understanding of the topic. When paraphrasing from another source, at the very least the student should change the wording, sentence syntax, and order of ideas presented in the paper. Ideally, the student will integrate ideas from multiple sources while providing critical commentary on the topic in a way that clearly identifies whether words and ideas are those of the student or are from another source. Plagiarism is one type of academic misconduct described in SIUE's Student Academic Code (<http://www.siu.edu/policies/3c2.shtml>). University policy states that "Normally a student who plagiarizes shall receive a grade of F in the course in which the act occurs. The offense shall also be reported to the Provost." (<http://www.siu.edu/policies/1i6.shtml>). The University policy discusses additional academic sanctions including suspension and expulsion from the University. To insure that you understand how to avoid plagiarism, we encourage you to review the information on plagiarism provided on the Department of Psychology web page at <http://www.siu.edu/education/psychology/plagiarism.shtml>.

SIUE Statement on Diversity: All societies and peoples have contributed to the rich mix of contemporary humanity. In order to achieve domestic and international peace, social justice, and the development of full human potential, we must build on this diversity. SIUE nurtures an open, harmonious, and hospitable climate that facilitates learning and work. Each member of the University is responsible for contributing to such a campus environment.

SIUE Nondiscrimination policy: Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) is a public comprehensive University committed to creating and maintaining a diverse community in which students, faculty, and staff can learn and work together in an environment free of discrimination and free from any form of illegal harassment. Such actions violate the dignity of the individual and the integrity of the University as an institution of learning. SIUE prohibits discrimination against employees, applicants for employment and students on the basis of age, color, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran's status. Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated; management and supervisory personnel, at all levels, are responsible for taking reasonable and necessary action to prevent discrimination.

Office Hours: I have set office hours to be Monday through Thursday from 3:30 to 4:30. However, if you cannot meet at that time, simply e-mail or come talk to me and we can arrange another time.

Cell Phones: Please be respectful and turn them off or on silent. It is only annoying for everyone else and embarrassing for you. In general, please be courteous to everyone in class.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructors may be necessary.

Day #	Week of	Topic	Chapter In Book	Other Notes
1	Aug. 25 th	Introduction to Class		
2	Aug. 27 th	Introduction to Cognition	Ch. 1	
3	Sept. 1 st	Introduction to Cognition	Ch. 1	
4	Sept. 3 rd	Cognition and the Brain: Basic Principles	Ch. 2	
5	Sept. 8 th	Cognition and the Brain: Basic Principles	Ch. 2	
6	Sept. 10 th	Perception	Ch. 3	Quiz # 1 (Ch. 1-2)
7	Sept. 15 th	Perception	Ch. 3	
8	Sept. 17 th	Exam #1 (Ch. 1-3)	Exam #1 (Ch. 1-3)	Exam #1 (Ch. 1-3)
9	Sept 22 nd	Attention	Ch. 4	
10	Sept. 24 th	Attention	Ch. 4	
11	Sept. 29 th	Short-Term/Working Memory	Ch. 5	
12	Oct. 1 st	Short-Term/Working Memory	Ch. 5	
13	Oct. 6 th	Long-Term Memory	Ch. 6	Quiz # 2 (Ch. 4-5)
14	Oct. 8 th	Long-Term Memory	Ch. 6	
15	Oct. 13 th	Exam #2 (Ch. 4-6)	Exam #2 (Ch. 4-6)	Exam #2 (Ch. 4-6)
16	Oct. 15 th	Everyday Memories and Memory Errors	Ch. 7	
17	Oct. 20 th	Everyday Memories and Memory Errors	Ch. 7	
18	Oct. 22 nd	Knowledge	Ch. 8	
19	Oct. 27 th	Knowledge	Ch. 8	
20	Oct. 29 th	Visual Imagery	Ch. 9	Quiz # 3 (Ch. 7-8)
21	Nov. 3 rd	Visual Imagery	Ch. 9	
22	Nov. 5 th	Exam #3 (Ch. 7-9)	Exam #3 (Ch. 7-9)	Exam #3 (Ch. 7-9)
23	Nov. 10 th	Language	Ch. 10	
24	Nov. 12 th	Language	Ch. 10	
25	Nov. 17 th	Problem Solving	Ch. 11	
26	Nov. 19 th	Problem Solving	Ch. 11	
	Nov. 24 th	No Class	No Class	No Class
	Nov. 26 th	No Class	No Class	No Class
27	Dec. 1 st	Reasoning and Decision Making	Ch. 12	
28	Dec. 3 rd	Reasoning and Decision Making	Ch. 12	Quiz # 4 (Ch. 10-11)
29	Dec. 8 th	Review and Catch-up		
30	Dec. 14 th	Final Exam (12-1:40)	Final Exam (12-1:40)	Final Exam (12-1:40)