

University of Waterloo
Department of Psychology
Psychology 207
Cognitive Processes
Fall 2014
MW 2:30-3:50, RCH 101

Instructor and T.A. Information

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Course Description

Psychology 207 should be a fun and interesting introduction to some of the things that cognitive psychologists do. I say “some of the things” because cognition is so broad that we will have time to merely touch upon only a few of the vast areas of interest. Although cognition is probably not what most of you thought of when you first became interested in psychology, it is arguably the most important sub-discipline in the field. Essentially everything you do (other than breathing and your heartbeat) involves cognition. How you perceive, read, remember, think, argue, speak, understand, learn, make judgements about events and people- all of these (and many other skills) involve cognition. So, think of this as your opportunity to build a little “owner’s manual” that will help you to begin to understand your mind.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Explain how the mind works in basic terms, including
 - how we perceive people, events, and things
 - how and what we remember
 - how we organize information in memory
 - how we recruit our stored information and resources to make decisions

- B. Describe how context shapes and constrains cognition, which involves
 - recognizing that cognitive phenomena have contexts that foster and constrain their occurrence, and
 - recognizing that universal cognitive mechanisms assumed or generalized from the

laboratory do not always translate to every person in every situation

Required Text

- Galotti, K.M., Fernandes, M. A., Fugelsang, J., & Stolz, J.A. (2010). *Cognitive Psychology: In and Out of the Laboratory: First Canadian Edition, USA*. Thomson Wadsworth.

Information Available on LEARN

The course web page can be found on LEARN at <https://learn.uwaterloo.ca/>. Here, you will find links to the syllabus, to my lecture slides, and to important announcements. Supplemental readings may be posted here, as well.

Course Requirements and Assessment

There will be four non-cumulative tests, each worth 25% of the final grade (see dates below). The tests will be comprised predominately of multiple-choice questions with the addition of a few short answer questions. All tests will be based on material presented in the text and in the lectures. All tests will be administered in the classroom (RCH 101) during regular class time.

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Test #1	September 29th, 2014	25%
Test #2	October 22nd, 2014	25%
Test #3	November 12th, 2014	25%
Test #4	December 1st, 2014	25%
Total		100%

Students will also have the opportunity to earn 4 bonus marks by participating in research studies.

Course Outline

Notes on readings.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
1	9/8 9/10	Overview; Syllabus; Perception; Pattern Recognition	Chapters 1, 2, 3
2	9/15 9/17	Pattern Recognition; Attention	Chapter 3, 4
3	9/22 9/24	Attention	Chapter 4
4	9/29 10/1	Test 1 (covers lectures & Chapt 1-4) Memory Structures	Chapter 5
5	10/6 10/8	Memory Structures; Memory Processes	Chapters 5,6
6	10/13 10/15	Thanksgiving Memory Processes	Chapter 6
7	10/20 10/22	Concepts & Categorization Test 2 (covers lectures & Chapt 5-6)	Chapter 7
8	10/27	Visual Imagery & Spatial Cognition	Chapter 8

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
	10/29		
9	11/3 11/5	Language	Chapter 9
10	11/10 11/12	Thinking; Problem Solving Test 3 (lectures & Chapt 7-9)	Chapter 10
11	11/17 11/19	Making Decisions	Chapter 11
12	11/24 11/26	Individual Differences	Chapter 12
13	12/1	Test 4 (lectures & Chapt 10-12)	

Research Experience Marks

Information and Guidelines: Experiential learning is considered an integral part of the undergraduate program in Psychology. Research participation is one example of this, article review is another. A number of undergraduate courses have been expanded to include opportunities for Psychology students to earn points while gaining research experience.

Because experiential learning is highly valued in the Department of Psychology, students may earn a “bonus” grade of up to 4% in this course through research participation. Course work will constitute 100% of the final mark and a “bonus” of up to 4% may be earned and will be added to the final grade if/as needed to bring the final grade up to 100%. The two options for earning research experience credits (participation in research and article review) are described below. Students may complete any combination of these options to earn research experience grades.

Option 1: Participation in Psychological Research. Research participation is coordinated by the Research Experiences Group (REG). Psychology students may volunteer as research participants in lab and/or online (web-based) studies conducted by students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Participation enables students to learn first-hand about psychology research and related concepts. Many students report that participation in research is both an educational and interesting experience. Please be assured that all Psychology studies have undergone ethics review and have been cleared through the Office of Research Ethics.

Educational focus of participation in research: To maximize the educational benefits of participating in research, students will receive feedback information following their participation in each study. This feedback will detail the following elements:

- Purpose or objectives of the study
- Independent and dependent variables
- Expected results
- References for at least two related research articles
- Provisions to ensure confidentiality of data
- Contact information of the researcher should the student have further questions about the study

- Contact information for the Director of the Office of Research Ethics should the student wish to learn more about the general ethical issues surrounding research with human participants, or specific questions about the study in which s/he participated.

Participation is worth 0.5 participation credits (grade percentage points) for each half-hour of participation. Researchers will record students' participation and REG will advise the course instructor of the total credits earned by each student at the end of the term.

Study scheduling, participation and grade assignment is managed using the SONA online system. All students enrolled in this course have a SONA account. It is VERY IMPORTANT that students get an early start on their studies. For detailed instructions on when and how to access your SONA account and for a list of important dates and deadlines, please, as soon as possible, click on:

<http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~regadmin/regparticipant/sonainfo/#SonaSignUp>

Please do not ask the REG Coordinator for information unless you have first thoroughly read the information provided on this website.

Option 2: Article Review as an alternative to participation in research. Students are not required to participate in research, and not all students wish to do so. As an alternative, students may opt to gain research experience by writing short reviews (1.5-2 pages) of research articles. Please contact your TA in order to be given an approved article. Each review counts as one percentage point. To receive credit, you must follow specific guidelines. The article review must:

- Be submitted before the last lecture. Late submission will NOT be accepted under ANY circumstances.
- Be typed
- Fully identify the title, author(s), source and date of the article.
- Identify the psychological concepts in the article. Critically evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article. If inappropriate or incorrect, identify the error and its implications for the validity of the article. You may find, for example, misleading headings, faulty research procedures, alternative explanations that are ignored, failures to distinguish factual findings from opinions, fault statements of cause-effect relations, errors in reasoning, etc. Provide examples whenever possible.
- Clearly evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article.
- Keep a copy of your review in the unlikely event that we misplace the original.

Please note that all extra credit must be completed by the SONA deadline. **Absolutely no exceptions!**

Electronic Device Policy

Laptops for notetaking are permitted during lectures. Web surfing and emailing during lectures will not be permitted, however.

All cellphone ringers must be turned off during lectures and exams.

All electronic devices (e.g., phones, laptops, tablets) must be stowed away and inaccessible during exams.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is not mandatory, however students who attend class regularly perform better than those who do not. If a class is missed, it is up to the student to get lecture notes from a fellow classmate. Attendance at each of the 4 in-class exams is mandatory. If a student is ill and unable to write an exam the instructor must be notified PRIOR to the exam. Furthermore, the student must provide appropriate documentation of illness from the Office of Health Services. Failure to do so will result in a mark of 0% for the exam.

Institutional-required statements for undergraduate course outlines approved by Senate Undergraduate Council, April 14, 2009

Cross-listed course

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#).

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

Other sources of information for students

[Academic integrity](#) (Arts) [Academic Integrity Office](#) (uWaterloo)

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services office](#), located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.