



**OTRP** *online*  
office of teaching resources in PSYCHOLOGY

**Cognition Syllabus – Spring 2010**  
**Psychology 4324 – Section 003**  
M, W, F – 1:00 – 1:50 p.m.  
Room: English 108

Instructor: J Rudine

E-mail: j.rudine@ttu.edu

Phone: 742-3711 x 422

Office Hours:

Office hours are designated days and times each week during which I will be in my office so that you can drop by and ask any questions or address any concerns that you might have. These are *literally* times each week when I am sitting in my office waiting for you to come in and see me, so please do not hesitate to take advantage of this valuable resource!

Office: Psychology Building, Room 451-D

Office Hours: Mondays: 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. & Wednesdays: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

\*By appointment

\* I realize that any time I might choose for office hours will most likely be in conflict for some people in class, so if these times do not work for your schedule please feel free to contact me and we'll set up a time to meet that is more convenient.

**Required Text:**

Reisberg, D. (2010). *Cognition: Exploring the science of the mind* (4<sup>th</sup> media edition). New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This course provides an overview of the topics in human cognition. Essentially, this course will examine the scientific study of mental processes from seemingly simple processes such as feature recognition and attention to more complex and uniquely human processes like memory, knowledge, language, and thinking. To this end the main objectives for this course are:

- To offer a broad and general knowledge about cognitive processes and concepts. This objective will be addressed primarily through performance on exams, quizzes, labs, and in-class discussion.
- To examine the ways in which cognitive psychologists conduct research so that you can critically examine concepts and theories provided in this course, as well as psychological claims outside the classroom. This component will be assessed through performance on exams, quizzes, and an integration paper.
- To provide an understanding and appreciation of cognitive psychology so that you can apply the principles of cognitive psychology to your own life. This objective will be addressed through performance on exams, questions, and in-class discussion.
- To provide the opportunity for you to practice communicating your thoughts and ideas about topics in cognitive psychology clearly and effectively. This objective will be assessed through performance on exams, questions, and an integration paper.

## **Syllabus Reading Tips:**

As you read through the syllabus, you'll notice that there are two types of information for each section. The information that is in standard type, such as this, is everything you need to know about that section, including things like my rationale for including a section or assignment. This information should be read at the beginning of the semester to get a feel for me, my teaching style, and the course that we will be exploring together. However, as I am admittedly a bit wordy, I have also included the second type of information in each section.

### Quick Hits

The second type of information, which is enclosed in a box like this, is a quick overview of the important information from the section. This information will generally consist of no more than three or four bullet points that briefly describe what you absolutely need to know from each section. You can refer to these sections throughout the term to refresh your memory about assignments or policies in the course.

## **Course Requirements:**

### **Reading Assignments:**

It may seem ridiculous to point out that the reading assignments are a course requirement, however due to past experience, I think it is worth bringing up in the syllabus. The assigned readings and the dates they are due are provided in the schedule that will be provided. These readings are due before the class date in which they will be discussed. This is important because in lecture we will be discussing information under the assumption that you have read and understood most of the text already. In this way, we will be expanding on the concepts presented in the text, clarifying these concepts, and possibly discussing concepts that were not covered by the text. Also, in order to do well in this class I encourage you to do more than simply read through the assigned chapters and consider the material sufficiently implanted in your brain. In order to develop an understanding of the material you need to do something with it either during or after you read it. You can do this by taking notes on the reading material, highlighting important concepts as you read, applying the concepts to situations in your life, or using the web site that is available for this text. In addition, we have a very limited amount of time in class to discuss each chapter and must be selective about which topics are discussed. Even though we will not be able to cover everything from the text, you will still be responsible for all material covered in the text for exams and other aspects of the course. Finally, while the reading assignments themselves will not be graded, everything that will be graded in this course (i.e., exams, paper, etc.) relies heavily on these assignments.

### Reading Assignments Quick Hits

- The assigned readings are provided in the schedule attached to this syllabus.
- These readings are due before the class date in which they will be discussed.
- You should engage in active study methods (e.g. SQ4R) when reading the class materials.
- Even though all material from the text won't be discussed in class, you are responsible for this material on exams.

### **Exams:**

In order to assess your understanding of the cognitive processes and concepts we will be discussing, there will be a total of five exams over the course of the semester. There is a cumulative nature to the material that we will be covering throughout the term. To grasp some of the concepts in later parts of the term does require a certain understanding of material that has been covered previously (for example, understanding the network approach to knowledge representation relies on a previous understanding of feature nets from the object recognition chapter). Therefore, each exam will be cumulative such that any material covered in the course up to the point of the exam is fair game. Each exam will be composed of multiple choice and short answer items.

### Exams Quick Hits

- There will be five exams over the course of the semester.
- There is a cumulative aspect to the material we will be studying.
- Exams will be composed of multiple choice and short answer items.

## Quizzes:

The primary purpose of the quizzes is to encourage reading *and understanding* of the material before the class period in which it is discussed. Therefore, quizzes will only cover material from the text. Material covered only during lecture will not be included in the quizzes (but is still fair game for exams). A secondary purpose of the quizzes is to provide practice with the types of multiple choice questions I will be asking on the exams so that you can tailor your study habits accordingly. A final purpose of the quizzes is to give me an idea about the topics people are having difficulty with in the text so that I can be sure to address these concepts in class.

Throughout the semester, quizzes will be administered online through Blackboard. I administer quizzes over Blackboard for a couple of reasons. First, we can avoid using valuable class time for administering the quizzes. Second, I am hoping that taking the quizzes online from the comfort of your own home (or dorm room, as the case may be) will provide a less stressful atmosphere that will be beneficial for your grasping the material. In the event of temporary technical problems (e.g. problems logging in, etc.) or individual technology problems (e.g. your computer crashes), it is the student's responsibility to make a reasonable effort to complete the assignment before the availability period ends (e.g., leaving time before the end of the availability period to complete the assignment, or going to a public computer lab). In the event of a larger technological failure (e.g., campus servers are down for an extended period of time) that affects all students, due dates or times may be adjusted by the instructor.

You are free to use your book for the quizzes, although they will be time limited so you should have an understanding of the material the quiz will be covering. The ability to take quizzes via Blackboard does come with a certain amount of responsibility on your part. Namely, it is expected that you will work on each quiz independently. You are welcome to study for the quizzes with your classmates; however the quiz itself should be your own work. If, at any point during the semester, I discover that this method of quiz administration is being used in a dishonest manner, quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class without prior warning and anyone involved will be given a zero for those quizzes.

### Quizzes Quick Hits

- There will be a quiz over the material in each chapter of the text.
- Quizzes will be administered online using BlackBoard.
- You may use your book for the quizzes, but they are time limited.
- Each quiz must be taken independently; consequences for comparing quizzes with classmates are not good!

## Questions:

In order to enhance the effectiveness of my lectures (i.e. by hitting on points that are truly in need of clarification), I will be asking you to jot down at least three questions per chapter for discussion in class. These questions can be for additional clarification on a topic or concept from the chapter that you had difficulty understanding or they can be more conceptual questions that expand on the ideas presented in the text (or some combination of these). In either case, you should provide a few sentences explaining or setting up your questions (i.e. specifically where you are having difficulty understanding or explaining the connections to other material for conceptual questions). See the "Asking Questions" section under my teaching philosophies for ideas about how to ask good questions!

### Questions Quick Hit

- For each chapter, three typed questions about the material from that chapter will be due in class.
- Each question should include a brief two or three sentence explanation that sets up the question.

## Lab Participation:

Research has repeatedly demonstrated that one of the best ways to learn is to actively engage in the material that you are studying. As such, one requirement of this course will be that you participate in a series of online and in-class labs that demonstrate the principles we will be discussing in class. The class results from these labs will then be used as a point of discussion in class. In order to get credit for the online labs, you will be required to submit a print out of your results. In order to get credit for in-class labs you must attend class and complete the lab, which will require you to turn in your responses at the end of the lab.

### Lab Participation Quick Hit

- You will be completing a series of online and in-class labs that demonstrate principles from the class.
- Credit for online labs requires a print out of your result; attendance is required for credit on in-class labs.

### **Integration Paper:**

As we make our way through the course, my hope is that you will notice some regularities in the ways that our cognitive system works across all types of mental processes. To this end, one of your class assignments will be to write an integration paper that identifies a common theme across several sections of the text (and class) and to discuss this theme using specific concepts from the course. There are two main components to this paper. The first is the ability to identify commonalities among the findings that we will be discussing – specifically, this requires a deeper understanding of the material such that you can identify similarities among concepts that appear quite different on the surface. The second component is the ability to communicate your ideas about cognition clearly and effectively. This latter component means more than just using good spelling and grammar (although this will also be required). Instead, this component will require understanding and organization of your ideas, identification and clear description of your theme, and providing evidence for your theme in a cogent and logical manner. **DO NOT WORRY** – rather than simply throw you into the deep end to teach you how to swim, I will be providing several smaller assignments throughout the semester to help prepare you for this integration paper. Additional details about the integration paper will be provided throughout the semester.

#### Integration Paper Quick Hit

- You will write an integration paper that identifies and discusses a theme from Cognition.
- Several smaller assignments will be provided in order to help with the development of this paper.

### **Class Policies:**

#### **Attendance:**

Attendance, by itself, will not be computed as part of your grade. However, you are responsible for ALL material covered in class, class announcements, and quizzes. Therefore, if you need to miss class for any reason, be sure to get any notes and/or materials handed out in class *from one of your classmates*. If you have questions about the notes or topics discussed in the class that you missed, I will be more than happy to help clarify the material; however, I will not provide you with notes from the class that you missed. Ultimately, attendance is important as a way to clarify material and simply get additional exposure to the concepts we'll be studying. In addition, I have a tendency to bring up material that I think is useful or interesting, but often is not covered in the text. So, while attendance per say is not calculated into your grade, failure to attend class regularly will likely have a negative impact on those components of this course which are calculated into your grade (e.g. exams, lab participation, integration paper, etc.). Therefore, I strongly encourage you to attend class regularly in order to optimize your ability to do well in this course.

#### Attendance Quick Hit

- If you miss class, you must get any notes and/or materials from a classmate.
- Although attendance is not directly computed in your grade, you will be more successful if you attend class!

### **Class Participation:**

A well-replicated finding in the psychological research literature is that learning is an active rather than passive process. This means that you can be more successful in this (or any other) course by being an active participant rather than a passive listener in class. So, what does being an “active participant” mean? Fortunately, there are tons of ways to be an active participant, such as asking questions and making comments, participating in class activities and demonstrations, as well as applying the concepts you are learning to your own life. It turns out the most important part of being an active (rather than passive) learner is to simply use the material you are learning in some way; for example by thinking more deeply about it, physically doing something with it, or even responding to your emotional reactions about it. So, while I will not be grading you on how much you talk or contribute in the classroom, you will probably do much better in this course if you take an active role in this course (as opposed to being a passive recipient of whatever I might be saying). For my part, I will do the best I can to make this class a comfortable place for you to ask questions and make contributions.

#### Class Participation Quick Hit

- One of the best ways to be successful in this course is to be an active participant in class!
- You will not be graded on participation, but should find your own way of being an active learner.

## Make-up Policy:

If you miss an exam, I will only give a make-up exam under rare circumstances that occur due to an emergency. What is considered an “emergency” will be decided, by me, on a case by case basis. Needless to say, sleeping in or being extremely hung over, will not be considered an emergency, but rather poor decision making which does not justify a make-up exam. So, if you miss an exam due to instances such as a party the night before, make sure that it is an EXTREMELY good party, so that you can justify to yourself (and perhaps your parents) the reasons why you did poorly in this course. In the event that you are absent for an in-class exam you must have a valid excuse (e.g. illness, car accident) *with documentation* in order to schedule a make-up exam. Should an emergency arise, please make every reasonable attempt to contact me in advance, however, if this is not possible, you must contact me by the class period following the missed exam in order to be eligible for a make-up exam. If you know that you will be unable to take an exam in advance (e.g. university sanctioned travel, observance of a religious holiday), you must let me know at least one week before the exam so that we can schedule a time for you take the exam at an earlier date.

Likewise, if you miss an in-class activity due to absence, you will be required to provide a documented excuse to make up that activity. If you have a documented excuse, assignments that were due may be turned in at the beginning of the next class period that you attend. However, if you do not have documentation for your absence, in order to be fair to students that turned in their assignments in a timely manner, assignments (e.g. labs, questions, integration paper components) will be penalized 20% per class day they are late and may not be turned in after the third class period from the original due date.

### Make-up Policy Quick Hit

- Missed exams can only be made up when you have a valid excuse with documentation.
- In this event, the make-up exam must be scheduled within *seven days* of your return to class.
- Missed quizzes without documentation cannot be made up – these will be counted as a dropped quiz
- Missed assignments and labs also require documentation to make-up
- Missed assignments without documentation will be penalized 20% per class period and no longer accepted after three late class periods

## Time Spent Studying for This Course:

Many students underestimate the amount of time required to do well in any specific course. The general rule of thumb is that for every hour spent in class, at least two to three additional hours of study outside of class are needed. In this case, since this is a three credit hour course, you will very likely need to spend *at least six to nine* hours each week studying, reading, and completing assignments in order to be successful in this class. I strongly encourage you to make enough room in your schedule for this class now, rather than waiting until after the first exam to discover that this course will require more time than you anticipated.

### Time Spent Studying Quick Hit

- You are expected to spend six to nine hours each week studying for this course outside of class.
- Be sure to develop your schedule to account for this amount of study time per week.

## University E-mail Account:

Due to the fact that a substantial portion of this course will be conducted outside the classroom, I will be using your university e-mail address to send messages to the entire class. This way, I will be able to make class announcements and let you know when materials have been posted on BlackBoard. Therefore, it is essential that you check your university e-mail at least once every day. It is your responsibility to check your e-mail in order to receive class announcements and assignments in a timely fashion. “I didn’t check my e-mail” will NOT be considered a justifiable excuse for having missed an important assignment or announcement!

### University E-mail Account Quick Hit

- I will often use your university e-mail account to send announcements and assignments to the class
- You are expected to check your university e-mail at least once every day.

## **Respecting Others:**

This class should be considered an open forum to talk about ideas and concepts within the realm of cognitive psychology. In order to keep the atmosphere of this class as open as possible, please be respectful of the people around you. This means being respectful of other peoples' comments and opinions (whether you agree with them or not) and generally just keeping an open mind about the people around you. Discriminatory comments or behaviors towards any group (whether represented in class or out of it) are not acceptable and should be left at the door. In general, as cheesy as it may sound, the best policy is to follow the "Golden Rule" and treat others with the same respect that you would like to receive from them. In this way, we can hopefully have some challenging and interesting discussions about cognition in which everyone can feel comfortable participating.

### Respecting Others Quick Hit

- You should be respectful of other people's comments and opinions in this course.
- Discriminatory comments or behavior are not acceptable in this classroom!

## **Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating or plagiarism, is a serious violation of Texas Tech University's code of student conduct. Any act of academic dishonesty will, at the very least, result in a zero grade for that assignment and the student may be reported to Student Judicial Services (for further information visit the following website: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentjudicialprograms/AcademicIntegrity.htm>).

### Academic Dishonesty Quick Hit

- Academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will result in unpleasant consequences.
- Do not engage in academically dishonest behaviors (see Student Judicial Services website for info).

## **Special Needs:**

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, you may contact the Student Disability Services office at 335 West Hall or 806-742-2405.

### Special Needs Quick Hit

- Contact me as soon as possible if you need any special arrangements in this course.
- I will not be able to provide accommodations unless verification I am given appropriate verification.

## **Teaching Philosophy & Responsibilities:**

### **Expectations:**

I tend to have high expectations for student learning which are reflected in my lectures and the coursework that I assign. These expectations include not only the acquisition of knowledge (e.g. remembering facts), but the ability to use that knowledge to think critically about and produce effective solutions to problems you may encounter (either in the classroom or, more importantly, in the real world). I maintain these expectations semester after semester for several reasons. First, and foremost, I believe that you can achieve them. After all, you likely would not be here, in college, if you were not able to reach and eventually attain some pretty lofty goals. Another reason is to prepare you for life after your undergraduate education, whether this life includes graduate school or employment. At some point, you will leave the safe confines of this campus and seek either employment in the “real world” or additional education on this or another college campus. The fact is that neither graduate programs nor employers are looking for people who can simply remember a lot of facts. Instead, they are looking for people who can put their extensive knowledge to work by generating ideas, communicating these ideas clearly and concisely, developing solutions to problems, and making intelligent decisions about difficult situations that might come about – the kinds of skills people are supposed to learn in college! For my part, I will try to provide as many opportunities as possible for you to both observe and practice these kinds of thinking skills.

### **Learning:**

Learning is hard! Truly learning a subject is a difficult, time-consuming, and often frustrating enterprise, especially when the goal is to develop a deeper understanding of the material so that it can be used or applied effectively. This deeper understanding does not come about through passively reading the text and listening to lectures, but rather comes through hard work, practice, and actively seeking a higher level of comprehension. In class, I can help further your comprehension of the material, but only if you come to class with some level of understanding already (even if this understanding is a bit murky). Therefore, it is your responsibility to come to class prepared to think about and learn the material to be discussed. You can do this by reading the text before the class period in which it will be discussed, thinking about the material and identifying aspects that you are having difficulty with, and (shockingly!) coming to class awake and alert.

This responsibility does not end at the door to the classroom. In class, you should be ready to take notes, participate in activities and discussions, ask questions, and generally be prepared to *think* about the material being covered. Learning can seem difficult because it often involves making mistakes, identifying where we went wrong, and then correcting ourselves. The problem is that we (as human beings) do not like to be wrong, so we tend to avoid any evidence that we might be. This process of not correcting our mistakes is more difficult in the classroom because we are often confronted with the evidence of our mistake either overtly (someone tells you that you are wrong) or covertly (you realize you were wrong by listening to a discussion of the material). Unfortunately, in class we often hide behind our notes (or the person in front of us) unwilling to take a risk and possibly make a mistake. During this course, I challenge you to change this pattern of behavior by stepping outside your comfort zone and offering answers to questions or comments on the material being discussed.

This process of learning continues when class lets out and you are on your own again. Rather than just assuming that you suddenly understand the material because you were in the presence of my psychological wisdom, you should take what was covered in class and actively use that material, in conjunction with your text, to further enhance your comprehension. This can be accomplished by re-writing your notes, re-reading the text, or using the materials provided on your text’s web site (to name just a few). The important thing is that you 1) actively incorporate what was discussed in class with your previous understanding of the material and 2) spend time thinking about and trying to use this newly discovered understanding.

Ultimately, I cannot force you to learn and understand the material in this class (although I can and do strongly encourage it). The responsibility for learning the material in this course falls squarely on your shoulders. For my part, should you choose to learn the material in this course, I will do my best to provide the tools necessary to help you achieve your goals for this course. I will accomplish this by 1) pointing you in the direction of additional tools useful for enhancing understanding and 2) by spending as much time as necessary to help you understand the material you might be having difficulty with (either in class or outside of class).

While it is important to discuss the difficulties inherent in learning, it is also useful to point out the potential benefits of successful learning. The first benefit is the feeling of accomplishment achieved by completing a difficult goal or having met high expectations (it provides a nice little boost to your self esteem). A second benefit is that successfully learning the material in this course should give you an appreciation for the current state of knowledge in

cognitive psychology, the work that cognitive psychologists do and an idea of what cognitive psychology can offer. And finally (although I'm sure the first two points were all that you needed to become actively engaged in this course), active engagement and deeper understanding of the material is very highly correlated with getting higher grades in the course!

### **Asking Questions:**

As alluded to throughout this syllabus, there will most likely be times when you are simply having difficulty understanding the material in this course (either in class or outside of class). If you find yourself in this situation (and you likely will at some point in this course), it is your responsibility to let me know you are having trouble understanding the material! Over the last few years of teaching, I have been working on my ability to read your mind and just "know" when you are having trouble, but sadly have yet to achieve any real results. So, I need you to let me know if I need to provide further information or clarification. Along with this, it is your responsibility to ask me *specific and detailed* questions about exactly what you are having difficulty with. I often receive questions (especially via e-mail) such as "I am having difficulty understanding the information about memory. Can you clarify this for me?" First of all, the information on memory is several chapters in your text, so I'll need you to narrow down the area of difficulty for me. Secondly, rather than reading through (or listening to) the material and simply assuming you don't understand, stop for a moment and think about exactly where the problem is, what specific part of the theory or concept are you having difficulty understanding? Likewise, think about how you can most effectively ask me to clarify the material and hence your misunderstanding. Just taking a few seconds to clarify your question, will not only help me identify and resolve the problem in your understanding, but will very likely make my answer more comprehensible! Again, the goal is to enhance your learning of cognitive psychology, which can be achieved much more effectively if you are actively thinking about and trying to understand both the material and where you are having difficulty.

In turn, my responsibility, once the area(s) of difficulty have been identified is to take the time needed for you to gain the understanding and/or answers you are seeking. In most situations, I should be able to do this in class by restating the material or providing additional examples. However, on occasion, I may need time to either think about different ways of presenting the material or to research an answer to your question (I know quite a bit about psychology, but no one knows *everything*). In these situations, I will do my best to answer your question at the next class period or at least update you on my progress towards an answer. Likewise, when answering questions about material via e-mail I will often be able to quickly (within limits – give me at least 24 hours to read the e-mail and think about a response) and concisely answer your question. However, at times the question is broad enough that it will be more effective for you to simply set up an appointment to discuss your question in detail (rather than sending you a seven page e-mail). In this latter situation, it is your responsibility to set up an appointment and show up to discuss the problem. With all of this in mind, I love to sit around and talk about psychology, so please do not be afraid to ask questions in class or drop by my office to get clarification on the material we are covering. (Often these discussions lead to my identifying problem areas for future classes and better ways to approach the material for enhanced understanding, thus aiding in my learning process by helping you with yours!)

## What can I do to be successful in this course?

- Read the text before class – Not only should you read the text before coming to class, but you should read the text actively rather than passively (e.g. using the SQ4R method). This active reading of the text will enhance your understanding of the material before you come to class so that you will be better prepared to think about and discuss the material we will be covering.
- Attend class regularly – By “attend” I don’t mean simply show up for class (although this is certainly required), but rather come to class awake, alert, and ready to think about and discuss the material we will be covering.
- Actively take notes in class (and while reading the text)<sup>1</sup> – Passive note-taking occurs when you simply write down whatever appears on the PowerPoint. In contrast, with active note-taking you take the time to think about your personal understanding of the material and write that down. (Note: the ability to take notes this way is much easier if you come to class with a deeper understanding of the material – see above). Also, when you study the material after class you should revise your notes as you develop a better understanding of the concepts and theories being discussed. Finally, when it comes to taking notes – more is always better! The more notes you have from class and the text, the better they will be when it comes to studying for the exams.
- Be an active participant in class – This goes along with being awake, alert and ready to participate (see above). It is not enough to physically “be” in class, rather you should physically, cognitively, and emotionally “be” in class. This means that as we are discussing material, you should be thinking, asking questions, and making comments about the material being discussed. This does not necessarily mean that you have to talk out loud, although this can help. Writing these questions and comments in your notes can also be effective – if you follow up on your comments and get answers to your questions.
- Take advantage of class activities/demonstrations – you should both participate in and think about the activities and demonstrations conducted in class (e.g. Why are they relevant? How do they relate to the material? From the perspective of psychological theory, why do they turn out the way that they do?). Along these lines, don’t just complete these exercises to “get credit”, instead actually think about the questions or concepts and try to connect these exercises to the material being covered.
- Think about the material that you are trying to learn – I know this keeps popping up, but that should tell you how important actively thinking about the material is to successful learning. So, in class, while you’re studying, or in your dreams, think and ask questions about the material we are covering. Sample questions to think about include: How does this information relate to other material we have covered? How can this information be applied to my life (i.e. how can you use this)? Do you agree or disagree with the psychological findings/theories being discussed? Why? What additional evidence is needed to convince you?
- Use time management to study regularly & often – As mentioned earlier, students often underestimate the amount of time needed to study for this course. To get ahead of this problem, schedule time each day to study for this course. Importantly, once you have the schedule – stick to it!
- Distribute your studying rather than cramming – Research in memory has demonstrated that people learn material more effectively when they spread out their learning over a period of time rather than cramming it all into one session. As such, the best way to study for this course is to break the material down into small manageable chunks and spread out your studying. For example, rather than reading an entire chapter in one night, split the chapter into several sections and read each section across several nights. In addition, it is helpful to review the material you read previously before reading the current section of the text. This can help you to incorporate old information with new information which is essential for some of the assignments and exam questions in this course.
- Continually check your understanding of the material – this can be accomplished a few ways from reciting the main points from the text (with the book closed!), to using the tools provided on the text’s web site (see below). An easy way to assess your understanding that is part of the course is by using the quizzes provided on the text website as a study tool. In this way, you can take the quiz, identify areas you are having difficulty understanding, then go back and review that material in the text.
- Use the text web site and study guide to study and review the text material – This site includes summaries, quizzes and supplemental essays to help you create connections with the material we will be covering.
- Study in groups! – This makes learning the material more fun! Importantly, research has shown that studying in groups helps people learn because they actually teach the material to each other. So, get together and go over the study guide, or create questions to ask each other, or assign one section of the chapter to each person, making them the expert who has to answer questions – no matter what you do, learning in groups is more effective for everyone!

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<sup>1</sup> Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D. J., & Pollock, J. E. (2001). *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*. Alexandria, VA: ACSD Publications.

### **Grading and the Grading Scale:**

The following is a breakdown of points and percentages for the various assignments and exams over the course of this class:

#### **Distribution of Points:**

<u>Requirements</u>		<u>Total Points</u>		<u>Percentage of Course Grade</u>
Exams	-	160 points	-	40%
Quizzes	-	60 points	-	15%
Questions	-	40 points	-	10%
Lab Participation	-	40 points	-	10%
Integration Paper	-	100 points	-	25%
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Total	-	400 points	-	100%

#### **Grading Scale:**

Grade	Percentage	Points
A/A-	90% - 100%	400 – 360
B+/B/B-	80% - 89%	359 – 320
C+/C/C-	70% - 79%	319 – 280
D+/D/D-	60% - 69%	279 – 240
F	Below 60%	239 & Below

#### **Disclaimer:**

If necessary parts of this syllabus may be changed to accommodate needs that arise throughout the semester. In the event that this occurs, you will be given an appropriate amount of time to make any needed adjustments to your own schedule. Basically, if I need to make changes I will do my best to give you advance warning and allow you enough time to adjust your life accordingly.

#### **Library Resources:**

The library can be an incredibly useful (and often underutilized) tool. You may find this tool particularly useful while working on portions of this course. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this resource. For specific questions about tools for psychology, you can contact the subject librarian for psychology:

Brian Quinn  
e-mail: brian.quinn@ttu.edu  
phone: (806) 742-2238 x294  
Office: Library Reference Room Mezzanine 113

#### **Faculty Supervisor:**

The faculty supervisor for Cognition (PSY 4324) is Dr. Jessecae Marsh. She may be reached by e-mail at jessecae.marsh@ttu.edu with questions or concerns about this course.

### **Class Schedule:**

Cognition - PSY 4324-003 – Spring 2010  
M,W,F – 1:00 to 1:50 p.m.

The following is a tentative schedule for this course. Topics and dates may change depending on how long it takes us to cover the material.

Date	Class Topics	Readings
<i>Week 1</i>		
1/13	Introductions & Syllabus	Syllabus
1/15	Doing Well in this Course!	Syllabus
<i>Week 2</i>		
1/18	<i>No Class – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday</i>	
1/20	A Brief History of Cognition	Reisberg, Ch. 1
1/22	All You Need to Know about Cognitive Research Methods (for this course)	
<i>Week 3</i>		
1/25	Cognition & the Brain	Reisberg, Ch. 2
1/27	The Visual System: Early Visual Analysis (sub-cortical structures)	
1/29	The Visual System: Later Visual Analysis (cortical structures)	
<i>Week 4</i>		
<b>2/1</b>	<b>Mini-Exam #1</b>	
2/3	Perception	Reisberg, Ch. 3
2/5	Object Recognition: Pattern Matching	
<i>Week 5</i>		
2/8	Object Recognition: Word Recognition	
2/10	Attention: Classic Studies of Selective Attention	Reisberg, Ch. 4
2/12	Attention: Function and Structure of Attention, Divided Attention	
<i>Week 6</i>		
2/15	Attention: The Effects of Practice & Application (Cell Phone Use)	
<b>2/17</b>	<b>Exam #2</b>	
2/19	Entering Memory: The Modal Model of Memory	Reisberg, Ch. 5
<i>Week 7</i>		
2/22	Entering Memory: Testing the Modal Model with the Serial Position Curve	
2/24	Entering Memory: Levels of Processing & Application (Adaptive Processing)	
2/26	Entering Memory: Distributing Practice, Organization, & Desirable Difficulties	
<i>Week 8</i>		
3/1	Types of Memory: Encoding-Retrieval Interactions	Reisberg, Ch. 6
3/3	Types of Memory: Distinguishing between Implicit and Explicit Memory	
3/5	Types of Memory: Implicit Memory & Application (Unconscious Plagiarism)	
<i>Week 9</i>		
3/8	Real-World Memory: Memory Errors & Schemas	Reisberg, Ch. 7
3/10	Real-World Memory: Application (Memory in Legal Situations)	
3/12	Real-World Memory: Forgetting (Decay vs. Interference)	
<i>Week 10</i>		
3/15 – 3/19	<i>Spring Break – No Classes</i>	<i>Have a great break!</i>
<i>Week 11</i>		
<b>3/22</b>	<b>Exam #3</b>	
3/24	Knowledge Representation: The Network Approach	Reisberg, Ch. 8
3/26	Knowledge Representation: Testing the Network Approach	

<i>Week 12</i>		
3/29	Knowledge Representation: Adjusting the Network Approach	
3/31	Concepts & Categories: Family Resemblance Approaches	Reisberg, Ch. 9
4/2	Concepts & Categories: Comparing Prototypes & Exemplars	
<i>Week 13</i>		
4/5	<i>No Class</i>	
4/7	Concepts & Categories: Theory Use in Categorization & Application	
4/9	Language: Processing Words	Reisberg, Ch. 10
<i>Week 14</i>		
4/12	Language: Parsing Sentences	
4/14	Visual Imagery: Working with Images	Reisberg, Ch. 11
4/16	Visual Imagery: Long-Term Visual Memory	
<i>Week 15</i>		
<b>4/19</b>	<b>Exam #4</b>	
4/21	Judgment: Using Heuristics	Reisberg, Ch. 12
4/23	Judgment: Covariation & Base-Rate Neglect	
<i>Week 16</i>		
4/26	Reasoning: Confirmation & Disconfirmation	Reisberg, Ch. 13
4/28	Reasoning: Decision Making	
4/30	Problem-Solving: Methods of Solving Problems	Reisberg, Ch. 14
<i>Week 17</i>		
5/3	Problem-Solving: Barriers to Solving Problems	
5/4	<i>Individual Study Day</i>	
<i>Finals Week</i>		
<b>5/11</b>	<b>Exam #5 (1:30 – 4:00 p.m.)</b>	