



Society for the Teaching of Psychology (APA Division 2)

OFFICE OF TEACHING RESOURCES IN PSYCHOLOGY (OTRP)

Department of Psychology, Georgia Southern University, P. O. Box 8041, Statesboro, GA 30460-8041

Project Syllabus
Cognitive 2

Cognitive Psychology

PY 308: 11:30 - 12:20 MWF

I. General Information

A. Course Description & Course Objectives

"PY 308: Cognitive psychology - An analysis of human cognition, including such topics as attention, perception, pattern recognition, memory, language, decision-making, problem solving, creativity, and artificial intelligence. Emphasis is given to application of research in these areas to clinical, education, and other settings." (SVC Bulletin, page 114)

This course will give you an extensive background in human memory systems. Many of you taking the class are doing so to fulfill requirements for obtaining your teaching certificates. You may find understanding experiments on human memory difficult, boring, or perhaps tedious. However let me remind you that experiments in human memory are the backbone of the American educational system: Many of the experiments we will discuss have already been integrated into the classroom by teachers and integrated into teacher training programs. Learning about these experiments will help you to integrate principles into the classroom and make you a better user of human memory research in the future. In addition, learning about these principles may help you become a better student.

Those of you not obtaining a teaching certificate have your own reasons for taking this course. I encourage you to consider how this course may influence your careers. For example, if you are interested in clinical work, how might client's memories impact the therapy process? Or, if you are interested in advertising, how might human memory influence consumer practices? Or, if you are interested in management, how might human memory influence how colleagues interact with one another?

B. Text

Galotti, K. M. (1994). Cognitive psychology in and out of the laboratory. Pacific Grove, CA: Wadsworth.

C. Your Rights and Responsibilities

1. Attend class, take notes (when appropriate), participate in in-class activities, participate in class discussions.
2. Read the texts and be prepared to discuss them in class.
3. Successfully complete the four exams.
4. Successfully complete a term paper.
5. You have the right to have ideas explained so that they make sense to you and the responsibility to speak up (either in class or out of class) when you do not understand.

6. You have the right to a fair* evaluation of what you have learned and the responsibility of learning the material. (*Note: "fair" does not necessarily mean "easy.")

7. You have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy by the instructor and other students and the responsibility to treat others (the instructor and your classmates) with respect and courtesy.

D. Statement about Writing Designated Classes

As well as providing knowledge within a specific discipline, this course is designed to nurture your skills in critical thinking and written expression. In this class, you will complete several writing assignments; your teacher will evaluate them according to how well you follow the six basic principles: Clarity, Purpose, Organization, Insight, Coherence, and Support. Your professor will expect your written work to use standard English as you learn the writing conventions of the discipline of which this course is a part. Your professor is part of an interdisciplinary writing project which follows standards for all writing-designated courses. If you have problems or questions, consult your professor as well as the Writing Center tutors who are trained to help you with your writing assignments in this course.

E. About Dr. Rewey

1. Contacting her:

a. In her office: Benedict 36 (go outside the classroom, 2nd door on the right)

b. By phone: at extension 2375. I have voice mail and if you leave a message I will get back to you as soon as possible. Be sure to leave an extension or phone number at which I can contact you!

c. By e-mail: at "rewey"

2. Office Hours:

My office hours for the semester are: MWF 1:00 - 2:00, T 2:15 - 3:00, and by appointment. If you do not see me at my desk make sure you look for me at the computer and in Fr. Vernon's inner office (I may be retrieving

something from the printer, scanning in some material for class or helping Fr. Vernon's office assistants with the computer). I often spend hours at the computer without sitting at my desk. If I am working on something, let me know that you are there (very often I don't hear people come into my office). And although I may be working on something during office hours, I expect to be interrupted.

Office hours are times when you can discuss difficult class material, your grade (in the course or on a particular assignment), questions from the quizzes / exams, problems you may be having in the class, or asking for help with the material or arranging a tutor. In general the sooner you come see me the more helpful I can be. If you come see me after the first exam to ask for help, I will probably be able to help you on the rest of the exams throughout the semester. However, if you come see me during finals week, my helpfulness is severely limited.

If for some reason my office hours are not convenient for you feel free to stop by my office anytime or make an appointment to see me. Be aware that if you "stop by" my office I may not be there or I may be working on something that cannot be interrupted.

3. Teaching Philosophy

As a learner and as a teacher I hold to the philosophy of connectionism and try to teach my courses based on that philosophy. Connectionism is the belief that learners must be active participants in the learning process. Research consistently shows that students learn more, perform better on tests, and remember more information when they are active learners compared to passive learners. In other words, notetakers remember more than non-notetakers, people who make outlines remember more than people who don't make outlines, and people who test their recall by writing summaries remember more than people who don't write summaries.

You should note that there is more than one way to be an active learner. Which method is best? The best methods for being an active learner are the following: thinking about the material; evaluating whether or not the material makes sense; anticipating test or quiz questions which might be asked of the material; quizzing each other over the material; writing summaries of the material; making up one's own examples of the material; and relating the material to one's self - making the information personal.

F. Course Policies

The following policies may at first seem extreme, but they are based on situations I have encountered with students in the past. In addition the policies are based upon discussions with other faculty and students to establish fair and reasonable guidelines in the classroom. My experience with teaching is that the situations described below do not come up often; in fact they are quite rare. And while I do not anticipate that you will find yourself in one of these situations, I prefer to have guidelines and policies laid down before the situation occurs for two reasons. First, making students aware of the guidelines ensures that all students will be treated equally and fairly should a situation occur. For example, if two students have excessive absences both students will know what to expect and both will know that I am not favoring one student over another. Second, making students aware of the guidelines can help to prevent unfortunate situations from occurring in the first place. For example, knowing that attendance is important to your grade will ensure that you attend class on a regular basis.

Please be aware that the guidelines are NOT negotiable nor will the guidelines change during the course of the semester. If you feel you cannot accept these guidelines feel free to drop the course now rather than find yourself in an unacceptable situation later in the semester. Let me assure you that if you drop the course I will not take it personally.

II. Academic Misconduct

Neither plagiarism nor cheating of any kind will be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as using another person's words, phrases, or ideas as your own without giving that person credit. Cheating includes (but is not restricted to):

- a) copying another student's test responses,
- b) falsely signing another student's name,
- c) having another student take an exam for you,
- d) having another student write a paper for you,
- e) telling other students any portion of the contents of an exam or quiz.

If you are found to be plagiarizing or cheating in any way, you may receive an F for the assignment, an F for the course, suspension or expulsion. If you have any questions about this policy or what constitutes academic misconduct, please see Dr. Rewey.

III. Attendance Policy

You are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings, to be on time for each session, to be prepared, and to stay for the entire period. Excessive or regular absences will lower your final grade. Generally two or three occasional (versus consecutive) unexcused absences will not hurt your grade. Four unexcused absences will lower your grade by at least a grade, and more than six absences will change your semester grade to an "F." You may find this policy extreme, however I believe it is reasonable. In the "real world" your employer would give you 5/6ths of a vacation day per month - I am giving you an entire vacation day per month (up to three absences for 15 weeks of classes), above and beyond the college-wide vacation days.

If you miss class for reasons of your own, it is your responsibility to get the notes and the assignments from other students. If you miss class (regardless of the reasons - job interview, meeting with your advisor, studying for a test, standing in line for registration, or a nice day), remember that it is your choice and your business. It is inappropriate for you to explain the excuse for your absence to me. It is also inappropriate to expect me to consider your reason for missing class as an exception for your class responsibilities.

If you play a varsity sport and your team schedule requires that you miss class, you will need to provide written documentation from your coach that you will be away from campus during our class. The note you bring should be dated and should say when and where your game is scheduled and what time you are leaving campus. For you to be excused from class you must notify me at least the day before you are scheduled to be absent. Notes brought to my office the day of class, notes sent to me through the mail, or given to me after the fact, and notes brought to class the day you are leaving will not excuse you from being in class (that is, you can leave, of course, but your absence will count towards those that can affect your grade).

If you must be absent from class for reasons beyond your control, such as a family emergency or a serious illness that requires your absence from campus, you should notify the Dean of Students, who will then notify your professors that your absence is legitimate. Absences excused in this manner will not lower your grade. However if you miss more than two classes because you are sick or with your family you should come and see me as soon as you get back to campus to make arrangements to make up the work you missed. Please be aware that going to the Health Center on campus does not excuse you from class. The Health Center is open all day and you can visit the nurse at times other than when class meets. However, if you go to the Health Center and your visit leads directly to your leaving campus that day, it will be covered by the excuse you get from the Dean of Students. The only excused absences will come from the Dean of Student's office or from a varsity coach.

IV. Coursework and Evaluations

A. Course Grade

Your grade in this course will be based on: readings from primary source psychology articles (200 points or 33.3% of final grade), four exams (200 points or 33.3% of final grade) and a term paper (200 points or 33.3% of final grade). The total points possible for this class will be 600.

Final grades in this course are based on the scale published in the SVC Bulletin (page 27). That scale is:

Points Earned	Percent	Letter Grade
600 - 558	100 - 93%	A
557.5 - 540	92 - 90%	A-
539.5 - 522	89 - 87%	B+
521.5 - 498	86 - 83%	B
497.5 - 480	82 - 80%	B-
479.5 - 462	79 - 77%	C+
461.5 - 438	76 - 73%	C
437.5 - 420	72 - 70%	C-
419.5 - 402	69 - 67%	D+
401.5 - 360	66 - 60%	D
359.5 and lower	59% and below	F

B.Course Evaluations

1.Readings of Primary Journal Articles:

During the semester you will read 10 articles from psychological journals within the area of cognitive psychology. You will read each article and answer a series of questions pertaining to the article. Anticipate that I will hand out an article on the day we begin a new chapter and you will have one week to complete the assignment.

2.Exams

There will be four 50-point exams during the semester. None of the exams will be cumulative and will only cover material which has not been examined before. All of the exams will be essay exams. Don't panic. Approximately two weeks prior to the exam you will receive a list of potential exam questions. During the week prior to the exam you will be able to formulate your responses to all essay questions. At exam time I will choose a limited number (probably 2-4) essay questions which you will answer. In summary, it's an essay exam but you know all of the potential questions in advance, you have time to prepare your responses in advance, and you won't be asked to answer all of the essay questions, just some of them. One note, however: The exams will be closed book. While you will be able to prepare your essay answers in advance you will not be allowed to bring notes to complete the exam.

3.Term Paper - see the handout for a fuller description of the term paper and the requirements.

V.Schedule

A.Chapters to cover

This semester we will be using Galotti's text for the third time. I would like to cover the 12 chapters in the order listed below. We have 37 class periods (41 class days - 1st day - 3 classes for exams = 37 class periods) Therefore, we should be completing a chapter in 2-3 class periods.

Date(s)	Topic
8/24 to 9/14	Chap. 1: Traditions within cognitive psychology
	Chap. 2: Perception and pattern recognition
	Chap. 3: Attention and automaticity

9/16 Exam 1 (anticipate receiving questions on 9/2)

9/18 to 10/7 Chap. 4: Memory
 Chap. 5: Knowledge representation
 Chap. 7: Visual imagery

10/9 Exam 2 (anticipate receiving questions on 9/25)
Note: Exam 2 occurs on the last day before October Break

10/14 to 11/2 Chap. 8: Language
 Chap. 9: Thinking and problem solving
 Chap. 12: Cognitive development through adolescence

11/4 Exam 3 (anticipate receiving questions on 10/21)

11/6 to 12/4 Chap. 13: Individual and gender differences in
cognition
 Chap. 14: Cognition in cross-cultural perspective
 Additional material???

12/8 Exam 4 during regularly scheduled final exam time, 11:00 - 1:00
(anticipate receiving questions on 11/23)

B. Additional Dates

Friday, October 16	Term paper draft due
Friday, November 6	Goal: papers returned to students
Friday, December 4	Re-writes of term papers due (note: re-write is optional!)