Ps242 Cognitive Psychology

Tues & Thurs from 2:20 to 4:00 PM in beautiful PHHS 150 (& 137)

Professor: Brenda Yang, byang3@elon.edu

Course Description

How does the mind work? In this course, we'll tackle this question – one of the most ambitious undertakings in all of science.

On its own, your brain is blind, deaf, and numb; in reality, your senses are bombarded with information. In our first module (Methods, Brain, Perception, & Attention), we will examine how you construct the world you see and feel around you.

Even though you have immediate access to only now, your mind can relive past events (e.g., the last time you had pizza), imagine what could happen in the future (e.g., how it will feel to walk across the stage at graduation), and conjure scenarios that are fully impossible (e.g., riding a flying hippogriff). In our second module (Memory & Visual Imagery), we will consider how the mind processes and stores information.

In our third module, we’ll apply our theories and skills to understanding still more complex feats of the human mind, such as language and decision-making. Through the course, you will explore a recent cognitive science finding of your own choice, evaluate the evidence presented, and communicate the core of those new findings in a format suitable for a general audience.

Expect class meetings to be active and designed to help you construct your own knowledge about how cognitive psychology works. In any given class, you’ll experience involve interactive lectures, frequent small-group discussions, in-class demonstrations of psychological phenomena, short ideas, whole-class discussions, and more.

Your performance in this class will be determined by: (1) your ability to identify and apply rigorous concepts in cognitive psychology, as assessed by our exams, (2) your understanding of the methods of experimental psychology, as assessed with CogLab write-ups, and (3) the clarity with which you can explain scientific findings to a general audience, as assessed by your Science Communication Project.

Introduction to Psychology (Psy111) is a pre-requisite.

What will you learn?

Course Learning Outcomes

- Identify and explain cognitive phenomena using an information-processing framework
- Distinguish between key theories of perception, attention, memory, visual imagery, language, and decision-making
- Explain and critically evaluate empirical research methods of cognitive psychology
- Clearly and engagingly communicate cognitive psychology or cognitive neuroscience research to a general audience

1 Icons in this syllabus are from thenounproject.com
Who teaches Psy242-C?

It’s my sincere pleasure to be your Psy242 instructor this fall.

Professor: Brenda Yang
Please call me: Prof. Yang, Professor (pronouns: she/her)
How do you pronounce that? Like the English word young but rhyming with fang is also fine
Email: byang3@elon.edu – expect a response within 32 business hours

About me: When I’m not teaching this course, I am a full-time PhD student studying cognitive psychology at Duke University. That means that I spend much of my time thinking about psychology, designing psychology experiments, analyzing data, and sharing those results with my field. My research interests center on memory, but I have many: ask me about them!

It’s been my dream to teach this course at a school like Elon for a long time. I look forward to sharing the world of cognitive psychology during our time together. For fun, I like to: create very specific Spotify playlists (e.g., “Yogurtland at night”), add to my Office trivia question spreadsheet on the 20+ watch through, dangle things in front of my cats, boulder, and more.

Make my day: come see me at office hours!
- Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4 – 5 pm; by appointment
- Psychology 125-L

What you will do in this course

This course consists of 7 elements: (1) class meetings, (2) weekly online quizzes and reflections, (3) course texts and media, (4) CogLab write-ups, (5) the Science Communication Project, (6) occasional surveys, and (7) exams.

1. Class meetings

Please arrive no later than 2:20 pm and stay until 4:00 pm.

Regular attendance in class is essential for your ability to be successful. This is especially true because we do not have a required textbook. That means the class time is the primary way we’ll be learning together, making it harder for you to make-up missed content.

If you anticipate that coming to class regularly will be a difficulty for you, I ask that you don’t take this course this semester. I would be happy to help you brainstorm alternative strategies to learn more about the wonderful world of cognitive psychology.

While attendance is necessary, my expectations for you are significantly higher. Points for engagement and collaboration relate to the extent you are actively supporting your learning and the learning of others, above and beyond your corporeal presence.
2. Weekly online quizzes & reflections
You will have an opportunity to practice engaging with course concepts frequently. A quiz will be posted on Moodle after class on Thursdays (~4:30 pm). It is due the following Monday at 9 pm. Quizzes include a short set of questions similar to what you will find on exams and reflection question(s).

There will be 8 quizzes over the semester, but only your 6 highest quiz scores will be included in your grade.

You can use your notes, books, and materials for the quiz. However, it may not be taken in collaboration with other students. You may attempt each quiz up to 3 times; your highest score is the only one that will count.

During exam weeks, I may release brief ungraded quizzes to help you study. Due to the short turnaround on these exam week quizzes, they will be ungraded, and you may collaborate with classmates if you wish.

Each quiz is worth 10 class points, out of 1000 possible course points. In other words, they aren’t worth very much. The main purpose of them is to help you succeed by:

- Encouraging you to review the material often
- Provide you with timely feedback on how well you’re learning class concepts
- Give you an early and ongoing sense of what exam questions will be like

What materials do you need to buy for Psy242-C?
There is not a required textbook for this course. To support your learning, I recommend Cognitive Psychology, 4th Edition by Goldstein. You may find the textbook helpful for explaining key concepts to supplement class material. However, content covered only on the textbook will not be assessed.

CogLab 5 Access (https://www.cengage.com/shop/isbn/9781285461083; ISBN: 781285461137) is required. This is not a textbook, but an online laboratory. CogLab is a critical component of our laboratory exercises and write-ups.

You will also need access to How We Learn by Benedict Carey OR Moonwalking with Einstein by Joshua Foer. The specific edition is not important, and a library or borrowed copy is perfectly fine.

is required ($50)

or

is required ($0 - $15)

You also will have extra credit opportunities related to reading additional books relating psychological concepts to a general audience and viewing popular shows/film. To access these, you may need to borrow or buy additional books/access to media or streaming services.
3. Course texts and media
In addition to How We Learn or Moonwalking With Einstein, you will be assigned a variety of no-cost course materials found on the web or on Moodle. These include:

- Excerpts from secondary sources, such as textbooks and academic books
- Peer-reviewed journal articles
- Episodes of podcasts and radio shows
- Links to short videos or documentaries

Each one of these readings was hand-picked to communicate key course concepts, apply ideas from the course, and extend your learning. You will see material from course materials reflected in quizzes and exams.

4. CogLab write-ups
Hearing and reading about experiments is one thing; experiencing them is quite another. We’ll enrich our understanding of the empirical work of cognitive psychology by participating in key experiments.

The goal of these assignments is to encourage you to discuss these experiments and to think about how such research evidence relates to concepts discussed in the course.

In order to complete laboratory write-ups for full credit, you must successfully complete the computer laboratory exercises during our lab/class time.

⚠️ For each lab not completed during our regular class time, lab write-ups will be worth a maximum of half credit.

5. Science Communication Project (SciCommProj)
The Science Communication Project is designed to help you learn to discuss about what you are learning with friends and loved ones, and to consume media summaries of psychological research with a critical eye.

The SciCommProj is divided into 3 parts that build your skills in evaluating and creating science communication. In Part 1, you’ll consume and examine examples of science communication. In Part 2, you’ll develop a pitch appropriate for The Pendulum, Elon’s campus newspaper. In Part 3, you’ll produce multiple drafts of your piece, give and respond to feedback, and submit a final draft.

You will hear more about the details of this project in subsequent classes and in a separate handout. It is worth 200 points (20% of the course grade).

6. Surveys
I’ll send out 4 surveys throughout the semester. They don’t test your knowledge of cognitive psychology, and you’ll get full credit for completing them in good faith. They help me to:

- Learn about you as a scholar and a human
- Gather information about you relevant to pedagogy & instruction

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² Handouts for the SciCommProj can be found here: https://sites.google.com/view/brendayang-teaching/psy242/scicommproj?authuser=0
• Solicit feedback from you early and often about our classroom instruction and community
• Collect collective information about our class (e.g., favorite study habits) that we can use to analyze and think through course concepts

7. Exams: midterms and a final
There are 3 exams throughout the semester and 1 cumulative final exam, covering content from class and readings. Your lowest midterm score will be dropped. Midterm dates are subject to change.

The cumulative final takes place during the scheduled final exam period. This date is absolutely firm. The final exam grade is required i.e., it cannot be dropped if it happens to be the lowest exam grade.

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<th>Exam #1</th>
<th>Exam #2</th>
<th>Exam #3</th>
<th>Final</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, September 24</td>
<td>Thursday, October 31</td>
<td>Tuesday, December 5</td>
<td>Friday, December 13</td>
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The final exam date and time is determined by the university. Be sure to tell your parents and friends, and do not schedule your plane, bus, or ride home before the afternoon of Friday, December 13.

There will be no make-up exams.
Your lowest midterm exam grade will be dropped. If you must miss an exam due to an emergency, that 0 will be your dropped exam.

What will exams be like?
Exams will contain multiple-choice questions, and may contain short answers, essays, and matching items. Reviewing weekly quizzes is the best way to get a sense of the kinds of questions that will be asked on exams.

Grading Breakdown
The total possible number of course points possible is 1,000. They are distributed as follows:
Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale based on total accumulated points:

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<td>C+</td>
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<td>830 - 869</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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**Engagement score break-down**

**Weekly quizzes (6 x 10 points)**
- Weekly quizzes due on Mondays: 60 points
- You can use anything to help you EXCEPT other people
- 3 tries per quiz
- Bottom 2 quizzes dropped

**Surveys (4 x 5 points)**
- 4 throughout the semester: 20 points
- Help me to personalize instruction
- Collect feedback from you

**Engagement & Collaboration**
- The extent you are actively contributing to your learning and the learning of others: 20 points
- You need to physically attend class, at minimum, in order to engage and collaborate

**100 points total**

**What does “Engagement & Collaboration” look like?**

Wherever your future takes you, you will need to engage and collaborate with other human beings. This score reflects the extent you contribute to the learning of the whole-class community.

An exceptionally engaged and collaborative student:

Engages in small group discussions, enhancing the depth and rigor of the conversation

Helps clarify their own understanding of course content, and helps others learn, too

Contributes insights to whole group discussions and/or amplifies the insights of others

I will base this score on observational data, but this score is subjective by nature. You will receive qualitative mid-semester feedback on your engagement & collaboration score.
Core values

No instructor is neutral to what they value in their classroom, the students they meet, and themselves. However, we often hide these values from you, such that if you wanted to know what I value, you would need to play a guessing game.

Here are 4 values that I value and that I aim to embodereasevidence relates to concepts discussed without your input; it is my intention to leave enough ambiguity that we can interpret them together as the semester goes on.

- curiosity
- community
- ingenuity
- transparency

Checklist for success in Psy242

**Before class**
- Turn in weekly quiz by Monday at 9 PM
- Read or listen to relevant course material
- Check Moodle to make sure you are caught up

**During class**
- Plan to arrive a little before 2:20 PM
- Put your phone on “Do Not Disturb” mode and keep in your bag
- Take notes focused on the concepts discussed in class
- Contribute actively to your own learning and the learning of others

**After class**
- Put anything that was assigned to you onto your planner or calendar
- Review slides and resources from class. Make a note of anything that was unclear to ask during class or office hours
- Review and self-test material from class within 24 hours of class
- Consider stopping by office hours
- Look ahead for CogLab or SciCommProj deadlines
- Make regular, consistent progress on parts of your SciCommProj
Course Policies

Updated! Laptops and Classroom Technology

On day 2 of class, we generated possibilities for laptop policies and discussed advantages and disadvantages of each policy. As a class, we agreed on a “You do you” policy as parsimonious guideline that respects the diverse learning needs of every student. When using policies in the classroom, keep your learning and the learning of others in mind. I encourage you to put laptops— if they’re not being used— aside in discussion-heavy activities.

Outside of specific class activities, keep cell phones out of sight (yes to in your bag or pocket; no to face down on your table or your lap) and silent. If you are expecting an important message during class that requires you to check your phone, speak to me. Feel free to step out for brief breaks to check texts, emails, and the like.

To complete class assignments on your own time, you will need access to a personal computing device, such as a laptop. If access to technology is a hardship, please reach out and you will be supported confidentially.

Tech Considerations

- Research suggests that taking notes by hand is more likely to result in deeper conceptual understanding of the material.
- Our attention is captured by movement. If you are using a laptop, keep in mind where you are sitting to minimize distractions to others.
- The temptation to multi-task is strong, and will only get stronger as the semester goes on. People with strong self-control don’t have more willpower; they put themselves situations that encourage success. If you use a laptop, help yourself out: turn on airplane mode or restrict non-academic websites & apps (e.g. Pomodoro app on Chrome).

Technology in the Classroom

We will have the opportunity to learn about potential influences of technology on our psychology. We will determine as a class whether to allow laptops during the lecture portions of our class meetings, and if so, what guidelines we should have.

Outside of specific class activities, keep cell phones out of sight (yes to in your bag or pocket; no to face down on your table or your lap) and silent. If you are expecting an important message during class that requires you to check your phone, speak to me. Feel free to step out for brief breaks to check texts, emails, and the like.

To complete class assignments on your own time, you will need access to a personal computing device, such as a laptop, for accessing class readings, listening to podcasts, submitting class assignments, and completing projects. If access to technology is a hardship, please reach out and you will be supported confidentially.

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3 This is what the laptop policy looked like starting from the second week of the semester.
4 Educator: This is what this section of the syllabus looked like at the beginning of the semester. The question of banning technology in college classrooms is a perfect opportunity for students to dive into empirical cognitive psychology and how it applies to classrooms. My first pedagogical goal is to demonstrate the type of evidence-based thinking we will be doing for the rest of the course. My second intention is for students to think through the nuances of this policy: What about “secondhand laptop use”? Outing students with SDAO accommodations? How strong is the “anti-laptop” research, really? How should one weigh personal experience against empirical evidence? This sets the stage for intentional use of technology for the rest of the semester (with some reminders, as needed). My goal is not for students to elect a blank laptop ban for themselves (unlikely), but to spur rigorous discussion and reflection.
Life Happens
$&*$ happens. You have a one-time, no-questions-asked extension on any non-exam assignment. To evoke this:

1. Email me (byang3@duke.edu) with the subject line, “Life Happens’ request for extension” as soon as you can.
2. You can provide any level of explanation you feel comfortable with, including none at all.
3. Tell me the assignment you’d like an extension for.
4. Propose a new deadline (date and time) that will allow the opportunity to succeed on this assignment, up to 7 days past the original deadline.
5. Please wait for a confirmation from me to finalize the extension.

Leave at least 24 hours before the deadline to use the “Life Happens” policy.

Sample email:

Date: October 10, 2019
To: byang3@elon.edu
Subject: “Life Happens” request for extension

Professor Yang –
I’d like to use my “life happens” policy for Science Communication Project, Part 2, as I have unavoidable family concerns that have come up.

Could I extend the deadline from October 15 until 5 PM on October 20th? I know that with the extra 5 days, I will be able to submit my best work.

Thank you for considering!

Warmly,

Philippa Phoenix

Sending your instructor an email
In general, I encourage you to practice professional email etiquette when contacting me and your fellow students. For informal advice on writing to me and other faculty members, consider this Medium post or this sample email for inquiring about research opportunities.

Did you include a relevant subject line?

Did you include a respectful address, such as, “Hello Professor Yang—“

Did you communicate your request/note clearly and in complete sentences?

Did you close with your name, such as, “Thank you for considering, [your name]?”
Exam Re-Grades
Short answer responses with graded rubrics and multiple-choice exams will be available for review following the exams and during office hours. While I take care to score your exams fairly, you may encounter reason to submit your exam for a re-grade. Your re-grade request should be submitted no later than 3 days after you review your exam. The results of the re-grade request are final, and may result in a higher or lower score.

Moodle
You should make a point of visiting the Moodle site 2 – 3 times each week during our course. You will find copies of the PowerPoint slides from class, important announcements, and extra resources.

Affordability of Course Materials
I am committed to ensuring that this course is financially accessible to all students. Please reach out if you have concerns about the affordability of materials, and we will figure something out.

Commitment to Diversity and Equity
Our classroom does not exist in a vacuum: historical and systemic forces powerfully shape our beliefs, interactions with each other, and even the content of the course. It is my intent that students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives be served by this course, that students’ needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that diversity be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my goal to present materials and activities celebratory of diversity in multiple forms, including: gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, culture, disability, age, veteran status, socioeconomic status. I will encourage us as a community of learners to operate from a place of cultural humility. Your suggestions are welcomed.

Academic Accommodations
I am committed to ensuring that students have every opportunity to succeed in our course. If you need accommodations to succeed to your full potential, please register with Disabilities Resources: https://elon-accommodate.simplicity.com/public_accommodation. You may reach out to Disabilities Resources for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs.

Disability Resources is located in the Koenigsberger Learning Center (Belk Library 226; (336) 278-6568). For more information about Disabilities Resources, visit: https://www.elon.edu/u/academics/koenigsberger-learning-center/disabilities-resources.

Elon Honor Code
Elon’s honor pledge calls for a commitment to Elon’s shared values of Honesty, Integrity, Responsibility, and Respect. To be clear about what constitutes violations of these values, students should be familiar with code of conduct policies described in the student handbook.

Students with questions about the specific interpretation of these values and violations as they relate to this course should contact me. Violations in academic-related areas will be documented in an incident report which will be maintained in the Office of Student Conduct, and may result in a lowering of the course grade and/or failure of the course with an Honor Code F.

Violations specifically covered by academic honor code policies include: plagiarism, cheating, lying, stealing, and the facilitation of another’s dishonesty. Multiple violations may result in a student’s suspension from the University.

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5 Adapted from https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/statement
**Academic Integrity at Elon and Within the Discipline**

As a baseline, you are expected to adhere to Elon’s Honor Code (above) and are responsible for understanding the University rules regarding academic integrity.

In addition to the Elon Honor Code, you are also expected to adhere to the principles of ethical scholarship that form the basis of the field of psychology. Scientists rely on community accountability to advance knowledge about psychological phenomena. The principles of the field of psychology are incorporated into specific policies for academic integrity with regard to assessment integrity, collaboration on the Science Communication project, correct citation procedures, and regrade requests.

**Add/Drop**

You can drop this course (no hard feelings!) during the drop/add period through OnTrack. It won’t appear on your transcript or grade report.

After drop/add, you can withdraw before the course withdrawal deadline via OnTrack, resulting in a “W” on your academic transcript. If you do not officially withdraw from the course using OnTrack (but thought you did), you will receive an F. You can’t withdraw after the withdrawal deadline, unless the dean’s office grants you an exception.

**Religious Holidays**

In supporting religious diversity, Elon has a policy and procedures for students who wish to observe religious holidays that are in conflict with the academic calendar, allowing students an excused absence. Students who wish to observe a holiday during the semester must complete the online Religious Observance Notification Form (RONF) by September 10, 2019.

http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/religious_life/ReligiousHolidays.xhtml

This policy does not apply during the final examination period. Students are required to make prior arrangements with the instructor for completion of any work missed during the absence. Once the completed RONF is received, the Truitt Center will send an e-mail to the instructor and the student that a RONF has been submitted. Students may contact the Truitt Center staff with any questions (336-278-7729).
Resources
Successful people access support when needed. Here are some great ones available to you.

Belk Library
The librarians in Belk Library can help you find appropriate resources for your assignments. You can schedule an appointment to meet with a librarian: https://elon.libcal.com/appointments or chat with a librarian on the library website: https://www.elon.edu/library.

Writing Center
Elon’s Writing Center in the Center for Writing Excellence is staffed by trained peer-consultants who can help you with all of your writing projects (for any class or major and for any extracurricular, personal, or professional purposes), so take advantage of this excellent academic resource and include a visit to our Writing Center as part of your writing process. http://www.elon.edu/cwe

In one-to-one sessions of up to 45 minutes, Writing Center consultants will work with you on any kind of writing (such as research or analysis papers, PowerPoint or poster presentations, resumes, or job applications) at any stage of the writing process (such as understanding an assignment; brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing; developing a research question or starting your research; or writing in-text citations and bibliographies/works cited).

We have two multimedia production studios so you can create and work with a consultant on your multimedia and visual texts (such as PowerPoint or Prezi presentations, videos, or websites). Visit our presentation practice room where you can easily record and critique yourself giving a presentation and get feedback from a consultant on your accompanying visuals.

The main Writing Center, located in Belk Library, is open extensive hours:

- M-Th 10am-10pm
- Fri 10am-4pm
- Sun 2pm-10pm

The Writing Center also staffs satellite Writing Centers in CREDE and in the Business School (see The Writing Center website for more details). If you have questions, please contact The Writing Center Director, Dr. Julia Bleakney, at jbleakney@elon.edu or X5642

Elon Learning Assistance
Located in the Koenigsberger Learning Center (KLC), Learning Assistance offers currently enrolled students walk-in and by-appointment peer tutoring and study skills tutoring as well as academic success consultations. Visit the Learning Assistance website for hours and instructions on how to schedule an appointment. If you have questions, please contact the Director of Learning Assistance, Dr. James Holsinger, at jholsinger@elon.edu or X6500
Design Thinking
The Center for Design Thinking invites you to join us this semester to:

— experiment with design methods and develop design thinking skills
— develop a group project with a team
— learn ways to use design thinking for learning, working and living well
— participate in design thinking workshops, activities and events
— explore new ways to listen, make and lead like a designer
— do those things we haven’t discovered students need or want

The Center for Design Thinking is a resource supporting all Elon students. Walk-in hours are M–Th from 2–5 p.m. If you have questions or want to schedule conversation or event, please contact the Center for Design Thinking — elonbydesign@elon.edu

Supporting fellow students in distress
As members of the Elon community, we each share a personal responsibility to express concern for one another and to ensure that this classroom and the campus as a whole remains a healthy environment for learning. Occasionally, you may become worried or concerned about a fellow classmate’s well-being. When this is the case, I would encourage you to share these concerns with me or to Elon’s Student Care and Outreach program (https://www.elon.edu/ShareYouCare). Although you can report anonymously, it is preferred that you share your contact information so they can follow up with you personally.
# Semester Overview (last updated Aug 31)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<th>Assigned materials</th>
<th>Supplemental materials</th>
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<td>Quiz #6 on Mon @ 9pm</td>
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<td>Goldstein Chapter 8</td>
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