PSYC 317
Sensation & Perception
Fall 2017
last updated 6/21/2017

Section 001: 9am- 10:15am Mondays & Wednesdays

Location: Merten Hall 1200

Instructor: Dr. Matt Peterson

Office: 2058 David King Hall
Ph: 993-4255
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Office Hours: *12:30-1:20 Tuesdays (tentative)* or by appointment.
I fully encourage you to contact me by email if you have any questions about the class.

Text: Cognitive Psychology: Connecting Mind, Research and Everyday Experience, **4th** Edition, E. Bruce Goldstein, Wadsworth Publishing, ISBN-13: **1285763880** **(You only need the text, not CogLab or other add-ons)**

Prerequisites: 6 hours of psychology or consent of instructor.

What is Cognitive Psychology? Cognitive Psychology is the study of how people think. It is the study of how your visual system recognizes patterns as text, how your brain interprets those patterns as words, and how your mind combines those words into sentences and extracts their meaning from memory, all the while you ignore the mp3 playing in the background. It is the study of decision making, whether the task is to decide which new car to buy, or how best to defeat an opponent at chess. In short, Cognitive Psychology attempts to understand the underlying computations that produce thinking.

Cognitive Psychology is a subset of *Cognitive Science*. The Cognitive Sciences include such disciplines as Psychology, Artificial Intelligence, Linguistics, Philosophy, Neuroscience and Anthropology. For this course, we will be focusing on human cognition. Since cognition is ultimately a function of the underlying neurological architecture, we will also discuss relevant findings in neuroscience.

The course as a "LEARNING COMMUNITY"
This course is an opportunity for us to establish a genuine learning community where both faculty and students learn from each other's knowledge and experience. Such communities imply a "social contract" between faculty and students. My view of this contract is as follows:

WHAT I OWE THE CLASS
- I promise to treat you with respect, carefully listening to your questions and comments
- I promise to come to class prepared, provide structure to the course and convey a willingness to work with you in helping you master the material
- I promise to develop tests that are fair (not necessarily "easy"!) and that reflect the material covered in class.

• I promise to try to relate the material to your own experience

WHAT THE CLASS OWES EACH OTHER AND THEMSELVES
• To treat the instructor and each other with respect
• To come to class prepared to discuss/reflect on the material
• Stay current in the readings
• To extend reasonable effort to learn the material
• Turn in assignments on time
• Regularly access the courses web page (but don't let downloading the slides substitute for attending class!)

Official Communications via GMU E-mail: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices form the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. I will communicate only through GMU email accounts.

Technology Requirement Students are expected to be competent in word processing skills, Internet use, compiling of bibliographies, literature review searches, and downloading pictorial material from computers.

Attendance Policy: I expect (barring unforeseen circumstances) to see you in class each week. Keep in mind that many of the topics discussed in class are not discussed (or at least not in as much detail) in your textbook. Although I occasionally put some lecture notes on the web, they will not be complete and will not match the presentation given in class. If you miss a class, it is up to you to learn the missed information. NO CELL PHONES.

Cancellation Policy: This course follows GMU cancellation policy for inclement weather, and GMU will send an alert to your GMU email account and/or cell phone if any of their facilities are closing for inclement weather. If *I* need to cancel a class meeting, I will email the class about the cancellation.

GMU Honor Code: George Mason University has a code of Honor that each of you accepst by enrolling as a student. My expectation is that all of the work you do for me in this class will be the work of one individual. **Plagiarism or any other violation of the honor code will be taken very seriously and reported to the Honor Committee**. Having said that, I fully encourage you to discuss the readings and topics raised in this class with your fellow students.

Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office."

A+	97+			
A	93-96	**Grading**	Attendance	3
A-	90-92		Exams (4)	98
B+	87-89			101 points total
B	83-86			
B-	80-82			
C+	77-79			
C	73-76			
C-	70-72			

D 60-69
F 0-59

Exams (98%): There will be 4 exams, consisting of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and/or short answers. Your exam with the lowest score will be dropped, and your overall test grade will be calculated based on the remaining 3. That is, your top 3 exams will be weighed 32 $^2/_3$% points each (3 x 32 $^2/_3$% = 98%) and your worst will have a weight of 0%. Note that the 4th exam is mandatory. If you decide not to take the 4th exam, your final exam grade will be based on all 4 exam scores (including the zero for the 4th exam!) so that each one is weighed 24.5% (4 x 24.5% = 98%). The 4th exam can still be dropped if you took the 4th exam and it is your lowest grade. If you miss more than one exam (or the 4th exam), then that exam can only be made up if you receive my permission before the day of the exam or (b) have a valid excuse (note from a doctor, judge, commanding officer, etc.).

Attendance: 3% of your grade will be based on attendance, as I expect you to come to class. I *will* randomly sample throughout the semester without notice.

Calendar:

Note: The schedule below is tentative, and though I will try to follow it as closely as possible changes may occasionally be necessary. In the event that an exam date is changed, you will be notified at least one week in advance.

Note that September 5th is the last day to add this class and September 29th is the last day to drop this class.

Date	Day	Chapter	Topic
28-Aug	Mon	1	intro+ neuro
30-Aug	Wed	2	cogneuro
4-Sep	Mon	**No Class**	Labor Day
6-Sep	Wed	3	Perception
11-Sep	Mon	3	Perception
13-Sep	Wed	4	Attention
18-Sep	Mon	4	Attention
20-Sep	Wed	-	Attention / review
25-Sep	Mon	Exam 1	
27-Sep	Wed	5	Working Memory
2-Oct	Mon	5	Working Memory
4-Oct	Wed	6	LTM: structure
9-Oct	Mon	**No Class**	Leif Erickson/Columbus Day
10-Oct	Tuesday	6	LTM: structure
11-Oct	Wed	7	LTM: encoding and retrieval
16-Oct	Mon	-	LTM / review
18-Oct	Wed	Exam 2	
23-Oct	Mon	8	Everyday Memory
25-Oct	Wed	8/9	Using Knowledge

30-Oct	Mon	9	Using Knowledge
1-Nov	Wed	9/10	Imagery
6-Nov	Mon	10	Imagery
8-Nov	Wed	-	Imagery / review
13-Nov	Mon	Exam 3	
15-Nov	Wed	11	Language
20-Nov	Mon	11	Language
22-Nov	Wed	**No Class**	**Thanksgiving**
27-Nov	Mon	12	Decision Making
29-Nov	Wed	12	Decision Making
4-Dec	Mon	13	Problem Solving
6-Dec	Wed	13	Problem Solving
11-Dec	Mon	-	review
18-Dec	Monday	Exam 4	7:30 to 10:15 am (we can negotiate a new time).