**Cognitive Psychology**

**Course #: Psychology 317**

**Spring 2021**

Instructor: Yi-Ching Lee Class Time: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30-2:45 PM **Hybrid**

Office: David King Hall 2060 Class Location: Enterprise Hall, room 173

Email: ylee65@gmu.edu Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:00-10:30 AM or by appt

(include Psy317 in the subject line when emailing me)

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. I will use the Mason e-mail and Blackboard for class announcements, cancelation, reading assignments, and lecture slides. You are responsible for the content of university communication sent to your Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

**Last Day to Add: Feb. 1; Last Day to Drop: Feb. 12 (with Tuition Penalty Feb. 16); Selective Withdrawal Period: Mar. 2 – Apr. 1**

This is a **hybrid** class, meaning that we will have in-person instruction and synchronous live-streaming via Blackboard at the same time during each class. It is extremely important for everyone to monitor your health and safety, especially when you are attending the class in-person. You will --

* Wear face masks on campus and in the classroom
* Stay six feet apart, including entering and exiting classroom
* Complete the Mason Daily COVID Health Check
* Wash hands frequently or use hand sanitizer
* Stay home and attend class via Blackboard when feeling unwell

If you sign up for 317-006, you will attend class in-person on Wednesdays and attend class via Blackboard live-streaming on Mondays.

If you sign up for 317-007, you will attend class in-person on Mondays and attend class via Blackboard live-streaming on Wednesdays.

Please consult the university’s Safe Return to Campus website for more details on our safety plan: <https://www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>

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1. **Course Description and Objectives**

This course is a deep-dive into the study of cognition, including contemporary concepts and theories. Cognitive Psychology is concerned with the scientific study of the *mind*. Topics to be covered include perception, attention, imagery, memory, language, problem solving and decision-making. For each topic, the evidence will be considered in the context of longstanding discoveries and theory. Although the focus will be primarily on understanding cognition as it relates to behavior, brain mechanisms and computational approaches will also be considered. The focus of the lectures and activities will primarily be on theories and concepts, and course discussions will be driven by differing conceptualizations of the theory and research applications.

# Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you will be able to:

* Explain the core concepts of cognitive psychology
* Describe fundamental concepts related to human cognitive capabilities and limitations
* Apply concepts related to human cognitive capabilities and limitations and analyze questions in discussion posts and class activities
* Integrate methods and concepts related to cognition while evaluating relationships between behaviors and cognition
* Research ideas and library resources and write a scientific paper
1. **Blackboard Login Instructions**

Access to [MyMason](http://mymason.gmu.edu) and GMU email are required to participate successfully in this course. Please make sure to update your computer and prepare yourself to begin using the online format BEFORE the first day of class. Check [the IT Support Center](http://itservices.gmu.edu/) website. Navigate to [the Student Support page](https://coursessupport.gmu.edu/Students/) for help and information about Blackboard. In the menu bar to the left you will find all the tools you need to become familiar with for this course. Take time to learn each. Make sure you run a system check a few days before class. Become familiar with the attributes of Blackboard and online learning.

1. **Course Structure and Reading Assignments**

It is essential that you complete the required readings. YOU WILL BE READING THE ENTIRE BOOK IN 15 WEEKS. If you do not have time to do the readings it is unlikely that you will perform well in this class. A reading schedule can be found in the general course schedule below.

**Required Text:** Bruce E. Goldstein *Cognitive psychology : Connecting mind, research and everyday experience. (5th edition),* New York : Cengage learning. Earlier edition is fine, too.

You need to complete the assigned readings and the assignments by the due dates. During class, you need to be prepared to answer questions and participate in activities and discussion with peers.

# Technology Requirements

**Hardware:** You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and access to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required taking a distance education course, consider and allow for:

1. the storage amount needed to install any additional software and
2. space to store work that you will do for the course.

If you consider the purchase of a new computer, please go to [Patriot](https://patriottech.gmu.edu/get-started/) Tech to see recommendations.

**Software:** Many courses use Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the [myMason Portal](http://mymason.gmu.edu). See [supported browsers and operating systems](https://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1_SP_10_and_SP_11/Student/002_Browser_Support_SP_11). Log in to [myMason](http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/) to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use [Acrobat Reader](http://get.adobe.com/reader/), [Flash](http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/), [Java](http://www.java.com/en/download/), and [Windows Media Player](http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/products/windows-media-player), [QuickTime](http://support.apple.com/downloads/#quicktime) and/or [Real Media Player](http://www.real.com/realplayer/search). Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Anti-Virus software for free [here](http://antivirus.gmu.edu/).

Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch [this video](https://youtu.be/Hmm9Q-T0oTo) about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

# Course Policies

No extra credit will be given in this course. Points will be updated on Blackboard regularly.

Late Assignments: All assignments must be turned in by 11:59 PM EST on the due date given on the schedule.

**Instructor-Student Communication:** I will respond to your emails within 48 hours. If I will be away from email for more than one day, I will post an announcement in the Blackboard course folder. Before sending an email, please check the following (available on your Blackboard course menu) unless the email is of a personal nature:

1. Syllabus
2. Ask Professor
3. On-demand Blackboard videos on how to use Blackboard features, and Technical Requirements.

Feel free to respond to other students in the Ask Professor forum if you know the answer.

**Technology:** You will need a reliable computer and internet access to view course materials in Blackboard.

1. **Course Assignments and Grading**
2. Chapter quizzes. They are open note/open book and need to be completed each week by 11:59PM on Wednesdays. They are to ensure that you have read (not skimmed) chapter content. You need to complete 10 chapter quizzes. Each quiz is worth 10 points and may take 30 minutes to complete.
3. Discussion posts. You will be responsible for posting 3 original comments and replying to 5 comments posted by your classmates throughout the semester. These posts may be the results of in-class activity/discussion or questions raised by me. Posts must reflect your own thinking and be relevant to the topic. The original posts that are thoughtful and relevant will receive full credit, whereas original posts that are lacking in both of these will be scored a 0. Replies must extend the thoughts expressed in the original post – they cannot be simple restatements or statements of agreement or disagreement (such replies will be scored a 0). You should aim for having about 200 words for original posts and about 100 words for replies. Each post is worth 10 points and may take 1-3 hours to compose.
4. Exam. There will be one exam that takes place about 2/3 into the semester. It will be open note/open book and needs to be completed between March 31 and April 5 via Blackboard. It will be cumulative and can take the formats of short essay, multiple choice, and others. This exam is worth 100 points.
5. Paper. You will choose a topic and write up a scientific research paper. More details and grading rubrics will be provided. The paper is worth 100 points.
6. Activity. Throughout the semester, we will have 10 in-class activities where you will work on challenges individually or with a group. Each completion of the activity is worth 2 points.

Note: The grade for an unexcused missed exam will be a 0. Makeup exams will be given only when a student provides university-approved documentation clearly indicating that circumstances beyond the student’s control (e.g., a serious illness, serious automotive accident with documentation, death in the family, or other GMU-approved absence).

**Computing Your Final Grade:**

Your letter grade can be calculated by dividing the number of points you earn by the total number of points possible. Please do not approach me about bending the class rules to make personal exceptions about your grade: I take fair and equitable treatment of all students very seriously, and every student will be subject to the same grading standards. The chart below should be useful for determining your course standings near the end of the semester:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Point Source | Maximum Score | Determining Final Letter Grade |
| Chapter quiz | 100 points | A+ 100-97%  | >=388 points |
| Discussion post |  80 points | A 96-93% | 372-387 points |
| Exam | 100 points | A- 92-90% | 360-371 |
| Paper | 100 points | B+ 89-87% | 348-359 |
| Activity |  20 points | B 86-83% | 332-347 |
|  | Total 400 points  | B- 82-80% | 320-331 |
|  |  | C+ 79-77% | 308-319 |
|  |  | C 76-73% | 292-307 |
|  |  | C- 72-70% | 280-291 |
|  |  | D+ 69-67% | 268-279 |
|  |  | D 66-60% | 240-267 |
|  |  | F <59%  | <=239 |

1. **Attendance**

Attendance is required in this class without exception. Please arrive on time for class. Being late disrupts other students who are on time, but more importantly, being late may cause you to miss activities or be counted absent. Students who miss activities or other materials because of lateness will not be given the opportunity to make up the work and will be treated as absent. If you are absent more than 1/3 of the class, you will receive one letter grade reduction (going from an A to a B, for example).

1. **Class Cancellation Policy**

If a class needs to be cancelled (due to weather or other unforeseeable reasons), I will use the Mason e-mail and Blackboard for such announcement. I will provide reading materials or activities for you to complete during that class time. We will not reschedule that class.

# University Policies and Resources

1. Academic Honesty: You are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University’s Honor Code. The Code can be found [here](https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/). It is your responsibility to see me if you have questions about these policies. George Mason University has an honor code that states the following:

*To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.*

1. Students must follow the university policy for [Responsible Use of Computing](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/)
2. Student services: The University provides range of services to help you succeed academically and you should make use of these if you think they could benefit you. I also invite you to speak to me (the earlier the better).
3. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
4. [The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)](http://caps.gmu.edu/) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance. Counseling Center: Student Union I, Room 364, 703-993-2380.
5. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the [George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS)](http://ods.gmu.edu/) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Please note that accommodations MUST BE MADE BEFORE assignments or exams are due. I cannot adjust your grade after the fact.
6. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
7. [The George Mason University Writing Center](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/) staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. University Writing Center: Robinson Hall Room A114, 703-993-1200. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.
8. [Diversity](http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/): George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

**Course Schedule:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Day | Course schedule  | Discussion posts | Paper |
| 1 | Jan 25 | First class – Course overview, Chapter 1 |  |  |
|  | Jan 27 |  |  |  |
| 2 | Feb 1 | Ch. 2 Cognitive neuroscience |  |  |
|  | Feb 3 |  |  |  |
| 3 | Feb 8 | Ch. 3 Perception |  |  |
|  | Feb 10 |  |  |  |
| 4 | Feb 15 | Ch. 4 Attention |  |  |
|  | Feb 17 |  | *Post 1 due* |  |
| 5 | Feb 22 | Ch. 5 Working memory |  |  |
|  | Feb 24 |  | *Replies 1 due* |  |
| 6 | Mar 1 | Ch. 6 Structure of long-term memory |  |  |
|  | Mar 3 |  |  | *How to write papers?* |
| 7 | Mar 8 | Ch. 7 Function of long-term memory |  |  |
|  | Mar 10 |  |  | *Helpful tips in Word* |
| 8 | Mar 15 | Ch. 8 Everyday memory |  |  |
|  | Mar 17 |  | *Post 2 due* | *Paper requirements* |
| 9 | Mar 22 | Ch. 9 Knowledge |  |  |
|  | Mar 24 |  | *Replies 2 due* |  |
| 10 | Mar 29 | Ch. 10 Visual imagery |  |  |
|  | Mar 31 | **Exam (online) – no class** |  |  |
| 11 | Apr 5 | **Exam (online) – no class** |  |  |
|  | Apr 7 | Review exam; catch-up day |  | *Library resources; how to use Zotero?* |
| 12 | Apr 12 | Ch. 11 Language |  |  |
|  | Apr 14 |  |  | *Choose paper topic* |
| 13 | Apr 19 | Ch. 12 Problem solving |  |  |
|  | Apr 21 |  | *Post 3 due* |  |
| 14 | Apr 26 | Ch. 13 Decision making |  |  |
|  | Apr 28 |  | *Replies 3 due* | *Q&A about paper* |
| 15 | May 3 | No class |  |  |
|  | May 5 | **No Class – Paper due on blackboard** |  | **Paper due on blackboard** |

\*Note: this schedule is subject to adjustment.