**SYLLABUS**

 ***PSYCHOLOGY 317-DL1: Cognitive Psychology***

***Instructor*: Tyler Shaw, Ph.D.**

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*Office Hours*: Tuesday 1:30p-2:30p or by appt.

***Course Description***: 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 be 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.

***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***: E. Bruce Goldstein *Cognitive Psychology: Connecting Mind, Research, and Everyday Experience (4th or 5th edition),* Wadsworth/Cengage publishing

***What you need to know about this course:***

This course is completely online, so each student will have to take considerable responsibility for pacing their progress and learning the material. To succeed in this course, you will need to exert a lot of effort to keep yourself on a timeline that will allow you to complete material in a timely manner. All assignments and exams will be available at the outset, so students who want to work ahead can do so. Assignments and exams have due dates, and assignments/exams that are completed late will not be accepted. If you fall behind it will be difficult to succeed in the course.

It is absolutely necessary for you to familiarize yourself with the online content associated with this course. Part of this will require reading all of the handouts and instructions provided. The instructor and ITU at George Mason are available for assistance, but if you have difficulty with any of the resources, please be sure to read the associated instructions and handouts prior to requesting assistance.

The instructor will be available by email or phone throughout the entire semester. You may email or call with questions, comments, concerns, etc. Throughout the semester, all emails or voice mails will be answered within 2 business (M-F) days – although responses will usually come within 1 business day, please allow 2 business days. During the first week, the instructor will be online and checking email and voice mail even more frequently, and will endeavor to answer all questions within several hours.

***Grading & Evaluation***:

***Assignments, Exams, and Grade (based on 4 components)***

1. **Syllabus and Course Logistics Quiz: 5%.** Your first assignment is designed to familiarize you with the online course. Your task is to answer a series of questions about the syllabus and logistics of the course. This is due within the FIRST FIVE DAYS of the course (recommended within the FIRST TWO DAYS), and is designed to ensure that all students have fully read over the material necessary to succeed in the course. YOU ARE ALLOWED TO USE ALL COURSE MATERIALS WHILE TAKING THIS QUIZ. The purpose is not to test your memorization of the information, but rather to ensure that you have read and understand the logistics of the course.
2. **Chapter Assignments: 25%.** After just about every chapter, there are various graded assignments that must be completed and submitted in Blackboard. Credit is assigned based on quality and timely completion of assignments. Note that there are occasionally chapter quizzes. These quizzes are OPEN NOTE, but you will still be timed (30 min). This is to ensure that you have read (not skimmed) chapter content. However, be sure to check the quality of your work as your initial performance is your only opportunity to submit. There are two types of assignments. Assignments are either brief 250-500 word papers OR chapter post-quizzes (NOTE: there will never be both a chapter post-quiz and a short paper. It will always be either/or). All assignments are worth 10 points each.
3. ***Discussion Posts: 20%.*** You will be responsible for posting 1 original comment, and replying to 2 comments posted by your classmates, in 3 modules of the course (you post 1 original comment and 2 replies in each module – a total of 3 original posts and 6 replies—YOU MAKE 9 POSTS TOTAL). Original posts are worth 20 points, and replies to others’ posts are worth 15 points each. Postings must be original, thoughtful, and respectful. Original posts will be graded based on amount of thought demonstrated and the relevance to the subject matter. Original posts that are both thoughtful and relevant will receive full credit, whereas original posts that are lacking in both of these will be scored a 0. Replies to other posts must extend the thoughts expressed in the original post – they cannot be simple restatements, or statements of agreement or disagreement (such replies will result in 0 points for that post). At the same time, there is no need to be overly lengthy. Most original posts will be between 500 and 1500 characters. Most replies will be between 250 and 750 characters (these are not requirements, just guidelines – some perfectly acceptable posts may be longer or shorter).
4. ***Module Exams: 50%.***There will be one exam per module of the course – 6 exams total. Each exam will count for 10% of the final grade in the class. YOUR LOWEST EXAM GRADE WILL BE DROPPED. Students should not use any materials (textbook, notes, flashcards, etc.) during the exam. To ensure that students adhere to this, exams will be timed – once an exam is opened, ***it must be completed within 1 hour*** (if you need accommodations for extra time, please see the section below regarding disabilities). Also, exam questions will be randomly selected ***for each student***, so no student will take the same exam. Questions are taken from a pool of over 1,000 questions and matched for difficulty and content.

*Grading scale*:

The final grade will be calculated by summing the above percentages, with 100% as the highest possible total grade. Letter grades will be assigned based on the standard format (scores of .5 and above are rounded up, anything below .5 is rounded down):

A+ 97%-100%; A 93%-96%; A- 90%-92%; B+ 87%-89%; B 83%-86%; B- 80%-82%; C+ 77%-79%; C 73%-76%; C;- 70%-72%

***FINAL EXAM (Make-up)***:

The final exam is TBD and will be announced by the middle of the semester according to the rules set forth by the University’s final examination guidelines. The final exam will not be cumulative.

***Make-up exams***:

Make-up exams will be allowed at the discretion of the instructor.

***Other Policies***

*Technology Usage*

All primary contact in the course will be via email and Blackboard; thus, you are required to check your Mason email account regularly and to keep your mailbox maintained so that messages will not be rejected for being over quota. You may forward GMU emails to other accounts, but emails to the instructor should come only from your GMU account; instructors are not allowed to accept emails from non-GMU accounts. For this course, all assignments must be completed online within Blackboard (see below). You may need to download various free programs (e.g., Adobe Shockwave) to view some of the resources.

*Online Course Resources:*

The course will be run through Blackboard 9.1. ***It is extremely important to access Blackboard 9.1 through the MyMason Portal – please follow these instructions, as they may differ from your normal method of accessing Blackboard:***

1. Go to http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/

2. Login using your Mason ID and password (the same one you use for your GMU email account)

3. Click on the ‘Courses’ tab (toward the top right of the screen)

4. Go to the list of courses entitled “Courses 9.1 List” (it is in the **middle** of the screen)

5. Click on the link for Psyc 317-DL1

The class website in Blackboard will contain access to videos, assignments, online Publisher resources (Flashcards and Glossary), the discussion board, exams, and other course resources. Nearly all course activities will take place in Blackboard, so it is important to login and begin to explore the various components in the first days of the semester.

***Special needs*:**

Every effort will be made to accommodate students with a disability or special needs. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please both myself and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474.  All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

***University Honor policy*:**

***Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated****.* I will deal with academic dishonesty in accordance with George Mason University’s Student Code of Conduct. I recommend that you familiarize yourself with the policies set forth by GMU. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

***Important Dates***:

**Fall session start/end: August 22 – December 3, 2022**

**Final exam: TBD**

**Last Day to Add- August 29**

**Last Day to Drop without penalty- September 6**

Note: This schedule may be subject to change.

