SYLLABUS
PSYCHOLOGY 317-B01: Cognitive Psychology

***Instructor*: Matthew Peterson, Ph.D.**
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Office Hours: by appt. only

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 radio 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.

Reading Assignments: It is essential that you complete the required readings. YOU WILL BE READING THE ENTIRE BOOK IN 5 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. You will be reading approximately 2 to 3 chapters each week.

Required Text: Cognitive Psychology: Connecting Mind, Research and Everyday Experience, **5th** Edition, E. Bruce Goldstein, Wadsworth Publishing, ISBN: 9781337408271**(You only need the text, not CogLab or other add-ons)**

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. Exams for the entire course are already posted, so students who want to work ahead can do so. However, exams have due dates, and 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. 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 throughout the entire semester. You may email with questions, comments, concerns, etc. **Please put "317" somewhere in the subject line**, as this will ensure that your email gets noticed. Throughout the semester, all emails 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 even more frequently and will endeavor to answer all questions within several hours.

Technology Requirement Students are required to have a computer with a working web cam. Tests will be taken using Respondus Lockdown Browser, which requires a web cam for facial recognition. I suggest downloading Respondus (through Blackboard) and ensuring it works the very first day of class.

GMU Honor Code: George Mason University has a code of Honor that each of you accepts 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
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	0-59

Grading Exams (4) 100 points total

Exams (100%): 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 weighted 33 $^1/_3$% points each (3 x 33 $^1/_3$% = 100%) 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 weighted 25% (4 x 25% = 100%). 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.).

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).

Online Course Resources:
The course will be run through Blackboard. ***It is extremely important to access Blackboard 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 (left side of the screen)
4. Click on the link for Psyc 317-A02

The class website in Blackboard will contain access to videos, 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 inform 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:
Summer session **session start/end: May 30 – July 29**
Final exam: July 27-29
Last Day to Add- June 1st
Last Day to Drop without penalty- June 1st

Course Schedule:

Note: This schedule may be subject to change.

Module	Topic	Chapter	Recommended Start Date	Latest Date
Module I	Course Overview	1	30-May	9-Jun
	Cognitive Neuroscience	2	2-Jun	10-Jun
	Perception	3	6-Jun	11-Jun
	Attention	4	9-Jun	12-Jun
	Module I Exam	1-4	**13-Jun**	**14-Jun**
Module II	Working Memory	5	14-Jun	23-Jun
	LTM: structure	6	19-Jun	26-Jun
	LTM: encoding	7	23-Jun	27-Jun
	Module II Exam	7-May	**28-Jun**	**29-Jun**
Module III	Everyday Memory	8	29-Jun	10-Jul
	Using Knowledge	9	3-Jul	11-Jul
	Imagery	10	7-Jul	12-Jul
	Module III Exam	10-Aug	**12-Jul**	**14-Jul**
Module IV	Language	11	13-Jul	11-Jul
	Problem Solving	12	18-Jul	12-Jul
	Decision Making	13	21-Jul	13-Jul
	Module IV Exam	13-Nov	**27-Jul**	**29-Jul**