

Course Description & Syllabus
Cognitive Psychology
Spring, 2007

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Course Designation:* Psychology 230, Section 001, CRN 030833
- Instructor:* **Dr. Jason Chein**
825 Weiss Hall ~ (215) 204-7314 ~ jchein@temple.edu
Office hours: Tuesday 11:30-1:30, Thursday 12:00-1:00, and by appointment
- Class Schedule:* Tuesday & Thursday 10:10-11:30am, Tuttleman Learning Center Room 103
- Course Web Page:* On "Blackboard" accessed through TUportal - <http://tuportal.temple.edu/> or <http://blackboard.temple.edu>. Course is listed as "Cognitive Psychology, Spring 2007"
- Required Text:* Ashcraft, M. H. (2006). *Cognition (4th Edition)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall
Textbook is available at the Temple University Bookstore
Website: http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_ashcraft_cognition_4/0,10956,2456709-,00.html
- Prerequisites:* For majors, Psych 0070; for non-majors, Psych C060 or permission of the instructor
- Students with Special Needs:* This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability or other special circumstance should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at (215) 204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.
- Statement on Academic Freedom:* Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The university has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link:
http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02
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Course Goals & Methods

Cognitive psychology is the study of the mind; how we perceive the world, remember, reason, think, and learn. This course will present an overview of cognitive psychology; its findings, theories, and approach. Cognitive psychologists ask questions like:

- How do we see a 3-D world even though our eyes provide only a 2-D image?
- Can we easily divide our attention between tasks (e.g. driving and talking on a cell phone)?
- What factors determine how quickly we learn and how well we recall new information?
- What is language? Could animals ever learn human language?
- How does thought emerge from the brain? How is thought affected by damage to the brain?

The quest for answers to questions like these uses methods as diverse as laboratory experiments, building computer models, imaging the working brain, and studying the effects of brain damage on cognition. We

will discuss all of these approaches during the course, while on the way learning about key theories and research findings that have emerged from the field of Cognitive Psychology.

After successfully completing this course, you should be able to:

1. Relate key research findings to cognitive theories
2. Understand research methods in cognitive psychology, their strengths and weaknesses
3. Describe current issues in cognitive psychology research
4. Explain some of the broader implications of findings from cognitive psychology

More generally, I hope that the course will help you to develop your ability to understand and critique scientific ideas, apply these critical faculties to the ideas and information you encounter in your daily life, and explain your own ideas in a clear and concise style.

Course Structure

<i>Modules.</i>	The course is divided into 3 sections or “modules”: 1) Perception & Attention; 2) Memory; and 3) Higher Cognition. There will be 1 exam per module, and a final exam. In each module there will also be short in-class quizzes designed to highlight key information.
<i>Lectures & readings.</i>	The lectures provide the core content of the course, introducing key ideas and research findings in cognitive psychology. This information is supplemented by readings from the textbook and additional articles. Not all material in the readings will be covered in the lectures, and vice versa.
<i>Lecture slides.</i>	To reduce your writing burden in lectures, copies of the slides will be provided on the course website, giving you a greater opportunity to think about the ideas presented. The slides provide only an outline; they do not contain all of the information presented in the lecture. For example, the lecture notes might pose a question, but you won't know the answer to the question if you're not at the lecture to find out! REVIEWING THE SLIDES IS NOT AN ADEQUATE SUBSTITUTE FOR ATTENDING CLASS. Additional section outlines and supplementary learning materials are available from the companion website for the textbook, and it is strongly recommended that you take advantage of these resources.

Course Requirements

<i>Exams.</i>	There will be four exams in the course, one for each of the three course modules and a final exam. Each exam will involve a mix of multiple choice, true/false, and short-answer questions, covering material from lectures and assigned readings. The final will cover material from the whole course (cumulative). . Your final grade for the course will be based on your best 3 exam scores (i.e. your lowest exam grade will be dropped). Providing more assessment opportunities than you need for your grade is a way to compensate for any missed exams. THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS. You should contact me well in advance of the exam if special arrangements are needed.
<i>In-class quizzes.</i>	There will be up to 10 short in-class quizzes given across the semester. These quizzes will normally consist of 5 multiple-choice questions based on recent course materials. Your lowest two quiz scores will be dropped, and your overall quiz grade will be based on the remaining scores (e.g. if there are 10 quizzes given, the best 8 will be used to calculate your overall quiz grade). THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES.
<i>Assignment.</i>	You are required to complete 1 written assignment for this course. I will post four alternative assignments (Assignments A, B, C, & D) that cover topics spanning the semester, and you must choose one (1) of the four to complete and submit. Please do not submit more than 1 of these

assignments (only one will be graded). All assignments are due by the start of class on the day indicated in the course schedule, and MUST be submitted ELECTRONICALLY via the course Blackboard website. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE GRADED, AND THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS.

Extra-credit

There are three ways to earn extra credit and raise your grade in this course. To receive credit for your efforts, any extra-credit work must be submitted to me before the 26th of April. For a maximum of an additional eight (8) percentage points you can complete any of the following activities:

Take an on-line quiz. The companion website for the course textbook provides on-line quizzes linked to each chapter of the text (in the “Study Guide” section for each chapter), and allows the results of these quizzes to be forwarded to an email recipient. You can earn extra-credit for successfully completing (80% accuracy or higher) up to six (6) of these quizzes (submit one quiz per chapter only) for ½ extra-credit point (0.5%) each. After taking the quiz, the results should be sent directly to my email (jchein@temple.edu). Make sure to fill out your name in the submission form and to send the quiz as “text” (this is the default).

Participate in an approved cognitive research experiment. There are a number of active research projects here at Temple University, and you may participate as a subject in up to two (2) course-related experiments to earn two extra-credit points (2%) for each experiment completed. Experiments must be pre-approved (by me), and proof of participation (credit slip, receipt) must be furnished in order to receive credit. Go to <http://temple.sona-systems.com/default.asp> for a list of some currently active experiments.

Summarize a course-related article. At any time during the course, you can earn extra-credit by reading an article (scholarly or otherwise, but you must get pre-approval from me) relating to an issue in cognitive psychology and then providing a brief summary (1 page double-spaced) of its relationship to the course. You may submit up to two (2) such summaries for an additional two extra-credit points (2%) each (they will be graded as credit/no-credit)

The weighting of each of the course components in your final grade will be as follows:

Component	Exams	Quizzes	Assignment	Extra credit
% of grade	66%	24%	10%	+8% max.

Course Policies

Grading. Grades for individual exams, quizzes, and assignments will be given as a proportion of the maximum attainable points for that course component, and will not be scored relative to the performance of others in the class (that is, grades for each individual exam, quiz, and assignment will not be “curved”). At the end of the semester, final grades will be computed by taking the proportion of the maximum attainable points you have earned for all requirements of the course, and then scaling by the weight of the requirement (as explained in the table above). If the resulting grades are inadequately distributed, a further adjustment may be applied based on a standard grading curve. All grades will be posted on the course website as soon as they are available and in a manner that respects student privacy. Your final letter grade for the course will be based on the following grading scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89

B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	<60

Feedback. You can track your course performance via the course website. You should contact me any time during the term if you have questions regarding your performance or evaluation. Occasional grading errors are inevitable, as are misunderstandings, so please bring to my attention (privately) any specific concerns you have regarding your course grades.

Late assignments & missed exams. Your final grade will be based on the best 3 of 4 exams, all but the lowest 2 quiz scores, and the 1 submitted assignment. There are more assessment opportunities than you need for your grade, and the due dates for alternative assignments are intentionally varied to help you to avoid conflicts with other demands placed on your time. **NO ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE FOR MISSED QUIZZES OR EXAMS, OR FOR LATE ASSIGNMENTS.** As a general rule, it is strongly recommended that you take all exams and quizzes even if you feel under-prepared - you might surprise yourself.

Class Attendance. Your progress and success in this course will significantly benefit from your regular attendance and active in-class participation. It is expected that you will make every effort to be present at every class session. Please be courteous to your instructor and fellow classmates and arrive promptly. Disruption in class of any kind will not be tolerated. I hope that the class will be both informative and entertaining, and expect your cooperation in maintaining an environment that is conducive to both. If for any reason you must miss a class, you are responsible for any of the information discussed or presented in class that day. There will be no opportunity to make up quizzes or exams given on days when you were not present.

Academic integrity. It is of utmost importance that the exams, quizzes, & assignments you complete for this course are the result of your own work and reflect your own understanding of the material. It is your responsibility to be familiar with Temple's policies on academic integrity, cheating, and plagiarism (see undergraduate bulletin, or the following website: http://www.temple.edu/bulletin/Responsibilities_rights/responsibilities/responsibilitieshtm#honesty). Unless explicitly told otherwise, you can discuss assignments and readings with others, but be aware that presenting (intentionally or unintentionally) someone else's work as your own constitutes a breach of the academic integrity policy, and will be dealt with very seriously. If you have any questions or concerns about whether your behavior could be interpreted as cheating or plagiarism, please ask me before submitting the work.

Communication. The course website on Blackboard is the primary place where you can find course announcements, lecture slides, useful links, and information about assignments, deadlines, procedures and policies. For specific questions that are not answered on Blackboard, you are encouraged to send email (jchein@temple.edu). Please be sure to include your name in all email correspondences. I check my email regularly, and you can expect a reply within 48 hours. If you prefer to discuss your concerns with me directly, you may do so during the office hours listed above. You may also send an email to schedule a separate appointment with me.

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	IMPORTANT DATES
1/16	Overview & Introduction to cognitive psychology		
1/18	The science of cognition – approaches to research	Ch. 1 & 2	
1/23	Perception I – visual perception	Ch. 3	
1/25	Perception II – object & face recognition		
1/30	Perception, attention & awareness	Ch. 4	
2/1	Selective & spatial attention		
2/6	Open topic & Module review		Assignment A due
2/8	Exam 1		Exam 1
2/13	Transition: Attention as a mental resource		
2/15	Introduction to memory systems, Short-term memory	Ch. 5	
2/20	STM, Learning & remembering I	Ch. 6	
2/22	Learning & Remembering II		
2/27	Strategies for memory		
3/1	Brain & memory		Assignment B due
3/6	SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS		NO CLASS
3/8	SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS		NO CLASS
3/13	Constructive Memory/Real-World Memory	Ch. 8	
3/15	Open Topic & Review		
3/20	Exam 2		Exam 2
3/22	Transition: Semantic Memory & Priming	Ch. 7	
3/27	Language I	Ch. 9	
3/29	Language II		
4/3	Language III	Ch. 10	
4/5	Reasoning & decision making I	Ch. 11	Assignment C due
4/10	Reasoning & decision making II		
4/12	Open topic & Review		
4/17	Exam 3		Exam 3
4/19	Problem Solving I	Ch. 12	Assignment D due
4/24	Problem Solving II		
4/26	Course summary & Final review		
5/3	FINAL EXAMINATION (11:00am – 1:00pm)		Final Exam