

COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY PSY 230, Spring 2017

10:10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays in Olin 202

Instructor

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Office hours: Tuesday noon – 1:00 p.m., Friday 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cognitive psychology is the study of mind: how we perceive the world, remember, represent knowledge, acquire new information, become aware of our emotions, make plans, reason, and use language. In this course, we examine the empirical foundations that determine our understanding of mind, including classic research designs, recent advances in computational modeling, philosophical perspectives, and changes in cognition throughout the lifespan. The course also considers the neural underpinning of these topics.

REQUIRED MATERIAL

+++Anderson, J. R. (2015). Cognitive Psychology and its Implications (8th ed.). New York: Worth Publishers.

+++All non-textbook reading assignments are listed on the course schedule. The schedule as well as all non-textbook readings are available through the course's Moodle site (**enrollment key: Cognition**). You can sign up for the course Moodle site at <http://moodle2.bard.edu>.

+++Coglab: the online cognition lab. <https://coglab.cengage.com/info/features.shtml>. For detailed instructions regarding how to purchase and register your account, please consult the CogLab Instructions document on the course Moodle site.

COMPONENTS OF THE COURSE GRADE

Exams (300 points)

For this class, there will be 3 exams. Exam dates are firm but the material covered may vary slightly from the syllabus depending on how the course progresses. Any deviations from the syllabus will be made clear prior to each exam. Exams will contain a combination of multiple-choice, fill in the blank, short answer, and essay questions encompassing material covered in class, the textbook, and assigned readings. Exams will be worth 100 points each. The third exam will be cumulative but the majority of the material (~75%) will be from topics presented after the second exam. Students are expected to take all exams on the schedule dates. In an extreme circumstance, the student should contact me at least 24 hours prior to the exam and I will decide on what will be done. Make up exams will only be scheduled with a written excuse from the Dean of Students or medical professional.

CogLabs (75 points)

Over the course of the semester there will be six CogLab assignments. For these assignments, you are required to:

1. Log in and participate in the experiment prior to the deadline noted on the course syllabus (e.g. CogLab #1: Stroop Effect). Participation will take approximately 10–30 minutes depending on the specific experiment.
2. After the deadline for participation, I will compile the results and email them to you through Moodle. You will then take those results, graph them using R, and email a pdf image of your graph to thutcheo@bard.edu. Graphs are due by the start of class on the date indicated on the schedule (e.g. CogLab #1: Graph).

Participation in each experiment prior to the deadline is worth 5 points. Submission of each graph is worth 10 points. Your five highest grades will be counted towards your final grade.

Writing Assignments (50 points)

Over the course of the semester you will complete two writing assignments worth 25 points each. A stapled paper copy of the assignment must be handed in at the start of class on the assigned date. Any assignments that are handed in after the start of class will be considered late and will automatically lose 5 points. Each additional day late will result in the loss of 5 additional points. More information about the writing assignments is provided at the end of the syllabus.

Research Project (75 points)

In the second week of the semester you will be broken up into groups of 3–4 students. Over the course of the semester your group will investigate one issue involving cognitive psychology that is of interest to you by collecting data using Bard College students. The components of the project include: a group meeting with Tom to discuss your proposed project (10 points), submission of data to Tom in the form of an Excel spreadsheet (10 points), a final group presentation (20 points), and a final report (35 points). More details on the research project will be provided over the course of the semester.

Extra Credit Opportunities

Over the course of the semester there will be four psychology-sponsored colloquia. See the psychology program website (<http://psychology.bard.edu/>) for dates and times. You can earn a maximum of **5 points** towards your final grade through attendance at these talks. To receive credit, attend a talk and submit one question you would have for the speaker to me via email at thutcheo@bard.edu within 48 hours of the talk. Attendance and question submission will earn you a total of 2.5 points for each talk.

GRADING BREAKDOWN***POINT ALLOCATION***

Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
Exam 3	100
CogLabs (5 X 15)	75
Writing Assignment #1	25
Writing Assignment #2	25
<u>Research Project</u>	<u>75</u>
Total Points	500

GRADING SCALE

A = 100.0000% – 93.0000%
A- = 92.9999% – 90.0000%
B+ = 89.9999% – 87.0000%
B = 86.9999% – 83.0000%
B- = 82.9999% – 80.0000%
C+ = 79.9999% – 77.0000%
C = 76.9999% – 73.0000%
C- = 72.9999% – 70.0000%
D = 69.9999% – 60.0000%
F = 59.9999% or less

$$\text{FINAL GRADE} = ((\text{Total Points Earned} + \text{Extra Credit}) / 500) * 100$$

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with a documented disability who need reasonable academic accommodations should contact me as soon as possible to discuss your needs. I can only accommodate your needs if you allow me sufficient time to prepare. Informing me of a need on the day of an exam or on the date an assignment is due is NOT sufficient. As stated in the college handbook, “Students who claim physical, learning, or psychological disabilities should register with the Disability Support Coordinator at the start of the semester or as soon as the diagnosis is made.” Additional information can be found on the Bard College Learning Commons website (<http://inside.bard.edu/learningcommons/>).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are assumed to have read the Bard College Handbook and are familiar with the school’s policies regarding Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty. Violations of these policies are taken extremely seriously and one violation will result in a failing grade for the course and a referral to the Dean of Students for further action. Specific violations include (but are not limited to):

- Use or provision of prohibited assistance during quizzes or exams
- Sharing of writing assignments
- Plagiarism (which includes **both** the use of **words** and **ideas** without attribution)

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Guidelines

- +++Writing assignments should be carefully proofread and free of grammatical and spelling errors.
- +++Stapled paper copies will be collected at the start of class on the appropriate due date.
- +++You must work independently on all writing assignments.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 Due Thursday, February 9th at the start of class.

Propose an experiment to investigate whether caffeine improves academic performance. Your description of the experiment should be sufficient for a reader to conduct the experiment by himself or herself. You should include the following terms (in a way that makes apparent you know what they mean): independent variable, dependent variable, random assignment, operationalization, and control group. Finally, you should include a brief description about the results you expect to find and how these findings can meaningfully contribute to our understanding of how the mind works. This assignment should be 2–3 pages double-spaced.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2 Due Thursday, April 6th at the start of class.

A critical skill for psychologists is the interpretation and evaluation of research. In this assignment you will serve as a journal reviewer. Summarize and critique the Bernsterin et al article available on the course Moodle site. Your summary should include a description of the rationale and methods used in the article, the relevant results, and the author's interpretation of the results (~1–2 pages double spaced). In addition, you should come up with at least two critiques or concerns with the article and the ways in which the study could be improved (~1 page). Finally, do you agree with the reviewers' decision to publish the article? This assignment should be approximately 2–3 pages double-spaced.