Syllabus: PSYC 317-005 Cognitive Psychology

Wed 7:20 – 10:00 p.m., Fall 2012
Planetary Hall room 212

Instructor Brandon Beltz, Ph.D.
*email: bbeltz@gmu.edu phone: 703-993-5212
*Email is the best method to reach me as I rarely have access to a phone.

Office Hours Wednesdays 6:00 - 7:00 p.m., or by appointment. location: Aquia 337

Course Objective

The objective of this course is to introduce you to the field of cognitive psychology. Cognitive psychology is the study of internal mental processes including perception, attention, memory, knowledge, language, decision making, and problem solving. Cognitive psychology is an *empirical* discipline meaning cognitive psychologists conduct experiments in order to understand how peoples' internal mental processes function. During this course, we will examine how these processes operate and function according to the current state of scientific research.

Textbook (required)

Goldstein, E. B. (2011). Cognitive Psychology: Connecting Mind, Research, and Everyday Experience. 3rd Edition. Thompson Wadsworth.

Course Schedule

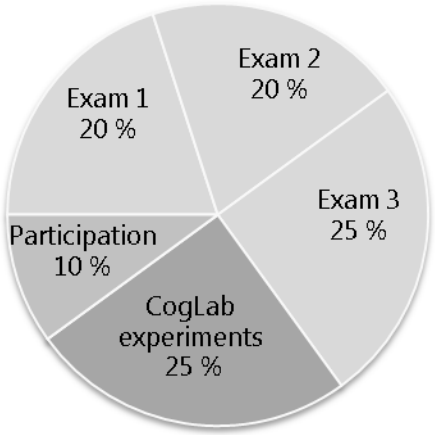
Any schedule changes or changes in assignments will be announced in class in advance. After an absence, students are responsible for contacting the instructor to obtain accurate information.

Date	Topic	Reading*	Exam, CogLab Due
Aug 29	Introduction to Cognitive Psychology	Chapter 1	
Sep 5	Perception	Chapter 3	perception
Sep 12	Attention	Chapter 4	attention
Sep 19	Short term memory	Chapter 5	short term / sensory memory
Sep 26	****Exam 1****		**Exam**
Oct 3	Long term memory	Chapter 6	working / memory processes
Oct 10	Long term memory	Chapter 7	memory processes
Oct 17	Memory applications	Chapter 8	metamemory
Oct 24	Knowledge	Chapter 9	concepts
Oct 31	****Exam 2****		**Exam**
Nov 7	Imagery	Chapter 10	imagery
Nov 14	Language	Chapter 11	speech and language
Nov 21	*No class. Thanksgiving holiday*		
Nov 28	Problem solving	Chapter 12	judgment
Dec 5	Reasoning and decision making	Chapter 13	judgment
Dec 12	****Exam 3****		**Exam**

*Unless noted, all chapters are from the Goldstein text

Course Grading

Final letter grades will be assigned based on your performance on in-class exams, on-line experiments (CogLab), and class participation.



Exams: There will be three exams based on material from the readings and lectures. Exams 1 and 2 will count towards 20% of your final grade. The 3rd exam will count for 25% and may contain some questions that cover the entire course. The exams will consist of multiple-choice, short answer (1-2 words), and short essay (1-2 paragraphs) questions. No make-up exams will be given except in cases of documented emergencies. All make-up exams will consist completely of essay questions.

CogLab experiments: CogLab is an online tool that allows you to experience many of the experiments that will be discussed in class. For your grade, you will be **required to complete 10** of the experiments when they are assigned. In addition you will need to **choose two** of the experiments you completed and **write a reaction paper** in which you describe how the experiment and results apply to your life. You may turn the reaction papers in at any time before exam 3. No late papers will be accepted. Details of the reaction papers and how to access CogLab will be discussed in class.

Class participation: 10% of your final grade will be your in-class participation. This includes participating in class discussions and activities. I'm sure most of you would prefer not to listen to me lecture the entire 2.5 hours of class each week so please speak up!

Final grade computation: I will compute final grades by adding your scores from each of the areas above. Final letter grades will be assigned according to the percentages in the table below.

A+	97 - 100%	**B+**	87 - 89.9%	**C+**	77 - 79.9%	**D**	60 - 69.9%
A	93 - 96.9%	**B**	83 - 86.9%	**C**	73 - 76.9%	**F**	Below 60%
A -	90 - 92.9%	**B -**	80 - 82.9%	**C-**	70 - 72.9%		

Honor Code

All provisions of the GMU Honor Code will be followed in this class. During exams no books, notes, or student interaction will be permitted. For reaction papers, all work submitted must be original. In the reaction papers, quotations are permitted, but they must be correctly cited and should be few in number. Other students/sources may be consulted for information regarding format, grammar, etc., but, again, the writing must be completed by the individual submitting the paper.

Attendance

Class attendance is very important for you to learn the material. Lectures will frequently include information not found in the textbook. Remember, material for the exams will be drawn from both readings AND lectures.

Special Help

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 709-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Official Communications via GMU E-mail:

George Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices form the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that

account and check it regularly. I may need to send class updates and notifications to the class email list. If your GMU email is not set up properly, you may miss an important announcement.

Internet Access

You will need to access the internet in order to participate in the CogLab experiments. If you have any issues with this requirement, please discuss them with me.

Add / drop dates

Last day to add: September 4, 2012
Last day to drop: September 28, 2012