

PSYC 3012-- Introduction to Cognitive Psychology

Instructor: Shriradha Sengupta

When: MWF 11:05 a.m.-11:55 a.m.

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Office Hours M 3p.m.-4p.m.

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By appointment as well.

Teaching Assistant: Dar-wei Chen

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By appointment as well

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Welcome to my class: Welcome aboard! I assume that you know that you are in for a Cognitive Psychology course at the college level. I have designed this course as an overview of the scope of cognitive psychology, its key exciting findings, and the methods used by psychologists to arrive at those findings. I intend to impart to you an understanding of answers to a handful of broad questions in cognitive psychology such as what are the mechanisms that underlie attention and memory, how can we better understand how human language works, and what are the mental processes that make human decision-making prone to error. By the end of the semester, I hope you leave my class with the wisdom to understand basic principles of human cognition and the ability to see how textbook psychological principles play out in day to day life.

Meet my teaching assistant: Meet Mr. Dar-Wei Chen, the teaching assistant for this class. He will be popping up from time to time during class, and works with me to make this course a happier, smoother experience for y'all. Please feel free to email him at darwei.chen@gatech.edu, whenever you need to reach him: be it for queries, complaints or suggestions.

How to use this syllabus: Please go over this long syllabus carefully. Believe it or not, you will be quizzed on it. Here is a table of contents to help you go through it.

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Required course materials: The text book I will be using for my class is *Cognition: Theory and Practice* (2013), by Russell Revlin, First Edition, Worth Publishers.
ISBN-10: 0-7167-5667-6
ISBN-13: 978-0-7167-5667-5

In addition, I encourage you to take notes. The slides from each class will be posted the same day of the lecture. Your personal notes and the slides from each class should combine to make excellent review materials before tests.

Course organization and assessments: I have organized this course in a manner which helps you learn in-class as we survey one area of cognitive psychology at a time. You will notice that the serial order in which I will cover the chapters in class is same as that in the book. This has been done so that the whole course can be broken up into 4 manageable modules (please see below). Assessments worth 20 points for each module are indicated below; specific dates are on the table on page 5. Given that you are attentive and you are doing what it takes during the semester, you may not have to take the final. In addition, there is going to be a group project worth 20 points.

The modules:

1. Introduction and Sensory Systems
2. Memory
3. Language
4. Problem Solving and Reasoning

Assessment for each module will be worth 20 points in total. The assessment will have a 20 questions in multiple choice format (10 points), a take home paper (5 points) and an in-class essay question (5 points).

Project: You will assign yourselves to a group of 5, and each group will pick a group project (worth 20 points). The aim of the project is to help you apply psychology principles to a problem. I will assign the dates of presentation based on the topic you pick so that your work nicely complements the theme of a given class period. Please note that you will be able to see the date of presentation when you choose your topic. A few presentations will be during the last week of class: these topics will integrate themes explored during the course of the semester. You will have to make a presentation (between 10 and 15 minutes long) on the topic and date of your choice.

Presentations will begin **September 16**.

Final exam: The final exam is optional. You can take the final exam to replace your score on any of the module assessments. You have to let me know by December 7 if you plan on taking the final and the score you would like to replace.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Dates	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
August 19, 21, 23	Introduction	Introduction	Introduction
August 26, 28, 30	Sensory Systems	<u>Project topics posted</u> Sensory Systems	Sensory Systems
September 2,4,6	HOLIDAY	Sensory Systems	Sensory Systems
September 9, 11, 13	Sensory Systems	<u>Assessment 1 items posted</u> Sensory Systems	Sensory Systems
September 16, 18, 20	Sensory Systems Project presentations begin.	Sensory Systems	Sensory Systems
September 23, 25, 27	Review for Exam 1	<u>Exam 1</u> <u>Assessment 1 items due</u>	Memory
October 30,2,4	Memory	Memory	Memory
October 7,9,11	Memory	Memory	Memory
October 14,16,18	HOLIDAY	Memory	Memory
October 21,23,25	Review for Exam 2	<u>Exam 2</u> <u>Assessment 2 items due</u>	Language
October 28, 30, Nov 1	Language	Language	Language
November 4,6,8	Language	Language	Review for Exam 3
November 11,13,15	<u>Exam 3</u> <u>Assessment 3 items due</u>	Problem solving and Reasoning	Problem solving and Reasoning
November 18,20,22	Problem solving and Reasoning	Problem solving and Reasoning	Problem solving and Reasoning
November 25,27, 29	Review for Exam 4	<u>Exam 4</u> <u>Assessment 4 items due</u>	HOLIDAY
December 2,4,6	Project Presentations	Project Presentations	Project Presentations
December 13	Project Presentations	Project Presentations	Optional final at 8 a.m.

Exam policy There is **absolutely no make-up** for the optional final exam. In addition, you will not be allowed to take any exam if you are more than 15 minutes late for the final exam.

The dates for other assessments are **set**. You can request a make-up only if (a) you are sick, or (b) you are out of town on an institute approved absence (please see the Dean of Students website). Appropriate documentation is necessary in both cases.

In addition, you have to turn in a hard copy of your paper at the beginning of class. You will not be allowed to turn in paper(s) 15 minutes after the beginning of class.

Extra credit You can earn up to 5 points for extra credit in my course. Earning extra credit will also expose you to lab experiments in psychology and/or articles published in scientific journals of psychology. There are 3 ways to earn extra credit in my course:

Research participation: To participate in research, you will have to sign up on: <https://gatech-psych.sona-systems.com> . You will get 1 credit, equivalent to 1 point, for every hour of participation, and you can participate for up to 5 hours for 5 points. After you sign up for an experiment and arrive at the laboratory, a researcher will explain your task. Please remember that you can refuse to participate in the experiment at that time or at any point of time throughout the experiment. Once you have completed the experiment, the researcher will give you credit. **Once credit has been given, you have to assign the credit to my course.** If you fail to do this, there is no way I will be notified of your extra credit and give you points for the same. Please remember that you should complete participating in experiments and assigning credit to my course by **December 6, 5 p.m.**

Research report: To write a research report, please see me to obtain a list of acceptable journals. Each report is worth 1 credit and therefore, 1 point. You may pick any article you find interesting from a journal of your choice. Once you have chosen your article, you have to write a brief summary (no more than 500 words) of that article. I will grade your report on a 3 point scale (0, 0.5 and 1, 1 being the maximum) based on your understanding of the article as reflected in your article. I can allow one rewrite if your performance is not satisfactory. All research papers are due to me by **December 6, 5 p.m.**

Combination: You may opt to do both –participate in experiments and write research papers for a total of up to 5 points.

Grades: Grades will be determined based on your performance on the five assessments and the optional final.

Your final score will be the total number of points accumulated and the extra credit you will earn.

I will use a straight grading scale to compute your **final grade**. The grades corresponding to final score ranges are as follows.

You will have to get a **C** to obtain a pass if you are taking the class for Pass/Fail.

Final score ranges	Letter grade
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 or lower	F

Tips on doing well in this course: Even though I cannot predict your grade at the end of the semester, here are a few ideas on what can make a big difference in your performance and your final grade.

1. Please attend class regularly. It is very likely that you will end up studying shorter hours before tests if you are inside the classroom during lecture.
2. Please come prepared to participate in class activity. I like to engage my students in the classroom, and your participation will greatly enhance your learning experience and outcome (final grade).
3. Please ask questions if you have a doubt. Always remember that if you have a question, someone else has it as well.
4. Review, review, and review. I have structured this course such that you have to study a very limited number of hours outside class, as long as you review the slides, class notes and tests, up to 3 times per week.
5. **Do shoot for an A.** I cannot stress this enough. Having a positive expectation of yourself will push you towards a better grade than if you have lower expectations.

Academic integrity: **I, as a member of the Georgia Tech community take academic honesty and integrity very seriously and expect you to do the same.** If a student is caught cheating (and this includes plagiarism), s/he will be referred to the Dean of Students immediately for further action and get a zero on the test/project. Georgia Tech's policy on academy dishonesty can be viewed online at:

<http://www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu/integrity>

Special needs: In accordance to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Georgia Tech is committed to ensure that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. Please provide me with accommodation letter from the ADAPTS program ((<http://www.adapts.gatech.edu>) no later than September 9 at 5 p.m., if you feel that you may have some special needs. You can also contact the ADAPTS program at 404-894-2564.

Feedback: I, as an instructor, like to provide constructive feedback to my students and also appreciate suggestions on how to adapt better to the needs of my diverse group of

students. Please feel free to email me, Dar-Wei, or mention ways to improve the course on the mid-term evaluation forms.

Closing remarks: I warmly welcome you to my course one more time. I hope that this course will add to your memorable Georgia Tech experience. Do your best. And always shoot for an A!