

Welcome!

Welcome to Cognition!

Cognition is the area of psychology that studies how humans and other animals use the information we have available - from the world and from our memories - to act in the world.

In this class, we will be examining this process from a broader, information-theoretic based angle. We will also be discussing and learning about the scientific process: how observation of phenomena become hypotheses become experiments and become theory.

Even if you are not planning on becoming a Cognition researcher, understanding the ranges and limits of our brain's abilities, and understanding the process of scientific thinking, will be helpful to you in whatever you plan on doing!

Enjoy!

Learning Goals

1. Develop scientific and critical reasoning skills.
2. Learn about the fundamental theories and approaches to the field of cognition.
3. Understand some of the links between mind and brain, and how those links are discovered.
4. Increase participation in lecture class by asking questions and contributing to discussions.

Materials

Book: Cognitive Psychology, 4th Edition, Goldstein, EB. You cannot use the third edition, as there are some substantial differences between the two

Book website: http://www.cengage.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20b&product_isbn_issn=9780840033550&token= This is for the third edition, but you can use it to practice basic definitions of terms.

Ten Helpful Hints

1. The most important requirement for doing well in this class is to pay attention, both during lecture and during reading.
2. The course content is cumulative so if you miss class, your understanding of material in subsequent classes will be compromised.
3. Pace your reading wisely. Do not leave it all for the last minute.
4. Ask questions of the professor and the text. Ask for information, to test your own knowledge and to develop critical skills. If you're not convinced by an argument, say so. Answer questions that are posed in lecture.
5. Make sure you understand the main points of each lecture and the main points of the reading material. You should be able to understand how specific examples and specific details relate to the main themes. Test yourself by writing a short summary of the chapter or an outline of the lecture. Don't rely on the feeling that you know what's going on. See if you can state the main points.
6. Each lecture builds on the material of the prior lectures, and on material from the text. Review your notes, with special emphasis on the main themes, before coming to class.

7. When reading the text, pay particular attention to the key words and to the graphs and figures. This is where the authors are putting the most important information.
8. Ask questions in lecture if you're confused. New material relies on the concepts already developed.
9. For individual help, see me during office hours, or make an appointment.
10. If you would like to discuss exam performance, bring your exam to office hours. Often there is a pattern to the errors that can be diagnosed only by examining your performance. In the interest of fairness to all, no questions will be answered during exams. To do so is equivalent to giving some students help or hints at the expense of other students.

Student Responsibility Outside Class

As per University and School (SAS) policy, this course assumes that all students will be spending at least 100 minutes *per credit hour* on activities pertaining to the class **outside** of the classroom. This means you should plan to be spending approximately 5 hours per week outside of this class on the material. In general, the reading in the textbook is **not** meant to take 5 hours: the additional time would be spent reviewing and synthesizing the material, such that you know what you really understand, and you know what you need to ask questions about.

Reading and Lecture

Reading: The material covered in the course is cumulative. Ideas introduced in the first few lectures will be amplified and developed throughout the semester. The required reading overlaps only in part with the corresponding lectures. Some issues developed at length in lecture may be given scant attention in the text while some issues discussed in detail in the text will not be covered in lecture. There will also be some points on which text and lecture do not agree and these will be described as we get to them. The differences between the text and lecture are as it should be: the text and the lecture complement each other; they are not intended to be redundant. **You are nonetheless responsible for material in both.** "Posted readings" (see below) refers to material to be posted on the class website on Sakai.

Class Requirements

Classroom Questions: Every class, you will work on writing and revising questions that - if answered correctly - demonstrate an understanding of the material. This will be demonstrated during the first class. The questions will be graded on a "done/not done". However, "done" means that the questions are substantial, not that they are handed in. The 15 best will count; you can earn extra credit on up to two sets of questions. Because there are many more than 15 classes, no late or makeups will be accepted or offered.

Hourly exams: 3 exams (see syllabus for dates) and a final. The final (fourth) exam will occur during finals week on the date scheduled by the university.

Exam requirements: Students are required to take all exams. If you miss an exam for a legitimate reason (e.g., illness) you must submit an official excuse (e.g., doctor's note). A make-up exam, composed entirely of short essay questions, will be given at the time of the final. If you do not submit an excuse note, a grade of 0 will be assigned and no make-up will be given. Once you begin work on an exam it will count. No exam scores will be dropped. So, if you are ill, do not take the exam - see your doctor! If you miss the final exam for a legitimate reason, a make-up will be scheduled. There will be no excused absences from the final.

Missed classes: You are responsible for material covered in classes that you may miss. To find out what was covered borrow notes from another student. Feel free to come to office hours or make an appointment to discuss material, ask questions, or get deeper explanations!

Instructor Information

Cordelia Aitkin, PhD

Office Hours: Mondays from 2:30-3:30, Tillett 241. I also make appointments; please send me 5 specific times you are available in the week following your email and we'll find a time that works for both of us!

Contact Information: cdaitkin@psych.rutgers.edu

Course Grade

Grades are calculated as follows:

Exam 1: 15%

Exam 2: 20%

Exam 3: 20%

In-class questions: 15% total

Final: 30%

All grades submitted to the University are final.

Course grades will be calculated from the grades you earn on the assessments, and will be based on the percentage system as follows:

A: 90-100%.

B+: 86-89.9999%.

B: 80-85.9999%.

C+: 76-79.9999%.

C: 70-75.9999%.

D: 60-69.9999%.

F: <60%

These cutpoints will apply to everyone. No adjustments in cutpoints will be made for individual students.

Schedule of Topics

Note: Schedule is subject to change

Unit 1: Cognition and Basic Structures

Jan. 23	Welcome to Cognition	SanaWestonCepeda_2013.pdf
Jan. 27	Approaches	ToSpeakIsToBlunder.pdf
Jan. 30	What is Cognition	Chapter 1
Feb. 3 & Feb. 6	Neuroscience	Chapter 2
Feb. 10 & Feb. 13	Perception	Chapter 3
Feb. 17 & Feb. 19	Attention	Chapter 4
Feb. 24	EXAM 1: FUNDAMENTALS	

Unit 2: Memory

Feb. 26 & Mar. 2	Short-term Memory	Chapter 5
Mar. 5	Long-term Memory: Structure	Chapter 6
Mar. 9 & Mar. 12	Long-term Memory: Encoding, retrieval, consolidation	Chapter 7
Mar. 16 - 20	NO CLASSES - SPRING BREAK	
Mar. 23	Everyday Memory	Chapter 8
Mar. 26	EXAM 2: MEMORY	

Unit 3: Higher-Level Cognitive Skills Part I

Mar. 30 & Apr. 2	Knowledge	Chapter 9
Apr. 6	Imagery	Chapter 10
Apr. 9 & Apr. 13	Language	Chapter 11
Apr. 16	EXAM 3: HIGHER-LEVEL COGNITIVE SKILLS PART I	
<u>Unit 4: Higher-Level Cognitive Skills Part II</u>		
Apr. 20 & 23	Problem Solving	Chapter 12
Apr. 27 & 30	Judgment and Decision Making	Chapter 13
Apr. 24 & Apr 26	Catch up & review	
FINAL EXAM AS SCHEDULED BY THE UNIVERSITY		

Final Exam

At least one quarter of the final exam will be exclusively on the last unit. Up to three-quarters of the final may be on the material covered over the entire semester. The final will take place in our classroom.

You can find all of your final exams here: <https://finalexams.rutgers.edu/> Final Exams are scheduled by the University, and your professors have no control over when they happen. **Be sure to check your exam schedule in the link for the correct times**

If you have a conflict as defined here (<https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/degree-requirements/policies/final-exam>) and you plan on rescheduling this class's final exam, please see Dr. Aitkin as soon as possible. Note: if you do not contact your professors before April 15, we may have trouble rescheduling you for your preferred time.

Accommodations for Accessibility

If you have a documented disability, please contact the Office of Disabilities Services (ODS) as soon as possible.

ODS is a fantastic resource! It will coordinate with you what you need for your disability in order to do well in the class, and the professor will never know why you have those requirements.

However, it's important to remember that professors cannot provide accommodations (for example, note-taking, additional time on exams, etc.) without documentation from ODS: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>. I am happy to provide them for you once you have the documentation to me!

Electronics

There is NO cell phone use (no texting; messaging; browsing) during class.

No laptop use in class EXCEPT for note-taking. In recent years the frequent use of laptops for activities unrelated to class has become a problem. Students are often unaware of how distracting to the instructor and to other members of the class these activities are. Since attention to the class is a requirement, the policy of no irrelevant laptop use will be enforced by deductions of points from the grade. If this policy proves to be insufficient to prevent irrelevant and distracting laptop use, then I will prohibit all laptop use during class.

Recording

No electronic recording of the lecture is allowed. This includes photos, videos, audio recording, cell-phone-based, and any other type of electronic recording.

Extra Credit

Any extra credit will be offered only at the discretion of the instructor, and only to the entire class.

No individual requests for extra credit will be honored; requesting personal extra credit assignments is disrespectful to your classmates.

Email Policies

All electronic communication about the course will be through email – you will receive notices about additions to the course site, reminders about exams, etc. through your SAS email. Please be sure to check your SAS email at least once every weekday.

The best way to contact me is through email. Please note that due to Federal Regulations protecting your privacy, I cannot respond to emails sent from non-Rutgers email accounts, and you will get an auto-response saying as such.

As I teach multiple courses, please include the course and section number in the subject, and your full name in the email itself.

Please note that lengthy or complex issues will not be discussed over email. Grades will never be discussed over email, for your own privacy.

Feel free to send me an email at any time! However, be aware that I am rarely available immediately, and it may take up to two full business days for me to respond. If I haven't responded after three business days, please re-send the email.

Cheating/Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

The consequences of scholastic dishonesty are very serious. Please review the Rutgers' academic integrity policy. (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>)

Academic integrity means, among other things:

- Develop and write all of your own assignments. This includes not asking others for answers on homework questions, or looking at others' exams.
- Show in detail where the materials you use in your papers come from. Create citations whether you are paraphrasing authors or quoting them directly. Be sure always to show source and page number within the assignment and include a bibliography in the back.
- Do not fabricate information or citations in your work.
- Do not facilitate academic dishonesty for another student by allowing your own work to be submitted by others.

If you are in doubt about any issue related to plagiarism or scholastic dishonesty in any course, please discuss it with your professor or TA.

Other useful sites:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu>

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/cardinal-rules.html>

University vs. Sakai

Be sure to keep track of information from the University, such as meeting times and exam times. If there is a conflict between our website and the University posting, assume the University posting is correct.

Student Wellness Services

Just In Case Web App
<http://codu.co/cee05e>
911 contact through an app.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)
(848) 932-7884 || 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 || <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)
(848) 932-1181 || 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 || www.vpva.rutgers.edu
The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services
(848) 445-6800 || Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 || <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>
Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Agreement to Policies

If you decide to stay enrolled in this class, it is assumed you have read the entire syllabus and agree to all the policies, dates, assignments, etc. outlined.