

Spring 2013

01:830:305 – Cognition

- Section 04: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:20 – 4:40 PM, Beck AUD
- Section 07: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:40 – 8:00 PM, SEC 111

Instructor:

Dr. John Ackroff

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1:00 – 2:30, and by appointment

I do not have any Special Permission Numbers.

Textbook:

Medin, D.L., Ross, B.H., and Markman, A.B. (2005). *Cognitive Psychology*. (Fourth Edition). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ISBN 9780470879290.

Available at New Jersey Books, 37 Easton Avenue, New Brunswick.

This is an unbound version, which is cheaper than the standard text. If you can find a used version of the bound version of the 4th Edition, you can use that. The contents are the same.

A copy of the book will be on reserve at the Kilmer Area Library.

About Cognition – Course Goals:

Most people think that cognition is about thinking and learning. In this course, we will take a much broader approach, and look at how our brain and mental processes are involved in almost every aspect of our lives. We will also see how we can apply the information discussed in the course to situations outside the classroom. You should also improve your critical thinking skills as a result of taking this course.

Exams and Grading:

You are expected to comply with Rutgers' [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

There will be three non-cumulative exams based on the text and other materials presented in class. You are responsible for bringing pencils with erasers to each exam. You must also bring your Rutgers ID Card to the exam. Exam scores will be posted in Gradebook2 on sakai. Whenever scores are posted, the grade scale will

be updated so that the letter grade you see corresponds to your current grade based on the total number of points (including extra credit) you have earned.

The first two exams will consist of two parts: 40 multiple choice questions, worth 80% of the grade for that exam, and an essay question worth 20% of your grade for that exam. One week prior to each exam, four essay questions will be posted online. Two of those questions will be selected for the exam; you will be required to answer either one of them in class. A sample question and answer will be posted before the first exam to give you some guidance as to what is expected. The third exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions.

The multiple choice parts of the exams are likely to be administered online using sakai. Both sections will take the exam at the same time, as indicated on the schedule below. The essay components will be administered in class, as shown on the schedule.

If you have questions about your score on a Multiple Choice exam, you can discuss them with Dr. Ackroff. If you have a question about your essay questions, you must discuss it with your Teaching Assistant. In either case, you should do this before the next exam.

If you have a schedule conflict with an exam, you may be allowed to take the exam before the scheduled date at the discretion of the instructor. If you miss an exam, you will be allowed to take a make-up exam only if you provide documentation for a valid reason for missing the exam. For absences due to colds, etc., a note from your Health Center or doctor will be acceptable. For more serious issues such as a death in the family or serious health or personal issues, you may present a note from your Dean's office verifying that you missed the exam due to an excused absence. This note should also indicate a reasonable time frame in which you will be able to make up the exam. You should give this note to the instructor within 1 week of your return to class.

If an exam is cancelled or postponed on the day of the exam, there will be a member of the Psychology Department in the room at the scheduled time to make the announcement. Notices posted on doors or the blackboard are likely to be hoaxes.

Grading in this course works differently from most other courses. Final grades will be determined by the total number of questions you answer correctly on the exams and your scores on the essay questions. However, do not think that achieving 90% of the total possible points guarantees you an A.

At the end of the semester, points for all exams are totaled for each student. An absolute frequency distribution of all scores is made. Typically, scores cluster, and there are natural "cut points" in the distribution. The top 20% or so of the students usually do *very* well on everything, and receive an A in the course. The next 25% or so do *pretty* well on everything (or very well on some things and not so well on others), and receive B or B+ for their grade. The next 40% or so do OK, and earn C or C+ grades. The bottom 10 or 15% receive D or F grades.

Extra credit points (see below) are added to the total number of points you score after we determine the cutoffs.

Practice Exams

will be made available on sakai.

Extra Credit:

You will have an opportunity to earn extra credit points by taking special forms of the practice exams. This will be explained when the first Practice Exam is made available.

There may be opportunities to earn extra credit through participating in experiments; these will be announced if and when they become available.

Note that these are the only opportunities available for extra credit.

Attendance and Correspondence Policies:

- **Attendance:** You should attend all meetings of all of your classes. My lectures are based on the material in the assigned readings, but may also cover material not discussed in the readings. You are responsible for all of this material.

If you arrive late or must leave before class is over, please sit near a door and try to be as inconspicuous as possible. It is distracting to everyone to have people walking in and out of the classroom during class.

Classes are held according to the schedule below as long as the University is open. If the weather appears to be threatening, you can check the [Campus Operating Status](#) here.

If an class is cancelled, postponed, or moved on the day of class, there will be a member of the Psychology Department in the room at the scheduled time to make the announcement. Notices posted on doors or the blackboard are likely to be hoaxes.

- **Classroom Etiquette:** Please turn off all cell phones, etc., before class begins.

If you wish to use a laptop computer to take notes, that is fine. If you wish to use a laptop computer to surf the web, play games, IM your friends, etc., I would suggest you go to the nearest Student Center. This advice also applies to having side discussions with your classmates, reading newspapers, doing puzzles, etc.

- **Questions:** I encourage you to ask questions during class. If something is unclear, or if you have a question related to the material being discussed, please ask your question then. Chances are that some of your classmates would also like some additional discussion of the topic.
- **Email:** I try to answer email promptly. Having said that,
 - Please use a Subject that gives me some idea what you are writing about. This is especially important if you send mail from an account other than eden. Mail from sexgoddess@aol.com with a subject of "hello" is likely to be considered spam and deleted unread.
 - If you ask me a question whose answer is on the course web page or Syllabus, my reply is likely to say that.
 - If you ask me a question about your standing in the course, please include your name and which course and section you are enrolled in.
 - Please re-read the section on "Questions" above. I realize that there are times when you are

reviewing notes after class and/or before an exam when you will discover that you have a question. But it is in everyone's best interest for you to ask your questions in class, rather than after the fact, if you have a question while class is in session.

- You are responsible for any announcements, etc., I send to the class via email.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
Tuesday, January 22	(No Class)	
Wednesday, January 23 Thursday, January 24	Course Introduction and Overview	
Monday, January 28 Tuesday, January 29	History of Cognition: Basic Scientific Principles	Chapter 1
Wednesday, January 30 Thursday, January 31	Learning	Chapter 2
Monday, February 4 Tuesday, February 5	Learning, cont'd	
Wednesday, February 6 Thursday, February 7	Perception	Chapter 3
Monday, February 11 Tuesday, February 12	Attention	Chapter 4
Wednesday, February 13 Thursday, February 14	Attention, cont'd	
Monday, February 18 Tuesday, February 19	Review for Exam I	Chapters 1 - 4
Wednesday, February 20 Thursday, February 21	EXAM I ESSAY	Chapters 1 - 4
	Section 04	3:20 - 3:40 PM
	Section 07	6:40 - 7:00 PM
Sunday, February 24	ON-LINE MULTIPLE CHOICE EXAM I	Chapters 1 - 4
	Both Sections	3:00 - 4:00 PM
Monday, February 25 Tuesday, February 26	Memory: Remembering New Information	Chapter 5
Wednesday, February 27 Thursday, February 28	Memory Systems and Knowledge	Chapter 6
Monday, March 4 Tuesday, March 5	Memory: Beyond Basic Effects	Chapter 7

Wednesday, March 6 Thursday, March 7	Spatial Memory, Imagery, and Visual Memory	Chapter 8
Monday, March 11 Tuesday, March 12	Language	Chapter 9
Wednesday, March 13 Thursday, March 14	Language, cont'd	
Week of March 18	No Class -- Spring Break	
Monday, March 25 Tuesday, March 26	No Class	
Wednesday, March 27 Thursday, March 28	Review for Exam II	
Saturday, March 30	ON-LINE MULTIPLE CHOICE EXAM II Both Sections	Chapters 5 - 9 3:00 - 4:00 PM
Monday, April 1 Tuesday, April 2	EXAM II ESSAY Section 04 Section 07	Chapters 5 - 9 3:20 - 3:40 PM 6:40 - 7:00 PM
Wednesday, April 3 Thursday, April 4	Concepts and Categories	Chapter 10
Monday, April 8 Tuesday, April 9	Reasoning	Chapter 11
Wednesday, April 10 Thursday, April 11	Reasoning, cont'd	
Monday, April 15 Tuesday, April 16	Problem Solving	Chapter 12
Wednesday, April 17 Thursday, April 18	Problem Solving, cont'd	
Monday, April 22 Tuesday, April 23	Expertise and Creativity	Chapter 13
Wednesday, April 24 Thursday, April 25	Judgment and Decision Making	Chapter 14
Monday, April 29 Tuesday, April 30	Intelligence	
Wednesday, May 1 Thursday, May 2	Review	
Monday, May 6	No Class	
Final Exam	ON-LINE MULTIPLE CHOICE EXAM III Rules for Final Exam Conflicts	Chapters 10 - 14 and Intelligence
Thursday, May 9	Section 07	8:00 - 9:00 PM

Wednesday, May 15

Section 04

12:00 - 1:00 PM

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