

Psychology 201: Cognitive Psychology

Fall 2016

Course Information:

Professor: Vanessa Hemovich, Ph.D.

Class days/time: Mondays and Wednesday, 5:00pm-6:20pm

Class room: Blanc

Instructor Email: vhemovich@digipen.edu

Office hours: Thursday (1:00pm-2:00pm)

Office phone: x5007

Course Description

This course emphasizes emergent research on the theory and dynamics of consciousness and the “cognitive unconscious”. Students are exposed to recent research that has led to an unprecedented understanding of higher human cognitive processes such as creativity, learning, perception, information processing, and memory.

The goal of cognitive science is to understand the purpose and function of mental processes. Cognition is a transdisciplinary discipline that draws heavily from a variety of different areas including psychology, computer science, linguistics, neuroscience, and behavioral economics. The goal of this course is to introduce classic and contemporary mental processing theories of cognition and employ these frameworks to concepts of the physiology of the human as it relates to the interpretation and categorization of various forms of information processing. Additional constructs are investigated with a specialized emphasis on the relation of these concepts to video game production and design, including rapid and multi-target localization processes, spatial and temporal aspects of attentional selection, visual field activation, and perceptual reaction.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The overarching goal of this course is to introduce students to cognitive psychology by establishing a core knowledge base consisting of basic theoretical frameworks and scientific applications. Students will also learn to recognize how cognitive principles are found within video games and utilized in the gaming industry. Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Describe and apply fundamental topics, theories, and basic applications in cognition;
2. Understand how cognitive processes operate in relation to each other, the brain, and the environment;
3. Recognize the relationship between principles of cognition experiments and the application of findings used to solve problems; and
4. Identify and explain cognitive effects and phenomena found and applied across environmental and mass media contexts (including game production and design).

Learning Experiences

Class will meet every Monday and Wednesday from 5:00pm – 6:20pm. You are responsible for attending every class lecture as I will be covering material not necessarily discussed in assigned readings. If you have a question about the lectures, exams, or course readings, please make an effort to discuss this with me either after class, during my office hours, or via email. I will not provide notes if you miss a lecture, in which case you are encouraged to get these from another student in class.

Course Text:

There is no textbook required for this course.

Assigned readings will be drawn from a variety of sources that include selections from contemporary literature, research from academic and scientific articles, and other academic texts. Relevant course material (i.e., assigned readings) will be distributed regularly throughout the duration of the course. These materials will be handed out by the instructor in class. Readings are used to supplement in-class activities, lectures, quizzes/exams, and homeworks assignments that will count toward a student's overall final grade.

Participation

It is hoped that lectures and in-class activities will inspire lively discussions to further engage your own interests in psychology. Students who thoughtfully and sincerely participate during class or outside class settings such as email exchanges with me will generally receive full participation credit. Students who are otherwise courteous and consistently present in class will receive points in keeping with their course average on tests and papers.

Course Policies

I treat students with respect and professionalism and expect the same in return. Class begins promptly at 5:00pm. Please be on time.

You have the responsibility to attend every class and complete weekly assigned readings *before class*. Exams will include both the distributed readings and in-class lecture materials, thus it is in your best interest to be present for each and every class. As this is a relatively small class, I fully expect to get to know most students on a first-name basis and will notice if you are periodically late or missing. Attendance is mandatory, and student absences will be closely monitored in this course. A considerable portion of a student's final grade is determined by attendance and participation. All unexcused absences will result in a grading penalty. More than two unexcused absences will have a definitive impact that adversely affects your final grade and, in extreme cases, may lead to an automatic "F" for the course despite prior performance on any assignments, quizzes, or exams.

In addition, I treat acts of plagiarism and other types of academic dishonesty in any form as a very serious offense and pursue such violations to the fullest extent I am able as an instructor. "Plagiarism" includes (but is not limited to) deliberately using others' written work from an external source that is presented as the student's own effort or failing to use proper citations as acknowledgment of the true source of information. "Academic dishonesty" includes cheating (i.e., using any device or other form of study aid during an examination or quiz), assuming another individual's identity or allowing another person to do so on one's own behalf for the purpose of fulfilling an assignment or enhancing the student's grade or academic standing, or falsifying attendance records other graded exercises of any kind. You will receive an automatic "F" if you engage in any act of plagiarism or any form of academic misconduct in this class, and I pursue such violations to the fullest extent I am able as an instructor.

Quizzes and Exams

There will be a total of three quizzes evenly spaced throughout the semester, worth 20 points each.

Quizzes are typically administered at the beginning of the designated class. ***Students that show up late to class on the day of a quiz will not be permitted to take that quiz.*** Each quiz will cover two to three of the most recently covered modules in the course and are designed to provide students with feedback regarding progress throughout the course. If you do well on the quizzes, you will probably do well on the exams.

There are also two in-class exams covering the modules indicated at the end of this syllabus. Students are encouraged to share notes with one another and form study groups in preparation for quizzes and exams. Use of notes will not be permitted during quizzes or tests. All exam questions will be in multiple choice or short answer format. The Final Exam is cumulative with the majority of test questions weighted toward the latter portion of the class material. Scantrons will be provided to the class on the day of the exams, but it is your responsibility to bring a #2 pencil to mark your answers. Both exams must be taken in order to receive a passing grade, thus it is recommended you strive to do well on both tests to do well in the course.

Students may not make-up quizzes or exams, except in extreme circumstances that are both beyond the student's control and verifiable. If you cannot take a quiz or exam on the day it is administered, you must do one of the following: (1) contact me at least five days beforehand with an explanation of why you require a rescheduled test date (e.g., an official school function, athletic event, performance, etc.), or (2) provide an official written excuse for your failure to complete the test as scheduled (e.g., a note from the doctor who treated you). If either of these conditions are met, you will be allowed a make-up date to take the quiz or exam. You should know your activity schedule at the beginning of the semester. Look at the class schedule below and determine early on if you foresee a potential conflict and be sure to contact me.

Homework Assignment Summaries

There will be 7 homework assignments worth 15 points each, with a due date that generally falls on a Thursday (see Course Schedule). Additional instructions will be provided in class. *To receive full credit, homework assignments must be submitted at the start of class the day they are due.* Late assignments will be penalized -3 points each day they are late and will not be accepted more than 2 days after the official due date.

Final Written Assignment

Over the course of the semester, students will be asked to complete one 3-5 page paper ***due the day of the Final Exam.*** To give you some creative flexibility, you may choose **ONE** of the following options: (1) review a fundamental theory in cognitive psychology, or (2) find a research article and provide a summary of what the article is about/what the results were/possible limitations, or (3) write a review of a book, movie, or game that incorporates cognitive psychology.

For this assignment, many students choose to identify and discuss how a particular video game incorporates elements of cognitive psychology. For example, this might include exploring how navigating certain elements within a game improves memory functions for game-related tasks, the role of flashbulb memories in game play, decision-making, or how interacting with various content fosters the

development of learned associations. This may also involve a critical examination of certain strengths and limitations of cognitive techniques utilized within a game, along with offering potential suggestions for improvement. I encourage students to be creative with this assignment!

Regardless of which option you choose, this assignment paper must be written in 6th edition APA format. If you are unfamiliar with APA style, Google search “OWL at Purdue APA 6th edition” for more information. I will also upload a sample APA paper to the course website in Moodle as an example of this formatting style. **You must include the full APA-style reference for the material you choose to write about.** You may select any theories, research articles, books/films/games, or other materials of interest to write about but it must be relevant to the nature of this course. I will be providing a sample copy of an APA style paper in the coming weeks. Writing an Abstract for this assignment is not required, but many students choose to include one. A Title page is required, along with a References page with at least 1-2 sources included (note: Wikipedia does not count as original source material).

Students may submit a rough draft of the paper before the official due date to receive evaluative feedback (tentatively scheduled for no later than one week before the Final Exam). It is strongly recommended that you begin working on this assignment as early as possible to avoid unnecessary stress during the final weeks of the course. Students may submit their final draft of the paper up to one week in advance of the deadline. Late papers will be penalized ½ grade per day after the deadline and will not be accepted more than three days after the official due date.

Student Disability and Support Services

DigiPen strives to ensure that all students are provided with an equal opportunity to participate in each course. Students seeking formal accommodations to fully participate in the course may be eligible for assistance and can contact the Disability Support Services Office at (425) 629-5015 or via email at dss@digipen.edu to arrange accommodations for this class. The DSS Office welcomes the opportunity to meet with students to discuss how accommodations will be implemented.

Grading Plan

Your grade in this course is determined entirely by the total points you earn. The breakdown of the course grades is as follows:

Quiz 1	20 pts	(5%)
Quiz 2	20 pts	(5%)
Quiz 3	20 pts	(5%)
Homework Assignments	105 pts	(15%)
Midterm Exam	40 pts	(20%)
Final Exam	60 pts	(25%)
Attendance & Participation	70 pts	(10%)
<u>Written Assignment</u>	<u>75 pts</u>	<u>(15%)</u>
<i>Total Points Possible</i>	410 pts	

Grades in this course will not be curved automatically. As such, your final grade is calculated as a percentage of the total possible points you could have earned in the duration of the course (see the Grading Scale Distribution, below).

If it so happens that less than 50% of students in this class have earned a final grade of 2.5, a curve will be applied so that 50% of students in the class achieve a grade of at least 2.5.

Grading Scale Distribution

<u>%</u>	<u>Grade</u>
93-100%	A
90-92.99%	A-
87-89.99%	B+
83-86.99%	B
80-82.99%	B-
77-79.99%	C+
73-76.99%	C
70-72.99%	C-
60-69.99%	D
<60%	F

Tentative Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Assignments/Readings</u>
Week 1 <i>Monday, Sept. 5th</i> <i>Wednesday, Sept. 7th</i>	NO CLASS Course Introduction and Overview	Reading #1
Week 2 <i>Monday, Sept. 12th</i> <i>Wednesday, Sept. 14th</i>	History of Cognition: Basic Principles Cognition and the Brain (con't)	Reading #2 Homework #1 Due
Week 3 <i>Monday, Sept. 19th</i> <i>Wednesday, Sept. 21st</i>	Sensation and Perception Quiz #1	Reading #3
Week 4 <i>Monday, Sept. 26th</i> <i>Wednesday, Sept. 28th</i>	Mental Imagery and Mapping NO CLASS	Homework #2 Due
Week 5 <i>Monday, Oct. 3rd</i> <i>Wednesday, Oct. 5th</i>	Mental Imagery and Mapping (con't) Attentional Processes and Cognition	Reading #4
Week 6 <i>Monday, Oct. 10th</i> <i>Wednesday, Oct. 12th</i>	Attentional Processes and Memory EXAM 1	Homework #3 Due
Week 7 <i>Monday, Oct. 17th</i> <i>Wednesday, Oct. 19th</i>	Spatial and Visual Memory Spatial and Visual Memory (con't)	Reading #5
Week 8 <i>Monday, Oct. 24^{ht}</i> <i>Wednesday, Oct. 26th</i>	Spatial and Visual Memory (con't) Quiz #2	Reading #6
Week 9 <i>Monday, Oct. 31st</i> <i>Wednesday, Nov. 2nd</i>	Language and Cognition Language and Cognition (con't)	Homework #4 Due

Tentative Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Assignments/Readings</u>
Week 10 <i>Monday, Nov. 7th</i> <i>Wednesday, Nov. 9th</i>	Decision Making & Problem Solving Decision Making & Problem Solving (con't)	Homework #5 Due
Week 11 <i>Monday, Nov. 14th</i> <i>Wednesday, Nov. 16th</i>	Emotion and Cognition Emotion and Cognition (con't)	Reading #7
Week 12 <i>Monday, Nov. 21st</i> <i>Wednesday, Nov. 23rd</i>	Creativity and Expertise Quiz #3	Homework #6 Due
Week 13 <i>Monday, Nov. 28th</i> <i>Wednesday, Nov. 30th</i>	Creativity and Expertise (con't) NO CLASS	Reading #8
Week 14 <i>Monday, Dec. 5th</i> <i>Wednesday, Dec. 7th</i>	Judgments and Reasoning Judgments and Reasoning (con't)	Homework #7 Due
Finals Week	Final Exam (Dec. 13th)	Final Written Assignment Due
