

Course Syllabus: Psychology 280, “Cognitive Psychology”

Spring 2005: TR 3:30-4:45; 284 Eberhart Building

Dr. Michael J. Kane (<http://www.uncg.edu/~mjkane/HomePage.html>)

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Required Text: Hunt & Ellis (2004, 7th edition). Fundamentals of Cognitive Psychology.

Prerequisites: Psy 121

Course Description

This is a course about human cognition, and in it we will be exploring the science of the mind. Consider the topic of this class to be the scientific study of the mental events involved in attention, action, memory, consciousness, and thinking. We'll be asking questions like: Why do we get distracted? How does practice make perfect? Does subliminal persuasion work? Can we really do two things at once? Does alcohol affect your memory? What does it mean to “forget” something? Are recovered memories of sexual abuse and UFO abductions accurate? Is it possible to implant “false memories” in other people? How do you know what you know? Does alcohol affect your memory?

My goals in this course are to have you demonstrate: (1) an awareness and knowledge of major psychological approaches to studying cognition, and the major theoretical issues involved; (2) an understanding of the findings and methodologies of cognitive research, and an ability to recognize the benefits and limitations of various research designs; (3) a knowledge of important cognitive concepts and terminology. All of these goals will be evaluated by examinations. I also have goals for this course that will not be evaluated by exam, such as stimulating your intellectual curiosity about human cognition, and helping you appreciate the beauty and necessity of the scientific method for understanding what is true about our minds, our behaviors, and our world in general.

Grades

Your scores on 3 in-semester exams and the Final Exam will determine your grade. All exams will be composed of multiple-choice questions, and they will all count equally (25%) toward your final grade. The final exam is cumulative, covering all the material dealt with in the course. Note that I do not grade “on a curve,” so your grade is your grade, and your classmates’ scores do not influence it. Thus, there is no reason to be competitive with your fellow students. Each exam may be made up of a different number of questions and/or points, so your grade on each exam will be a percentage correct score:

A: 100 to 90%; B: 89 to 80%; C: 79 to 70%; D: 69 to 60%; F: 59% and below.

Final Exam

The final is scheduled for **Thursday, 5/5 at 3:30 pm**. Students with more than two examinations within 24 hours may apply to the University Registrar’s Office, 180 Mossman Building, for permission to change their exam schedules. The usual policy is to change the middle examination in a sequence of three.

Make-Ups

In order to have the opportunity to take a make-up exam, you must provide me with written documentation of an illness or an emergency. I then will determine whether your absence is excused. Non-emergency travel, for example, does not qualify as an excused absence. If your absence is excused, then a make-up test may be arranged at a mutually convenient time, but before the exams are returned to the rest of the class. You are encouraged NOT to miss any exams.

Extra Credit

There is **no** extra credit for this course.

Attendance

Attending class is strongly advised, but not mandatory. I very much encourage you to attend every class. First of all, I hope it will be interesting and useful to you; most people find the material in this course to be difficult. Second, I will often lecture on material that is not in the textbook, and my lecture material will be emphasized on exams. Poor attendance will very likely lead to a poor grade, but it is your choice as an adult.

Arriving late or leaving before class is over is distracting to your classmates – please don't do it. If you know that you will have to leave class early for an important reason one day, it is considered polite to tell me in advance and sit near an exit to minimize disturbance.

If you carry a cell phone, please turn it off when you come to class. If there is some compelling reason why you need to leave it turned on one day, please come and discuss it with me.

Cheating

As a preventive measure, this class will follow the UNCG policy on cheating. A copy of this policy i.e., the *Academic Integrity Policy*, see: <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/>

I take cheating very seriously, so please don't do it in my class. During exams:

- 1) All written material must be out of sight, whether it belongs to you or not.
- 2) Calculators, computers, cell phones, pagers, & personal stereos must be put away
- 3) Baseball caps must be worn backwards.

Dropping/Withdrawal

The University policy on withdrawal will be followed (see page 37 of the Undergraduate Bulletin 2004-2005, or see: <http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/current/AcaRegs/CourseSelection.html>).

The last date to drop this course without academic penalty is **Wednesday, 3/16**.

Tentative Semester Schedule – Topics, Readings, & Exams

(Deviations may be necessary for anything except Examination dates)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Material</u>	<u>Corresponding Book Chptr</u>
1/11	Introductions, Syllabus	
1/13	History of Cognitive Psychology	1
1/18	Cognitive Psychology as a Science	
1/20	Perception, Attention, Action: <i>Sensory Register</i>	2 (37-50)
1/25	Perception, Attention, Action: <i>Control of Perception (Selective Attn)</i>	3
1/27	Perception, Attention, Action: <i>Control of Perception (Subliminal?)</i>	
2/1	Perception, Attention, Action: <i>Control of Perception (Divided Attn)</i>	
2/3	Perception, Attention, Action: <i>Control of Action (Divided Attn)</i>	
2/8	Perception, Attention, Action: <i>Control of Action (Divided Attn: Applied)</i>	
2/10	<u>EXAMINATION 1</u>	
2/15	Review Exam 1	
2/17	Immediate Memory: <i>Multi-Store Model & Short-Term Memory</i>	4
2/22	Immediate Memory: <i>Multi-Store Model & Short-Term Memory</i>	
2/24	Immediate Memory: <i>Working Memory Structures (Verbal vs. Spatial)</i>	
3/1	Immediate Memory: <i>Working Memory Functions (Language and intelligence)</i>	
3/3	Immediate Memory: <i>Working Memory and Executive Control</i>	
3/8	<u>SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS</u>	
3/10	<u>SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS</u>	
3/15	Long-Term Memory: <i>Encoding (Quantity & Quality of Study)</i>	5 (139-152)
3/17	Long-Term Memory: <i>Encoding (Organization & Generation at Study)</i>	
3/22	<u>EXAMINATION 2</u>	
3/29	Review Exam 2	
3/31	Long-Term Memory: <i>Encoding & Retrieval (Context Effects)</i>	5 (161-5); 13 (378-382)
4/5	Long-Term Memory: <i>Retrieval (Memory Systems)</i>	6
4/7	Long-Term Memory: <i>Retrieval (Memory Systems)</i>	
4/12	Long-Term Memory: <i>Retrieval (Practice, Forgetting & Interference)</i>	7 (202-214)
4/14	<u>NO CLASS: Dr. Kane out of town</u>	
4/19	Long-Term Memory: <i>Reconstructive Processes & False Memories</i>	7 (214-231)
4/21	Long-Term Memory: <i>Reconstructive Processes & False Memories</i>	
4/26	Long-Term Memory: <i>Reconstructive Processes & False Memories</i>	
4/28	<u>EXAMINATION 3</u>	
5/1	Review Exam 3	
<u>5/5</u>	<u>FINAL EXAMINATION – 3:30 pm</u>	