

# PSY (CGS) 3361-501—Cognitive Psychology—Spring 2008

HH 2.402 Monday 7:00-9:45 PM

## Instructor Contact Information

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Office: HH 2.402  
Office hours: Mon 3:30-4:30 PM

## Teaching Asst Contact Information TBA

**Prerequisites:** Introductory Psychology

### **Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to the scientific study of the mind and mental processes, including perception, imagery, attention, working memory, long-term memory, semantic memory, reasoning, decision making, and language comprehension. The focus is on the current research and theory in this rapidly evolving field. We will also consider the relevance of brain-imaging and brain-injury results as well as behavioral data.

### **Student Learning Objectives:**

After completing the course, students should be able to:

1.1 describe the primary objectives of scientific psychology (describing, explaining, predicting, and changing behavioral and mental processes).

1.2 demonstrate understanding of the history of cognitive psychology, including the evolution of methods of psychology, its theoretical conflicts, and sociocultural contexts.

2.1 (a) weigh support for conclusions and identify weak, contradictory, and in appropriate assertions.

2.1 (b) demonstrate an attitude of critical thinking that includes tolerance for ambiguity and intellectual engagement in processing literature related to the course

2.2 (c) evaluate whether research methods convincingly translate hypotheses into appropriate study designs and measurement operations.

2.2 (d) determine the extent to which research findings support specific hypotheses and explanatory contentions.

2.2 (e) evaluate whether conclusions drawn from research findings are warranted, and whether the discussion of the strengths and limitations of research are adequate.

3.1 Apply psychological concepts, theories and research findings to issues of everyday life.

3.3 Describe how applying psychological principles can enlighten social issues and inform public policy.

### **Required Textbook and Materials:**

Matlin, Margaret. *Cognition*, Harcourt Brace, 2005 (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)

**Course Website:** <http://galaxy.utdallas.edu>

### **Exams and Assignments:**

**Exams:** We will have three exams based on the lectures and reading, all in multiple-choice and short-answer format, and all weighted equally. The first two exams will be non-cumulative. The final will consist of 25% material from the first third of the course (material covered prior to Exam 1), 25% from the second third of the course (material covered between Exam 1 and Exam 2), and 50% from the final third of the course (material covered after Exam 2)

**Review Assignments:** There will be two assignments that will be required during the course (worth 5 points each toward the

final grade). For these reviews, the student is to find a journal article relevant to cognitive psychology and write a one-half page summary of what the results may mean for everyday life. These will be due at the beginning of the class periods listed below in the syllabus dates. If these summaries are turned in late points will be reduced by one point per day late.

**Attendance:** Attendance in class is strongly encouraged. Material from both the lectures and textbook will appear on the exams. Moreover, the lectures will often indicate which material in the text is particularly important.

### **Grading Policy**

Grading is based on a set of *a priori* criteria: 90% correct for A, 80% for B, 70% for C, and 60% for D. In the event that the tests prove unusually difficult, I will relax these criteria somewhat. Grades will be based on the total number of points (i.e., not on an averaging of letter grades). Each exam will count for 30% of the total grade. Review Assignments will count for the remaining 10% of the total grade. Pluses and minuses will be assigned when average scores across all three tests fall within 2 to 3 points of a major grade boundary.

### **Course & Instructor Policies**

**DON'T MISS AN EXAM!** Make-up exams will be given only if: (a) you were seriously ill and have documentation from a physician, or (b) you have a police report (e.g., auto accident) indicating you were detained the day and time of the exam, or (c) you made arrangements prior to the exam to attend an important event (e.g., a funeral). In any of these cases, you must notify the professor in advance of the scheduled time of the exam (call or leave an e-mail message if you can do nothing else). Otherwise, you will receive an F on the exam. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that an exam is made up within one week of the scheduled time. It is to your advantage to take the regular exam: Make-up exams are designed to be more difficult to compensate for the advantage of greater study time.

**Faulty Exam Questions:** Occasionally, exam questions can be unclear and faulty. If you encounter such a question, let me know immediately after the exam period. (You may talk to the instructor or leave a note with the secretary in the Associate Dean's Office, GR 4.528). I will consider your arguments before grading the exams, and if necessary throw out the question for everyone.

*Descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
Jan 7	Introduction and Orientation; Cognitive Science, Cognitive Neuroscience, & Artificial Intelligence	Ch. 1
14	Visual and Auditory Recognition; Object and Speech Recognition	Ch. 2
21	<b>NO CLASS</b> – Martin Luther King Jr. Day	
28	Attention: Types of attention and cognitive theories of attention; The study of consciousness	Ch. 3
Feb 4	Short-term Memory; Modern Working Memory	Ch. 4
11	Long-Term Memory I: Levels of Processing and Context Effects; Emotion, Amnesia, Expertise	Ch. 5
18	<b>EXAM 1</b>	Ch. 1 – 5
25	Memory Optimization; Memory Strategies & Practice	Ch. 6
Mar 3	Mental Imagery; Cognitive Neuroscience of mental imagery and Cognitive maps <b>REVIEW ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE</b>	Ch. 7
10	<b>NO CLASS</b> – Spring Break	
17	Representation of world knowledge; Semantic Memory	Ch. 8
24	Cognitive Psychology of Language; Psycholinguistics	Ch. 9 & 10
31	<b>EXAM 2</b>	Ch. 6-10
Apr 7	Problem Solving; Creativity	Ch. 11
14	Deduction and Human Reasoning; The Study of Judgment and Decision Making	Ch. 12
21	Cognition throughout the lifespan I: Cognitive development; Cognitive Aging <b>REVIEW ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE</b>	Ch. 13
28	Final Review	
May 5	<b>FINAL EXAM</b> (7pm HH 2.402)	Ch. 8

## Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com), which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

## Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

## Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

## Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response

provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

## Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

## Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22  
PO Box 830688  
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688  
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

## Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***