

# PSYCHOLOGY 219: COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

FALL, 2012 T-Th 9:30 – 10:50 Science Center A254

*Dr. Patricia deWinstanley*, Severance 103; Office Ph: 775-5705; e-mail: pdewinst@oberlin.edu

Office Hours: T -Th (11:00-11:50; 3:00 – 4:00) and by appointment

**COURSE OVERVIEW:** Cognitive psychology is the science of mental structures and processes involved in sensation, perception, attention, memory, problem solving, and language. In short, cognitive psychologists study the structures and processes that allow intelligent (and in a few cases, not so intelligent) behavior. As such, cognitive psychology is a cornerstone of modern day psychology having implications for social psychology, clinical psychology, and developmental psychology. Furthermore, research in cognitive psychology has many real world applications in the fields of engineering, computer science, marketing, and the law.

## Course Goals and Objectives

1. Students will acquire an understanding of how Cognitive Psychologists study mental structures and processes.
  - a. Students will be able to read about an experiment and interpret the results of the experiment.
  - b. Students will be able to determine whether an experimental design is an adequate test of a theory.
  - c. Students will be able to evaluate whether a set of results supports a theory or not.
  - d. Students will be able to evaluate theories based on the experimental support for or against the theory.
2. Students will become familiar with the types of questions that concern Cognitive Psychologists by means of a broad coverage of the field.
  - a. Students will demonstrate mastery of several concepts associated with each of the main topics concerning Cognitive Psychology.
  - b. Students will understand the lower order to higher order progression of the field of Cognitive Psychology.
  - c. Students will appreciate the interconnectedness of topics concerning Cognitive Psychology.
  - d. Students will be able to evaluate whether knowledge from one topic can inform what we know about another topic of Cognitive Psychology.
3. Students will understand the reasons for applying the techniques of neuroscience and computational modeling to answer questions in Cognitive Psychology.
  - a. Students will learn about the methods used in cognitive neuroscience and computational modeling.
  - b. Students will learn about how cognitive neuroscience and computational modeling inform the knowledge base in cognitive psychology.
  - c. Students will understand that some questions and theories cannot be adequately addressed using the methods of cognitive psychology alone.
  - d. Students will appreciate that the intersection of the fields of cognitive psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and cognitive science provide better knowledge than can be constructed from any subset of the three.
4. Students will entertain cutting-edge questions and examine indications of future directions in Cognitive Psychology by means of an in-depth coverage of the field.
  - a. Students will learn about the latest trends for each of the topics presented.
  - b. Students will be able to identify several directions that the research in a given field might move.
5. Students will appreciate the applications of Cognitive Psychology.
  - a. Students will endorse the importance of Cognitive Psychology for informing people about everyday problems and situations.
  - b. Students will be able to identify the important areas of application of Cognitive Psychology.

## Required Reading

The textbook for the course is *Cognitive Psychology: Connecting Mind, Research, and Everyday Experience* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) by E. Bruce Goldstein. In addition, you will be reading two articles which will be posted on our course Blackboard site. If you are unable to access our Blackboard site, or if you are having any difficulties obtaining the textbook, please see me immediately.

## Course Requirements

The exams will consist of two midterms and a final. The final is not cumulative. You are expected to take the exams at the scheduled time. If under extraordinary circumstances, I have granted you an alternate mid-term exam time, my policy is that all exam/course related questions must be asked before the normally scheduled exam. If you are taking the exam late, make sure that you have asked your questions before the exam time listed on the course schedule. Changes in the final schedule can be made by the Dean of Studies, only. Be forewarned, travel plans are insufficient justification for changing a final.

You will be answering 10 questions from the end of each chapter of your textbook (see the schedule for the assigned questions). The question answers are due at the beginning of class on Tuesday (no exceptions). If you must be absent from class on a Tuesday due to illness, an emergency, or a pre-arranged absent you will need to make arrangements with me for submitting your answers. **YOUR TEXTBOOK ANSWERS MUST BE HAND WRITTEN.** If you are unable to hand write notes, please see me. Additionally, on Tuesdays you will have a quiz (or paper due). The quiz will consist of 1 question from the textbook answers for the week (see schedule for exceptions). You will be given 10 minutes at the start of class for the quizzes (**All quizzes end at 9:40**). If you are not in class on Tuesday due to an illness or unforeseen emergency, you must make arrangements with me **before** 4:30 pm on the Tuesday that you missed to take a makeup quiz. If you know ahead of time that you must miss a Tuesday, see me as soon as possible; you may be allowed to schedule an early quiz date.

The short papers will be summaries of two articles. I will provide a set of questions to answer for each of the articles. There will not be quizzes on the Tuesdays that the papers are due.

Summary of grade breakdown:	Points
Chapter Questions	26 (2 each)
Tuesday Quizzes	13 (1 each)
Short Papers	16 (8 each)
Exams	45 (15 each)
TOTAL	100

## Course Policies

The Oberlin Honor Code applies to all work submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the course. In addition, you may not use old exams for this course as a study guide; nor may you make available to others your old exams. If you have questions about the Honor Code, please feel free to ask.

The course policy for the short papers is that you may collaborate with others in the class by discussing the assigned reading and how you might answer the questions about the reading. You must work alone when writing the papers. You may discuss the textbook questions and answers with other students but you must work alone when writing the answers to the questions.

On every assignment turned in for credit in the course, you will be required to write and sign the honor code: I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment. For further information on Oberlin's Honor Code, go to <http://new.oberlin.edu/office/dean-of-students/honor/students.dot>.

Permission To Include Work in a Course Portfolio

I understand that my Professor, Patty deWinstanley, is constructing a course portfolio for summative and formative assessment purposes. I hereby give her my permission to include a copy of any and all work that I submit for this course to be included in the course portfolio with the stipulation that all identifying information be removed from my work before it is included in the portfolio.

Please check the appropriate box:

I **give permission to include my work in the course portfolio.**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I **do not** wish for my work to be included in the course portfolio.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_