

# PSYCHOLOGY 219: COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Spring 2014 T-Th 1:30 – 2:50 Severance 108

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Office Hours: T -Th (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 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

You will be answering a set of questions for each of the assigned articles. The preparation papers are due at the beginning of class on Thursdays (see schedule for exceptions). If you must be absent for class on Thursday, you may email me your paper responses **before** the class meeting in which they are due. The preparation papers will prepare you for class discussions about the articles and for the final exam.

The exams will consist of three midterms and a final. The exams will assess your learning of lecture material. The exams are closed book and notes. The final is cumulative and will assess your knowledge of the classroom discussions of the articles and new data discussed on Thursdays. The final is open note and you may bring the articles with you.

Three quizzes will assess your learning of the textbook material. The quizzes are open book and open notes.

You are expected to take the quizzes and exams at the scheduled time. If under **extraordinary** circumstances, I have granted you an alternate quiz or 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.

Summary of grade breakdown:	Percentage Points
Prep Papers	8 ( 1 each)
Textbook Quizzes	30 (10 each)
Exams	45 (15 each)
Final Exam	17
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. All notes that you bring to quizzes or exams must be your own. You may NOT share notes. If you have questions about the Honor Code, please feel free to ask.

The course policy for the paper responses 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 your responses. You may discuss the textbook with other students but you must work alone when taking notes.

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 on 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 Professor 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: \_\_\_\_\_