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## PSYC 327-01, Cognitive Processes, Spring 2006

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**COGNITIVE PROCESSES  
PSYCHOLOGY 327  
SPRING SEMESTER 2006**

Instructor: Dr. Natalie Person  
Office hours: T 3:30 – 4:30  
or by appointment

Phone: 843-3988  
Office: 119 Clough  
email: person@rhodes.edu

**Required text**

Ashcraft, M. H. (2006). *Cognition (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Mason, M. (Ed.) (2005). *Taking sides: Clashing views on controversial issues in cognitive science*. Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill/ Dushkin.

**Purpose**

The psychology of human cognition is currently the dominant field in experimental psychology. There is an enormous amount of research that has been (and is currently being) conducted in this area. Such research addresses questions and ideas that are inherently interesting -- how we learn, reason, understand, and remember (just to name a few). Hopefully, you will leave the course with an introductory knowledge of a broad spectrum of theories and issues in cognitive psychology. Specifically, we will cover topics such as language, text comprehension, reasoning, and problem solving.

There is an important distinction that you will need to learn in this course: The difference between (a) unfortified opinion and attitude and (b) scientific knowledge and principled argumentation. Psychology is a science, not merely a body of folk wisdom. Our claims and theories are fortified by scientific research. Opinions and attitudes tend to become less prominent as one's exposure to scientific material increases. This statement is not intended to discourage your expression of opinions during classroom lectures. Such opinions are greatly encouraged and often prompt interesting classroom discussions.

**Grade evaluation**

You can earn a total of 1000 points in this course. The breakdown of these points is as follows:

Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points
Exam 4	100 points
Quizzes	200 points (20 points each, 10 total)
Presentation	100 points
"I think that . . ." paper	300 points

**Grading scale**

940 - 1000	A	733 - 766	C
900 - 939	A-	700 - 732	C-
867 - 899	B+	667 - 699	D+
833 - 866	B	633 - 666	D

800 - 832      B-  
767 - 799      C+

600 - 632      D-  
0 - 599        F

1. **Exams.** There will be four in-class examinations (1.25 hours); each will cover three Ashcraft chapters the assigned Marion readings. The exams will consist of one section of multiple-choice questions and one section of short essay questions. Each exam is worth 100 points.
2. **Quizzes.** There will regular unannounced quizzes on the reading assignments. The quizzes will include short-answer questions and/or multiple-choice questions. Quizzes will be taken at the **beginning** of the class period; therefore, it is important that you are on time. If you miss or are considerably late for a quiz (regardless of the reason), you will not be given a make-up quiz. Please do not ask before class whether or not we are having a quiz.
3. **“I think” paper.** You will be assigned one of the topics in the Marion book; this will be the topic of both your paper and your class presentation. In the paper, you will be expected to summarize the controversial issue, present the opposing views of the authors, discuss the scientific evidence for both sides, gather additional sources, and formulate your own opinion. The paper must be written in APA format and be between 3500 and 4000 words
4. **Presentation.** You will do one formal presentation to the class on your assigned topic from the Marion book. The presentation should be done in Powerpoint and be 30 minutes in length. You must send your presentation to Dr. Person via email within 24 hours of your presentation.

### **Additional Requirements**

1. Written work. All written work must be typed (double-spaced), proofread, saved on a computer diskette, and printed on a printer with adequate toner. You will be penalized for excessive grammatical, spelling, and formatting mistakes.
2. Honor code. All students are required to read the Honor Code. The constitution of the Honor Code is provided in the Student Handbook. The following will be considered violations of the Honor Code: (1) copying/using the work of other or previous students (cheating), (2) consulting old tests from my or other professors' classes, (3) failing to properly reference published work, (4) lying in official matters, and (5) stealing.
3. Late work. It is in your best interest not to wait until the last minute to write, save, or print your assignments. Ten points will be deducted from each assignment for each day it is late.
4. Attendance. I take roll at each class meeting. Although you will not be penalized for excessive absences, students who fail to show up for class generally earn low grades in this course. If you miss class it is your responsibility to contact a **classmate**, not me, to find out what you missed.

**Tentative Schedule**  
**(Subject to change at the discretion of the instructor)**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC/EVENT</b>	<b>ASSIGNED READINGS &amp; EVENTS</b>
Jan 12 R	Go over syllabus	
Jan 17 T	Introduction to Cognitive Psychology	Chapter 1
Jan 19 R	Measuring Information Process The IP Approach	Chapter 2 (pp. 34-49)
Jan 24 T	What is cognitive science?	Chapter 2 (pp. 51-73) Issue 1
Jan 26 R	Visual and auditory perception	Chapter 3 (pp. 74-91, 113-121) Issue 6 presentation
Jan 31 T	Pattern & Object recognition	Chapter 3 (pp.92-112)
Feb 2 R	Attention	Chapter 4
Feb 7 T	Attention (cont.)	
<b>Feb 9 R</b>	<b>Exam 1</b>	
Feb 14 T	Short-term memory	Chapter 5 (pp.163-189) Issue 7 presentation
Feb 16 R	Working memory	Chapter 5 (pp.185-209) Issue 4 presentation
Feb 21 T	Episodic memory	Chapter 6 Issue 9 presentation
Feb 23 R	Semantic memory	Chapter 7 (pp. 260-281, 287-307) Issue 5 presentation
Feb 28 T	Natural categories	Chapter 7 (pp. 282-286)
Mar 2 R	Semantic Integration	Chapter 8 (pp. 308-340)
Mar 7 T	Eyewitness testimony	Chapter 8 (pp. 341-361) Issue 8 presentation
<b>Mar 9 R</b>	<b>Exam 2</b>	
<b>Mar 14 &amp; 16</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>	
Mar 21 T	Structural and functional features of language	Chapter 9
Mar 23 R	Language acquisition	<i>Chapter 8 from Cole, Cole, &amp; Lightfoot text (will be provided by Dr. Person)</i> Issue 10 presentation

Mar 28 T	Levels of analysis	Chapter 9 Issue 12 presentation
Mar 30 R	Comprehension	Chapter 10 (pp. 415-436)
Apr 4 T	Reading	Chapter 10 (pp. 437-448)
Apr 6 R	Conversational discourse	Chapter 10 (pp. 449-460) Issue 11 presentation
<b>Apr 11 T</b>	<b>Exam 3</b>	
<b>Apr 13 R</b>	<b>Easter break</b>	
Apr 18 T	Logic and reasoning	Chapter 11 (pp. 461-472) Issue 16 presentation
Apr 20 R	Decisions and reasoning	Chapter 11 (pp. 473-515) Issue 17 presentation
Apr 25 T	Problem solving	Chapter 12 Issue 13 presentation
Apr 27 R	Problem solving	Chapter 12 Issue 3
<b>Apr 28 F</b>	<b>"I think" Paper due (Friday at 5:00)</b>	
<b>May 5 F</b>	<b>Exam 4 (Friday, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.)</b>	

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