

Psychology 330
Thinking
Spring, 1995

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Office Hours: 325 Straub Monday 1:30-2:30; Tuesday 10:00-12:00 or by appointment

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
March 28	Introduction	
March 30	Obstacles to good thinking	PJDM: Ch. 1-6
April 4	Obstacles to good thinking	Langer Ch. 1-4 , Feynman Pt. 1
April 6	Problem solving and creativity	
April 11	Metaphors/Language	Innum 1-2, Feynman Pt. 2
April 13	Assignment 1 due	
April 18	Logical thinking	Innum 3, PJDM: 10-16
April 20		
April 25	Logic, memory and aging	Innum 4 & 5, Feynman Pt. 3
April 27	Probability and statistics	
May 2	Probability and statistics Assignment 2 due	
May 4	Midterm	
May 9	Decision making	PJDM 7-9, Feynman Pt. 4
May 11		
May 16	Decision making	Langer 5-7, Feynman Pt. 5
May 18	Assignment 3 due	
May 23	Social dilemmas	PJDM 17-21
May 25		
May 30	Mindfulness	Langer 8-10
June 1	Assignment 4 due	

FINAL: Wednesday June 7, 8:00 A.M.

Texts:

1. John Allen Paulos Innumeracy: Mathematical illiteracy and its consequences

John Allen Paulos is a mathematician. In this book, he shows how a basic understanding of mathematical principles can help you think more clearly about a variety of real life situations.

2. Scott Plous The psychology of judgment and decision making ["PJDM" ON THE SYLLABUS]

Scott Plous is a psychologist. This book summarizes the most important psychological research on thinking and decision making.

3. Richard Feynman Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman

Richard Feynman was a Nobel prize winning physicist. This book contains anecdotes about his life that illustrate his critical thinking about many different topics.

4. Ellen Langer Mindfulness

Ellen Langer is a social psychologist. This book summarizes her research showing that we often draw conclusions and make decisions automatically without thinking (mindlessness). It also presents some advice on how we can become more mindful, conscious and aware of our thoughts and decisions.

Exams/Assignments:

There are two exams in this class (midterm and final) and 4 short writing assignments.

Midterm and Final: 100 possible points each. Exams will be based on lectures, and the books. I will hand out a review sheet about a week before each exam. **THE FINAL IS NOT CUMULATIVE.**

4 assignments: 25 possible points each

There are four short (2-3 page) writing assignments in this course. Some of the assignments are about the Feynman book. Others involve applying the ideas from class to real world situations. There will be handouts explaining the assignments in more detail.

You may participate in the psychology department subject pool in place of any one of the assignments. If you choose this option, you must participate in three experiments and write a brief (1 page) description of one of the experiments. If you do this option, you automatically get the full 25 possible points. This needs to be turned in by the day of the final. (TO SUMMARIZE: IF YOU CHOOSE THIS OPTION, YOU ONLY NEED TO DO 3 OF THE 4 ASSIGNMENTS. PARTICIPATION IN SUBJECT POOL SUBSTITUTES FOR ONE ASSIGNMENT).

Grading:

There are a total possible 300 points.

90% (270 or more points) = A

80% (240 - 269 points) = B

70% (210 - 239 points) = C

60% (180 - 209 points) = D

< 60% (179 or fewer points) = F