

Tue & Thu, 10:00–11:20 AM  
Office hours: Thu, 12pm - 2pm & by appointment  
**PSYCHOLOGY 330 – THINKING**  
Instructor: Dr. Catrin Rode  
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**Description:** The Psychology of Thinking will be introduced by many examples and class exercises. We will discuss different types of thinking (e.g. decision making, problem solving, making judgments, creative thinking). Typical failures in everyday thinking and reasoning will also be discussed.

**My goals for this class are:** 1) to give you theoretical and empirical knowledge of the principles of thinking and problem solving; and 2) to teach you how to apply those principles to real life problems. You will learn to evaluate your own and other peoples' reasoning processes critically.

**This class requires willingness to participate in classroom exercises.**

**Readings:** Textbook chapters and original readings will be mandatory readings and will be available on blackboard for each session. Book chapters are from:

Daniel Kahneman. *Thinking Fast and Slow*. Farrar, Strauss & Giroux. New York. 2011  
S. Ian Robertson. *Types of Thinking*. Routledge. London, New York. 1999

### **ATTENDANCE IS VERY IMPORTANT!**

Course material will be posted on blackboard, so if you missed a class you may use the lecture notes on blackboard. Please note that quiz questions may be referring to material just presented in class!

**Note regarding GTF:** the GTF will be responsible for most logistic details of the course (e.g., grading, anything to do with blackboard, copies and handouts, etc.). Questions about those aspects of the course should be directed toward the GTF; questions about course content should be directed toward the instructor. **When emailing, please place Thinking as the subject.**

### Schedule

| Date   | Topic   | Reading  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Week 1 (April 2 &amp; 4):</b>                                     | Introduction:<br>Thinking as information processing<br>Thinking and learning                | Roediger (2006)  |
| <b>Week 2 (April 9 &amp; 11):</b>                                    | <u>Fast and slow thinking</u><br>Fast Thinking : Anchoring effect,<br>Availability bias     | Kahneman chapter 1<br>Kahneman chapter 11                          |
| <b>Week 3 (April 16 &amp; 18):</b><br><b>Paper 1 due April 18th</b>  | <u>Fast Thinking</u><br>Base rate neglect<br>Framing effects                                | TBA<br>LeBoef (2003)   |
| <b>Week 4 (April 23 &amp; 25):</b>                                   | <u>Slow Thinking</u><br>Logical reasoning   | Robertson, chapter 4   |
| <b>Week 5 (April 30 &amp; May 2):</b>                                | <b>Exam 1</b><br><u>Choice overload</u><br>Cognitive depletion                              | Johnson (2008)<br>Vohs et al. 2008)<br>Potchepsova, 2009           |
| <b>Week 6 (May 7 &amp; 9):</b><br><b>Paper 2 due May 9th</b>         | Perception of chance<br><br>Thinking in disaster  | Plous, chapter 10 & 14   |
| <b>Week 7 (May 14 &amp; 16):</b>                                     | Development of abstract<br>thought<br><br>Creative Thinking                                 | TBA<br><br>Robertston, chapter 3                                   |
|  | <b>Week 8 (May 21 &amp; 23):</b><br>Thinking and intelligence<br><br>Thinking and expertise | Robertston, chapter 6<br><br>TBA                                   |
| <b>Week 9 (May 28 &amp; May 30):</b><br><b>Paper 3 due May, 30th</b> | Thinking and emotion<br><br>Thinking and language   | Loewenstein (2005)<br><b>Slovic &amp; Peters (2003)</b><br><br>TBA |
| <b>Week 10 (June 4 &amp; 6):</b>                                     | Review<br><b>Exam 2</b>   |  |

## **SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE OVER THE COURSE OF THE QUARTER!**

### **Evaluation**

**Homework:** At this point there are not assignments designated, but it is likely that some will be announced during the term. In most cases, they will involve writing a reflection essay (1 page) or answering specified questions (still, one page). These assignments will mostly be graded on effort: the more effort/thoughtfulness you put into your essay, the more likely you will earn full credit. These assignments will be posted on blackboard and announced in class at various times throughout the term and will be worth 5 points each.

### **Papers**

There will be three short papers (3 page) assigned over the course of the term. One paper will be a “poster”. More information regarding the poster will come in class. Check due dates for the papers on the syllabus. The top 5 posters will earn 5 pts extra credit!!!! Each paper/poster will be worth 10 pts,

*All homework and papers needs to be typed and turned in during class (i.e. A Hardcopy).*

*Any assignment that has excessive spelling errors or very poor grammar will automatically be deducted points. Use your spell and grammar check. I am not perfect myself in this respect, but frankly the work of some of my past students work has become that bad. Take pride in your work, even for the simple reflective essays.*

**Quizzes:** There will be 6-7 quizzes this term, typically one per week. The quizzes will be all multiple choice questions and will be taken through Blackboard. Quizzes will focus mainly on the textbook readings associated with what we cover in class that week, but a few questions could also come from lecture as well. Quizzes will become available on Friday, 12pm (noon) and will remain open till midnight on Saturday (so 36 hours). At any time during that period, you can enter into the quiz portal and complete the quiz. For each quiz, you will have 20 minutes to answer all 15 questions. Once you enter the quiz, you must finish the quiz. Do NOT enter the quiz unless you are prepared to take the quiz. Each quiz will be worth 15 points

“B” version of the quiz: When the quiz closes (the 24 hour period is over, and everyone had completed the quiz), then a “B” version of the same quiz will open until Monday 6pm. The goal for this version is to understand your errors. Even though the questions are the same, you will get more feedback, and have the ability to retake this version multiple times. Your goal is to retake it till you earn 15/15. If you do then I will give you back half of your lost points on your initial attempt. Understand, this score for the “B” version does not become part of your overall grade, but is only a measure to determine how many points you get back. For example, if you scored 10/15 on the initial “non-B” version, then earn 15/15 on the B version, then your final score for the first attempt becomes 12.5/15. For the B version, you will be given 2 days to try and earn 15/15. If you do not earn 15/15, even though you made an attempt, you will not earn any of your points back. Thus if you earn 8/15 initially, and then redo the “B” version 6 times, but only reach a final 12/15, you DO NOT earn any points back...your final score for the quiz is still 8/15.

**Each quiz adds a potential 15 points to your overall grade (remember the 15 points earned on the “B” version only is used to assess how many points you get back on your initial attempt. They are not incorporated into your overall grade by themselves).**

**Exams:** There will be 2 exams this term. They will be worth 100 pts each and will only cover the material presented since the last exam. The exams will contain both multiple choice and short answer questions. In all cases, the exam will start promptly at the start of class, and you will have to entire period to take the exam. You will need to bring a pencil; we will provide scan trons and there will be room on the exam for the written answers to the short answer questions (bring a pen for the short answer questions if you would like).

In lecture, we will not have time to cover all of the material in the readings, but I expect you to know the material. The material tested will come **MOSTLY** from my lectures, though, with items not covered only in your assigned readings being less likely to be tested, but some questions will cover that material. The point is that the book is there to help you and guide you, but come to the classes!!!! Those that come to class will do well, and those that do not, will not do well.

**A missed exam can me made up during finals week at 8:00am Tuesday, June 11! There will be one (!) exam given that covers the entire term**

*As we get closer to an exam, I will be able to tell you exactly what topics will be on the exam.*

**Final grade:** The final grade will be determined by assessing the number of points that you get from the homework assignments, quizzes, project as follows:

Homework (assume 6): 30pts

Papers: 30 pts

Quizzes (assume 7): 105 pts

Exams (2): 200 pts

365 pts Total

Notice there are some assumptions as to how many assignments or quizzes you may have. I reserve the right to change the number of assignments or any graded aspect of the class, and so the proportions presented above may change. I will try to keep to the plan described here though. The points earned will be converted into a percentage of the total points possible, and then letter grades will be applied as follows:

|               |               |               |                |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 97-100%= A+   | 83-86.99%= B  | 70-72.99%= C- | 59.99-below= F |
| 93-96.99%= A  | 80-82.99%= B- | 67-69.99%= D+ |                |
| 90-92.99%= A- | 77-79.99%= C+ | 63-66.99%= D  |                |
| 87-89.99%= B+ | 73-76.99%= C  | 60-62.99%= D- |                |

A grade less than a 60% will be a failing grade. Do not fail this class. I will try to explain the material to the best that I can, but it is up to you to read the text book and to come to me if there is something that doesn't make sense or that you need help with. I can't help you if I don't know there is a problem. The homework assignments are a good assessment. If you do not recognize or understand the homework, come and see me as soon as possible!!!!!!

### **Final points:**

**How to study:** Let me give some pointers on how to study for this course. The biggest issue for most students is that they do not understand how much effort it takes to do well. I expect my students to not only understand, but to remember the facts, terms, and concepts presented in this course. My tests are fair, but challenging. It takes a lot of effort to do well in this course. Studying a few hours the night before the exam will not work out so well for you. The main reason for this is simply that we will be covering a lot of information; it is not difficult to understand, but it is a lot. Start studying a week in advance! Organize your notes, compare them with the handouts and the book. Re-write them, it really helps. Outline the chapter, don't just read it. Then when you have stumbled on something which you don't understand, you can ask me and I will explain it to you. I am here solely to help you learn the material. If you start studying ahead of time, you will be able to take advantage of me. This really, REALLY helps. Clearly this advice is very brief. I have created an extended in-depth description of techniques that can be used and have posted it on my website. Please look it over. If you are not doing well, come and talk with me as soon as you can. Take responsibility for your efforts and do not expect the same strategy to lead to a better grade on the next exam. If you are not doing well, change your strategy!!!!!!

**Late Work/Make up Policy:** Homework and other assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. If the work is late, a point will automatically be docked for every day late. In the end, missing an assignment will be devastating to your grade, so turn them in! Because of the essay part of the exam, there will be little flexibility in terms of changing your exam date. You will need to have a fantastic excuse to make up an exam or to postpone an exam. I will be even more resistant to letting people take exams early.

**Attendance Policy:** Come to class! Your attendance will not affect your final grade directly, but I cannot over emphasize the fact that those who miss class WILL NOT do well. If you miss class, do not simply ask what we covered (and to give an impromptu lecture). I am an absent-minded professor and will not remember exactly what we did. Your job is to get the notes from a classmate, and if you need to, bring them to me and I can explain/go over them with you. You should get to know someone in class and get their phone number in case you miss a class.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** Do not do these things. Cheating and Plagiarism are serious offenses and will be dealt with severely! This could mean failing the test or assignment, failing the class or being excused from this college. I have little to no patience with cheating and will deal with the issue with the most severe action at my disposal. It is always better to simply work hard and learn the material. If you are having a problem learning the material, come see me. I have plenty of time to help you. Do not resort to cheating!

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please let me know if there is anything I can do to help. If you think there is something “going on” which is inhibiting your ability to learn, please contact the Accessible Education Center (AEC) either by email ([uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu)) or by phone ([1-541-346-1155](tel:1-541-346-1155)) or come and talk with me. Don’t be shy; I have had numerous students come to me after failing an exam and casually mention that they thought they were ADHD, Dyslexic, learning disabled or had anxiety issues. Support through the AEC is not special treatment, but is there to help you be the best that you can be. Let us help before the exam.

**The GTF:** It is fantastic that we have a GTF to help with this course. For the most part, she will be helping with the grading. If you have questions about gradeding, then set up an appointment. If you have further questions, please come and see me.

**The Final Grade:** I know that you work really hard for your grade, but please do not ask me to “up your final grade” because your are “sooooo close” to the grade change cut off (e.g. you earned a 79.85%, but the B- come at an 80%). I am very flexible with turning in (some) assignments late, and I do curve the exam grades (as needed), but I am pretty inflexible with the final grade. A 0.5% point increase may not seem much, but this is out of 460 possible points. So it is like asking for 3 point gift on an assignment, quiz or exam. Would just ask me for 3 more points on your exam just because it would make you feel better? I am very happy to talk about missing grades or errors in my calculations, but don’t ask for a gift.

**Finally:** It is important that you do well and learn the material. So feel free to email me anytime with questions. I understand that many questions will come when you are studying at night. Get on the email or phone and leave a message, I will respond. Also, feel free to catch me after class or before class and ask me anything. I am there to help you learn and understand the material as much as I can. So use me!

In addition, the UO has numerous resources to help you become the best that you can be as well. Please consult the Learning Services website. Performing poorly is more due to unrefined academic skills and effort than some inherent trait within the student. 99% of us need to work hard to learn the material; let us help you perform at your best