

SYLLABUS

University of Oregon

Instructor: **Dr. Jagdeep Kaur-Bala**  
[jagdeep@uoregon.edu](mailto:jagdeep@uoregon.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment only

Graduate Teaching assistant (GE): Ashley Miller – [amiller8@uoregon.edu](mailto:amiller8@uoregon.edu)

*Graduate teaching assistants (GEs) are available to help students with most questions and concerns. In particular, students should approach the course GE for questions on discussion and term paper grading first. Office Hours: By appointment only.*

**GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Cognitive psychology is the study of mental processes spanning low level sensory processes to higher level thinking. The course will examine key issues in cognition, various perspectives and models of cognition, as well as fundamental methods (such as experimental methods, data interpretation, neural correlates) will be introduced to familiarize students with the process of scientific reasoning. Overall the subject matter of the course will be relatively broad with emphasis on theory and data in mainstream cognitive psychology while also making contact with research in other areas. Major topics addressed in this course are issues in cognitive psychology and cognitive neuroscience, interdisciplinary fields of study attempting to answer complex questions about the functions of our minds (and brains) – perception, attention, memory, reasoning, problem solving and decision making. *This is a science course.*

**Course website:** <http://canvas.uoregon.edu> *This is a web course* and will be managed entirely through **Canvas**. Exams will be administered through Social Sciences Instructional Labs (SSIL) at UO, or with remote proctors approved by SSIL. All registered students have access to Canvas and SSIL login with their UO computer account username and password. If you have problems accessing your canvas account, please contact the Information Technology Center in Knight Library ([canvas@ithelp.uoregon.edu](mailto:canvas@ithelp.uoregon.edu), phone: 346 3053).

**How to use the syllabus:** *It is rather long, please read it all!* Familiarizing yourself with the course format and requirements will be one key to success in this class. *If you have a question, please be sure to check the syllabus yourself first and if you still need information, by all means ask.*

**EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:** The student who successfully navigates this course should have gained knowledge about the major findings and principles of the field, an ability to use the vocabulary, as well as an understanding of the various areas of human cognition. Students in this course will:

1. Examine core constructs that make up the cognitive system and to understand the contexts in which these different cognitive constructs are needed.
2. Explore competing theories and perspectives on cognition including various mechanistic and neural theories/perspectives as well as recognize/apply these theories in real-life scenarios.
3. Develop skills in reading, evaluating, and synthesizing research in cognitive psychology. We will include readings and discussions of the methods used by scientists to examine questions related to thinking (logical, or otherwise!). Discussion, critique and writings based on empirical research in the field are an important part of this course.
4. Apply knowledge regarding cognitive psychology to both formal and informal observations of humans in different contexts (laboratory and real-world settings).
5. Communicate clearly and effectively on psychological topics, including methodological and ethical issues in psychology, based on an understanding of both the strengths and limitations of empirical evidence.
6. Develop time-management skills, learning strategies and critical-thinking perspective for life!

**STUDENT WORKLOAD:** When you complete this course, you will earn 4 credits toward your degree. Four credits is the equivalent of 120 hours of work across the term. The bulk of the work in this course comes from completing learning module activities and explorations each week (40-50 hours total). This is a fast paced class and you should plan on scheduling regular intervals of time for studying/assignments outside of class. While each student learns differently, you should plan to spend time on reading the text and articles (15-25 hours total, 40-80 pages a week), completing quizzes and assignments (15-25 hours total), and studying for the midterm and final exams (25-30 hours).

**REQUIRED TEXT and MATERIALS:** Please notify me immediately if you have difficulty obtaining any of these materials from the bookstore –

**Cognition: Exploring the Science of the Mind by Daniel Reisberg.** 6<sup>th</sup> edition; Norton Publishing Company. This is a comprehensive text for the course and can be purchased new or used through the bookstore. This book is also available as an e-book. A copy of the textbook are also available on reserve at the Knight Library.

**ZAPS labs access code:** You will also need **access to the online ZAPS labs.** Access code to ZAPs is available packaged with the new textbook or ebook at no additional cost. In case you choose to buy a used copy of the textbook, you can purchase access separately from links posted on canvas, or from the UO Bookstore. If you purchased access for ZAPS lab for your PSY201 or PSY202 course, the access is good for one year from the date of purchase. Access purchased now is good for one year and maybe useful those courses as well; please plan accordingly.

**Additional readings:** All additional readings will be posted on Canvas.

**COURSE FORMAT:** Each week, you will be presented a lesson plan that will contain 1-5 short lecture videos, associated readings and assignments (e.g. online labs, reading response questions), and a graded quiz. There may also be additional materials like web videos or online resources and practice quizzes to go with the learning objectives for that week. Video lessons and readings will have some overlap, but will not be replications of each other; often, significant parts of the readings will not be discussed in the lecture videos, instead new or detailed materials that are not included in textbook readings will be presented to augment the readings. Discussion and exploration of experimental research methods will be included for all topics with ZAPS labs and through self-study lab assignments. The weekly checklist will give you a detailed list of activities and assignments for each week.

**Office hours:** The instructor and TA for this course are available to answer questions via email. We will make every attempt to answer all emails within 24-36hrs of receiving them. Emails received after hours on Friday will receive responses no later than the following Monday. Students are encouraged to request office hour appointments for one-on-one discussions via Skype, google hangouts, or by phone. To request an appointment, please send an email with several times when you can be available online within the next few days.

**COMPONENTS OF THE COURSE GRADE:** Final grades are based on consistent performance through the term. As such, the final grade will include the weighted scores for the quizzes, the term papers, study group discussion responses and the exams. In addition, some opportunities for extra-credit will be available to all.

- **Concept check quizzes** – 20%
- **Online labs and activities** – 10%
- **Discussion boards** – 10%
- **Term Paper** – 15%
- **Exams** – 45%

Letter grades will be determined by a default grading scale: A (90-103% of total possible points), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), F (0-60%). Scores in the upper and lower third of each grade range will be awarded a

'plus' or a 'minus' respectively (e.g. 80-83.33 a 'B-', 83.34-86.66 a 'B' and so on). Typically, grades are not curved. However, I reserve the right to relax (but not stiffen) this criterion for final grade assignments, depending on the actual distribution of scores in the class.

#### Criteria used in making grading decisions:

- Please see the psychology department guidelines for a description of the type of achievement that each grade signifies: <http://psychology.uoregon.edu/courses/department-grading-standards/>
- **As a general principle, I will never work harder for your grade than you do.** Students who have poor participation should not expect me to "make up" points for them. Students who have done everything in their power to do their best can be assured that will be carefully considered in making any borderline decision. I try to apply consistent standards and treat students fairly, as well as fulfill my responsibilities to U of O in making difficult decisions about grades.

**Grading problems:** If you feel there has been an error in working out your grade please let me know as soon as possible. Work out your grade as described above and specify the reason for your concern when contacting me. I want you to get every point you have earned. If you are unhappy with your final grade but agree that it has been worked out correctly as described above, please don't ask for a better grade, or extra opportunities to make a better grade, as a "favor" at the end of the semester. I consider such requests unfair to others in the class and always answer with a "no".

#### TESTS

##### Concept check quizzes: (20%)

Each learning module includes a quiz on Canvas. These concept checks are designed to serve as reviews of concepts covered in lessons, readings and activities for each topic and to help you keep up with the assignments (be sure to complete all readings and activities before taking the quiz!). For each canvas concept check, you will have one attempt of 2 hours to complete each once it is started. All concept checks are due at the end of the period for the learning module; due dates will be posted on Canvas and the checklist for each module. Concept check grade is based on the cumulative score for all quizzes for the term.

##### Exams: (Midterm: 20%; Final exam: 25%)

Exams primarily test conceptual understanding. Exams will be part multiple-choice, part fill-in-the-blank/match the information or short answer/short essay. All exams are somewhat comprehensive although none is fully cumulative; a greater focus on material covered after the previous exam is typical (refer to the study guide for each exam for a list of general concepts and detailed topics included in that test).

**Please note: EXAMS CAN NOT BE COMPLETED ON CANVAS!** Exams are administered through the **Social Sciences Instructional Lab (SSIL)** and distance education. Please login in to <https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/> and follow all instructions to set up your exams. Additional directions and instructions are posted on Canvas. Briefly, on-campus students can arrange to take exams at SSIL for free, students in Portland can take exams at the White Stag building for free, off-campus students outside the Eugene-Portland will need to arrange to take their exams at approved remote testing sites and with an approved remote proctor (also an option for students abroad). **Each exam period spans 2 weeks; weeks 4 and 5 for exam 1 and weeks 7 and 8 for the exam 2.** **You may schedule your exam anytime during this period, but no later than the due date.** Please be sure to give yourself enough time to both complete all materials covered in each of the exam as well as study for the exam. Please be sure to schedule your exams early in the term as testing is available on a first come first serve basis. **Since each exam has a 2 week period during which you are allowed to take your exam, it is your responsibility to schedule it for a time that you can take it. For the same reason, no make-up exams are allowed. If you miss your appointment and there is insufficient time within the exam period to reschedule, you will receive a zero on the exam. If you know in advance that you cannot take the exams at a scheduled appointment on the appointed dates (see the course schedule below), do not take this course!**

**TERM PAPER (15%):** A prerequisite to gaining scientific knowledge of any sort is the ability to read and critically evaluate the primary scientific literature, as well as apply learned concepts to real world experiences/ observations. The goal of this assignment is to help you develop these essential skills. The assignment is to read and critique an empirical research article on a topic in cognition and to apply the concepts you have learned to a real world experience/observation. You will write a short paper (4-6 pages) on a topic of your choice. The paper will be scored based on the quality of writing, critique of the reading and analysis of your observation (e.g. correctly applied scientific terminology to the observation; correct explanation of the phenomenon in terms of a theory discussed in class). More guidelines for this assignment will be posted on Canvas.

**ONLINE LABS AND ACTIVITIES (10% of final grade):** Part of the requirement for the course is completion of online labs activities. Labs are experiments, demonstrations or explorations of experimental methods in psychology designed to help you elaborate on some of the class material and learn critical thinking and analytical skills. Labs may be online ZAPS labs or non-ZAPS explorations. Other non-ZAPS labs, activities and explorations may require offline work. **All lab instructions, assignments and due dates will be posted on Canvas.** *To receive credit, all online labs and explorations for each module should be completed by the **due date for the module** in which they are assigned.*

**PARTICIPATION and DISCUSSION (10%):** Discussion assignments serve to form peer learning communities within the class. Critically thinking about the concepts, and applying them to your everyday life, is at the core of what I want you to take away from this class. To help you practice that, I will regularly post discussion questions on Canvas that asks you to think about the material for that week as applied to human cognition. All students are expected to participate actively in discussion and complete all responses to the exercises that go with course materials. Discussion forums will be available on Canvas, each with a specific due date. Discussion boards are moderated by the instructional team throughout the term but students will be expected to generate both questions and answers relevant to the concepts from the readings and the lessons. Participation in discussion will be graded mostly on effort: the more effort and thoughtfulness you put into your discussion, the more likely you will earn full credit. In addition, instructors will post exercises and discussion questions, responses to which will be graded for participation credit. About half of the participation credit is for participation in discussion and half for completion of the exercises.

#### **What about extra credit?**

Active participation is the **ONLY** way to earn extra-credit in this class! Students who complete all concept quizzes with a score of 50% or higher will be awarded 1% point of extra-credit. Consistent, thoughtful discussion responses may also be awarded extra-credit. All extra-credit accrued will be added to your final score at the end of the term.

**Due Dates:** Typically, all work for each learning module is due at the completion date for the module which will be posted on Canvas and in the course outline. Specific due dates for quizzes, labs, assignments, and discussions will also be posted on Canvas along with each module and assignment. Due dates for assignments and exams are not changed, except in very rare cases where they may be extended (but never forwarded). **Please note: most quizzes and assignments will not be available on canvas after their due date. In rare case, we may allow late work. In such cases, an assignment turned in after its deadline will be marked down 5% for each day late.**

**CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR:** This is a web course. As such, **emails through canvas** are the best way to contact the instructor and the GEs. Both the instructors and the graduate teaching assistants are available to assist students with conceptual understanding, reading and research assignments and to answer grading queries. For on-campus students, there may be opportunity to meet by appointment while off-campus students may set up a phone/skype appointment. Please email us if you have queries or need to set up a time to meet. Again, you may expect a response to your email within one working day.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** All students are assumed to have read the University Student Conduct Code

<http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/conduct>

***Cheating will NOT be tolerated in any form in this class.*** Academic misconduct is taken extremely seriously and will result in a failing grade for the course and referral to the Dean of Students for further action. Specific violations include (but are not limited to):

- Using or providing prohibited assistance during exams. All exams in this course are **closed-book**. You are not permitted to use any materials during the exams. Books, notes, computers, cell phones, headphones, etc., should be closed and put away.
- Plagiarism. This includes improper use of words and ideas. All work submitted in this course must be your own and must be original for this course. You may be required to submit writing assignments to **VeriCite**. VeriCite is a software tool designed to help students avoid plagiarism and improper citation. For more information on VeriCite refer to guidelines on Canvas. By enrolling in this course you grant the instructor permission to submit your work to VeriCite or some other plagiarism analysis and detection program. If your responses on assignments are suspected of plagiarism or if a proctor has any reason to be uncomfortable about your conduct during a test, they may ask you to move seats, confiscate your test and/or mark an "F" for that test/assignment. If you have any questions please ask. I will assume that all students enrolled in the course know and understand what constitutes academic misconduct and agree to be bound by these rules.

For consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. If your responses on assignments are suspected of plagiarism or if a proctor has any reason to be uncomfortable about your conduct during a test, they may ask you to move seats, confiscate your test and/or mark an "F" for that test/assignment. All violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records (*Please note: Reporting of suspected Academic Misconduct is MANDATORY -- required by the university. It is NOT at the discretion of the instructor!*) If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the instructors before you complete any relevant requirements of the course. (For more information, see the UO web site regarding academic honesty at:

<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx>

### **Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusivity**

It is the policy of the University of Oregon to support and value diversity. It's also personally important to me that my classes are accessible to all and respectful of diversity, including diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic status, religion, culture and ideology. It is imperative to me that all students feel welcome in my classes. Please contact me if you have any concerns during the term, especially for the following cases:

**Students with disabilities:** If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements with me early in the term. *The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are any aspects of instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).* Also, please request that an AEC adviser to send a letter verifying your disability and accommodation needs.

**Students for whom English is a Second Language:** If you are a non-native English speaker and think you may have language difficulties or need assistance, please contact me as soon as possible to make special arrangements. I do not allow *electronic* translators/dictionaries during tests but will make every effort to help you understand the materials throughout the term.

**Students with financial hardship:** If you are a student experiencing financial hardship and do not have access to notebooks, pencils, and other imperative resources to succeed in this course, please talk to me within the first 2 weeks of the term for assistance. We can work together to ensure you find the resources & time you need.

## Course Outline:

Date	Topic	Readings	Term time line (Check canvas assignments for specific due dates)
Week 1	Fundamentals of Cognitive Psychology: Neural Basis for Cognition	*(Ch.1 for ref.) Ch. 2	Syllabus quiz due
Week 2	Perception I: The role of stimuli, context and experience	Ch. 3	Paper Topics due on Canvas
Week 3	Perception II: Object Recognition	Ch. 4	
Week 4	Attention	Ch. 5	Exam 1 period starts Monday of week 4
Week 5	Memory	Ch. 6 *(Ch.7 & 8 for ref.)	MIDTERM EXAM : Ch. 2-5 (1*) DUE BY Friday of week 5
Week 6	Knowledge	Ch. 9 *(Ch.11 for ref.)	Paper drafts due for peer-editing
Week 7	Thinking – Reasoning & Decision making	Ch. 12	Edited drafts due FINAL EXAM period starts
Week 8	Problem solving	Ch. 13	Final term paper due FINAL EXAM : Ch. 6, 9, 12, 13 (1-5**, 7-8*,11*) DUE BY Friday of week 8

\* *Emphasis on learning modules; Comprehensive notes and additional readings on canvas - chapter for reference only*

\*\* *Included for conceptual understanding and continuity; see study guide for specific topics.*