

PSYC 3030: Cognition Syllabus

Instructor

Laura Heisick, M.A.

Course Time and Location

MWF 1:30p – 2:20p in
Tureaud Hall, 105

Email

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Office Location

Audubon Hall, 310

Office Hours

Monday, 12:00p –
1:30p; Wednesday,
12:00p – 1:30p; or by
appointment

Course Overview

PSYC 3030 is intended to give you an overview of cognitive psychology, which is concerned with human information processing (i.e., complex mental activities that you do every day, but for which you don't usually give yourself credit!). In this class, we will examine theory and data behind a variety of cognitive phenomena, including (but not limited to) attention, memory, pattern recognition, categorization, language, and thought. Throughout the course, we will examine evidence from both classic and modern experiments to give you experience interpreting, understanding, and applying scientific findings to your everyday experiences. The aim of this course is to provide you the knowledge necessary to develop your own investigations into cognitive science, and to build upon your critical thinking skills. The ultimate goal is for you to get involved with different aspects of cognitive psychology, and for you to understand it in greater depth than you would from textbooks or lectures alone.

Required Text

Get excited: There is no required textbook for this course! Although this saves you some money, this means attendance will be critical to your grade, as all test questions will come from lecture material and in-class discussions, activities, or demonstrations.

There will be required readings that will be posted throughout the semester on the course Moodle. Some will be optional, but others will be required readings that will appear on exams. I will indicate to you which readings are optional and which are required. However, required articles will not always be discussed in class.

It is your responsibility to keep up with required readings, and to ask questions in a timely manner if you have any difficulty with them. I realize reading articles may be unfamiliar to you, and I am happy to help you wade through anything you find confusing in scientific writing... just ask!

Course Materials

All of you should already be enrolled in the Moodle site for this course. If you are not, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. This site will be used throughout the semester to provide you with extra copies of in-class material (e.g., assignments, the syllabus, etc.), and some items will be made available exclusively on Moodle (e.g., required readings).

- I will periodically post grades and other announcements via the “Course announcements” section of Moodle, so make sure to check it throughout the semester. These announcements might alert you to time-sensitive extra credit opportunities, changes to syllabus policies or scheduling, or anything that is critical that the entire class know. Moodle is your friend, so please check it regularly!
- **I do not post my lectures online**, but I will make slide “shells” (i.e., the slides with some information deleted) and an outline of the slides as a Word document available to you before each lecture. This is intended to help you organize your notes during class, but **please note LSU’s Policy about posting slides to note-hosting websites!**
 - If you miss class, you must get notes from another student. If you email me asking for completed versions of the slides, I probably won’t respond, because the answer will be no!

Examination and Grading Policy

Your grade in this class will be based on **four exams**, with the first worth 15% of your grade and the remaining three worth 20% of your grade (**75% total**). Please note that you are responsible for all assigned material, including assigned readings that we may not discuss during class. The exams will contain a combination of multiple-choice, short answer, and short essay questions. I will not give study guides, but I will tell you what sections of the course will appear on which exams and provide you with learning objectives to guide you toward relevant material. Note that the final is **not cumulative**.

- **Make-up Policy:** If you cannot attend class the day of a scheduled exam, **you must contact me within 12 hours before or after the exam to schedule a makeup**. For school-sanctioned events (with a note) and verifiable documented excuses, you will have five business days from the original exam date to take the exam. Failure to contact me, to schedule, or to show up for your makeup exam within five business days will result in a grade of zero, unless documentation of extended circumstances can be provided.

- No undocumented makeup exams can be given for the final (Exam 4), and no undocumented makeup will be given if a student first requests an excused makeup.
- What counts as a documented excuse? The LSU Student Health Center does not give excuse notes, so notes from the LSU Health Center do not count as documented excuses. For medical excuses, only "return to work/school" notes from doctors or urgent care facilities will be accepted. Acceptable documentation for non-medical emergencies will be determined on an individual basis. The bottom line: Email me within 12 hours of the exam either way, so that you are at least getting the ball rolling!
 - If you find yourself in the unlucky position of not having a documented excuse, you can still contact me within 12 hours before or after the exam to schedule a makeup. Note, however, that you will not receive the standard exam; undocumented makeups will consist of ONLY essay questions and will be quite a bit more challenging than the original exam.
 - You will only get one undocumented make-up exam; please do not rely exclusively on this policy. This is intended to allow life to happen without totally killing your grade... but please do try to make it to every exam.

In addition to exams, your grade will be based on two short article reviews (each worth 5% of your grade) and one longer article review (worth 10% of your grade), and a few in-class participation activities (worth 5% of your grade, for a total of 25%). The article review assignments will require you to delve more deeply into a topic of cognitive science, and will be described in detail in a subsequent handout. The participation activities will involve simple graded assignments, of which you must complete a minimum of 5 to earn full credit.

There will also be extra-credit opportunities in the form of both in-class opportunities and out-of-class research participation (see "*Extra Credit??*" below). Grades will be calculated on a ten-percentage point scale, with the top 3% of each letter grade receiving a plus (+) score and the bottom 3% of each letter grade receiving a minus (–) score.

Given available extra-credit opportunities, I will not round-up grades at the end of the semester. Please do not ask me to do it, even if you are within .1% of a higher grade.

Grade Category	Plus	Regular	Minus
A	97 – 100	93 – 96	90 – 92
B	87 – 89	83 – 86	80 – 82
C	77 – 79	73 – 76	70 – 72
D	67 – 69	63 – 66	60 – 62
F		< 59.5	

Grades Breakdown

You will have to complete three short article review assignments over the course of the semester. Article review materials will be made available to you from the first week of class, and it is your responsibility to take advantage of these materials and to get clarification before the assignment is due. Details about this assignment will be contained in an additional handout, available on Moodle (see “*Article Review Requirements*” and “*Article Review Guidelines*” in the “*Handouts*” folder). I will outline this assignment during class, and am happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the articles you choose. Please note that I will not proofread your paper or assignment, but I have no problem answering specific questions about something you have read or written.

- **Make-up Policy:** Because the assignments outside of exams are to be submitted electronically, no make-ups will be allowed. Should something happen the day the assignment is due that prevents you from turning it in, your best option is to get in touch with me as soon as possible, and I will decide on a case-by-case basis provided you have documentation of your absence.
- **Late Penalties:** Say you just forget to turn in your paper on time, which is 11:59 PM on any afternoon in the Course Schedule that indicates an assignment is due. As described in the handout for the assignment, your paper should be submitted via Moodle, which can be done at any point on or prior to the due date. Late assignments will be subject to a 10% deduction for every day that they are late. This means if you turn in an assignment 2 days late, the maximum score you can receive will be 80%.
- **More information:** There will be additional handouts available on Moodle (and to be distributed during class) that will give you the precise breakdown of how to complete the article review assignments, and how you will be graded. If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with me as soon as possible.

Graded Item	Percentage	Description
Exam 1	10%	In-class exam worth 80 points
Exam 2, Exam 3, Exam 4	15%	In-class exam worth 100 points
Article Review 1 and 2	5%	Article review assignment
Article Review 3	10%	Scientific article review assignment
Participation	5%	Complete at least 5 in-class participation activities

Extra Credit??

There will be two forms of extra credit in this course, each of which is sneakily designed to encourage you to either attend class, or further your involvement in psychology research

sponsored by the LSU Department of Psychology (take that!). Note that you can earn a **maximum of 10 points of extra credit** across either form described below.

1. *Form 1:* On random days throughout the semester, I will ask you to participate in some in-class activities for credit. Once you have 5 points of in-class participation, any extra points you accrue roll over into extra credit (yay!). These activities will range from simply answering one question (or line of questioning), to participating in some (really cool, fun, and/or exciting) demonstrations of the different studies we will talk about. Activities will range from one to two points, depending on their complexity. Correct answers will be awarded full credit, incorrect answers half credit, and if you do not try, or are not present for the question, you will not receive any additional points.
 - a. **Make-up Policy:** Coming to class regularly and participating will significantly improve your grade on all exams. Therefore, you will not be allowed to make-up any participation activity without valid documentation. Participation activities will have to be made up within three business days of the day the activity took place. Failure to make up participation activities within three business days will result in no credit for the activity. In-class participation make-ups will be done during my office hours unless otherwise agreed.
2. *Form 2:* As you will learn in this course, participation in research experiments is crucial for the development of our understanding of psychology. Therefore, for every 1 research credit you earn, you will receive 0.5% extra credit towards your final grade. However, given that most of the studies we will discuss in class use an experimental design that involves some sort of interaction between a person and a researcher, a maximum of 3 credits will be applied to your final grade from online research participation. Please note that research experiments will be available throughout the semester, at different times, dates, and locations. You can sign-up for research experiments by visiting <https://lsuhumanresearch.sona-systems.com>.
 - a. The folder labeled “*Research Extra Credit*” on Moodle contains all the documentation and information you will need to participate in psychology research experiments. Please note: To receive credit for research participation, be sure to only sign up for experiments labeled “*PSYC-*” and to assign your credits to this course (*PSYC 3030 Section 01*)!

Please do not ask for any other forms of extra credit. Because there are already extra credit opportunities available to the whole class, I will not make exceptions for any individual students. I know that most of you would never ask for extra points at the end of the semester (at least, I hope not!), and it is unfair to other students if I give some of you extra points, but not others. As a general rule, I am happy to help you figure out more effective study methods, wade through course material, or answer your questions... but I am not willing to give you extra assignments for the sole purpose of boosting your grade.

LSU Policy Statements

In this class we will be discussing many interesting and diverse topics, and I encourage everyone to voice their opinion and participate in class discussion. However, please keep in mind that negative or offensive comments will not be tolerated. Students who violate this policy will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.

Behavior Policy: All students are expected to follow the **Code of Student Conduct. Section 10.2 covers behavioral misconduct:** http://students.lsu.edu/saa/code_10_2. Disruptive behavior interferes with educational processes and robs other students of the chance to learn. If I perceive that your behavior is disrupting class, I will inform you. Your best response to a warning is to stop immediately the behavior that led to your warning.

Recording Policy: Please contact me if you wish to record audio of lectures. I will not say “no,” but like to know if/when I am being recorded. **Photography/videography of any kind will not be permitted**, unless documentation can be provided from the Office of Disability Services. Instances of unapproved documentation will be forwarded to the Office of Student Advocacy & Accountability (SAA) for disciplinary action. **Please do not take pictures of my slides... it is very distracting to me, and does nothing to help you learn.**

Note-Hosting Policy: Because material is copyrighted, students are not permitted to reproduce any slides, figures, or audio used during lecture on note-hosting websites. The LSU Office of SAA will pursue violations of such policies, so please don't put yourself in the line of fire. You are more than welcome to upload your own notes, but you cannot use any material that I provide.

- Keep in mind that note-hosting websites, while potentially useful, likely won't accurately reflect the content of *this* course. Every professor teaches a course slightly differently, and we may cover content that was not covered in previous semesters, while not discussing other content at all. You don't want to answer an exam question with something that was taught in a previous semester... that makes it look like you have a copy of an old exam, which makes you look super guilty to the Dean of Students. If you miss a class, ask a classmate for notes... not the potentially misleading interwebz.

Psychological Services: This is an academic class and not meant as a substitute for psychotherapy. Students who are seeking personal psychological help may contact the LSU Student Health Center at (225) 578-8774 for mental health services.

Students with Disabilities: If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with Disability Services (DS). DS is located in 115 Johnston Hall. If you need more information, contact the Office of Disability Services at 225/ 578-5919, or disability@lsu.edu. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper DS forms and meet with me at the beginning of the semester.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you have any special needs for class or for testing. I will be happy to provide the necessary accommodations, but it is your responsibility to let me know in advance of when your accommodations are needed. You can come and see me privately before or after class (or during my office hours).

Diversity Statement: “LSU strives to create an inclusive, respectful, intellectually challenging climate that embraces individual difference in race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, spirituality, socio-economic status, disability, family status, experiences, opinions, and ideas.”

<http://uiswcmsweb.prod.lsu.edu/edco/edco/DiversityStatement/item25970.html>

For more information regarding Diversity at LSU, please visit the website for the Office of Diversity, or contact them in 135 Thomas Boyd Hall, by phone: 225/ 578-5736, or email: diversity@lsu.edu.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

All students are responsible for observing the highest standards of academic and personal integrity. You are bound by the LSU code of Student Conduct, which can be accessed at [http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/dos.nsf/\\$Content/Code+of+Conduct?OpenDocument](http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/dos.nsf/$Content/Code+of+Conduct?OpenDocument). The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, and ignorance is NOT an acceptable excuse.

Because you are required to do some writing for this course, I will be actively monitoring for plagiarism. The LSU Code of Student Conduct defines plagiarism as “the unacknowledged inclusion, in work submitted for credit, of someone else’s words, ideas, or data.” To view the full integrity policy, please visit: <http://www.lsu.edu/saa/students/codeofconduct.php>. You are responsible for understanding this policy.

You are also expected to complete all exams and assignments independently, and to maintain confidentiality about exam content (e.g., if your friend misses an exam because he is sick, you should avoid telling him what is on it – that counts as cheating for both of you, and no friend is worth a meeting with the Dean of Students). Any violation of the Code of Student Conduct will be forwarded to the Dean of Students for evaluation.

Please try to avoid plagiarism as much as possible. To guard against such acts, all papers turned in will be run through a plagiarism checker. If your paper is “flagged” by the system, this does not mean you will automatically fail. I will evaluate whether you were flagged in error (for example, you have one or two small errors or phrases in common with published work), or whether it appears intentional (for example, you have copied an entire paragraph from the research article you are reviewing). Acts of intentional plagiarism will be forwarded to the Dean of Students, and students who commit any forms of academic dishonesty (including plagiarism, but also cheating on the exams!) will be recommended for disciplinary action. Please don’t make me recommend

you – you will learn better, and we will both be much happier if you avoid all forms of academic dishonesty.

Important Dates

Date	Day	Important Event
January 9	Wednesday	Classes begin... hopefully you know this one already
January 17	Thursday	Final date for dropping without receiving a “W”, 4:30p deadline
January 18	Friday	Final date for adding courses, 4:30p deadline
January 21	Monday	MLK Day Holiday (no class!)
March 4 – 5	Monday, Tuesday	Mardi Gras Holiday (no class!)
March 22	Friday	Final date for dropping courses or resigning from the University, 4:30p deadline
April 15 – 19	Monday – Friday	Spring break (no class!)
May 4	Saturday, 10a – 12p	Our final exam!
May 7	Tuesday, 9am	Final grades are due