



PSYC 620-0SW, Intro to Human Cognition

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2024

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Will Whitham, Ph.D.

Office Location: Binion 215B

Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 11:00am-12:30pm; 3:15pm-4:45pm via zoom or in person

Office Phone: n/a

Office Fax: n/a

University Email Address: will.whitham@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: email

Communication Response Time: 24-48 hours Monday-Friday, weekends and holidays may take longer than 48 hours.

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required: *Essentials of Cognitive Psychology* - Free/Open textbook available at <https://una.pressbooks.pub/essentials-cognitive-psychology/>

Software Required: Microsoft Office or equivalent; PDF; myLeo/Desire2Learn (D2L)

Optional Texts and/or Materials: available on myLeo/D2L

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the science of cognitive psychology. We will seek to understand what a mind is, what it is like to have mind, and how previous research has suggested ways for us to study and learn more about minds. We will cover basic concepts, theories, research methods, and real-world applications related to fundamental cognitive competencies like attention, learning, memory, and language.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to appreciate the metaphors and the approaches to the scientific understanding of the human mind.
2. Students will be able to appreciate and to some extent follow the discourse appropriate to how cognitive psychologists communicate about the scientific study of human mind.
3. Students will gain an overview of how psychologists test, interpret, and demonstrate concepts, theories, and principles in empirical data.
4. Students will enhance reading prowess by diving into textbook sections, unlocking the essentials of concepts, examples, and evidence

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

You need to be able to use the following.

- Microsoft Office or equivalent
- PDF
- myLeo/Desire2Learn (D2L)
- Searching the internet for texts
- Using Library resources

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

This is a web-based course. Each week you will be expected to complete required reading materials, and to complete assignments designed to encourage integration of the readings with previous and future readings and with applications to the real world.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES OR TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THE COURSE

- 1) Check and read class emails promptly for announcements, updates, clarifications, etc.
- 2) Take notes as you listen to lectures, read the assigned parts of the textbook to check if your listening comprehension matches with the textbook descriptions, and fill in the missing pieces.
- 3) Quiz yourself often. Can you define a concept in your own words? Can you answer 3 or 4 questions of the textbook practice questions correctly?
- 4) Review the materials on a regular basis.
- 5) Complete assigned coursework on time.

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- 6) Please contact me when you have questions. The material is difficult, and no one learns everything perfectly the first time through. This class, and your time, is too important for you to spend time getting frustrated instead of learning

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

- A = 90%-100%
- B = 80%-89%
- C = 70%-79%
- D = 60%-69%
- F = 59% or Below

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Exams	50%
Weekly Reading Assignments	40%
Virtual Presentation	10%
TOTAL	100%

Makeup exams and assignments

Life happens. If illness or other circumstance prevents your completion of assignments, make-ups may be permitted at my discretion. Email me as soon as possible, and be ready to provide relevant documentation if requested. There will be no make-up exams except as mandated by University policy for University-excused absences, religious holidays and major illnesses. Students should contact the professor prior to the scheduled exam if possible, or within 24 hours of missing the exam due to accident or illness. Due dates for exams are listed below on the schedule of topics.

If you are traveling and representing the university (e.g., band members, athletes, etc.) you need to request accommodations BEFORE the exam or assignment is due, not after.

If you encounter any technical problems when you take any timed tests or assignments online, take screenshots and email me immediately for potential makeup.

Assessments

- **Exams (50%)** – You will take two exams during the semester: a midterm (20% of grade) and a final (30% of grade). These exams will primarily consist of short-answer or essay questions.

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- **Weekly reading assignments (40%)** – Each week you will submit some deliverable evidence of your engagement with the material for the week. All readings and their accompanying assignments will be made available on D2L/myLeo. These assignments may include, but are not limited to:
 - watching videos relevant to the week’s material,
 - leading a class discussion or responding to discussion posts,
 - completing a reading guide,
 - submitting a video response
- **Virtual Presentation (10%)** – At the end of the semester you will submit a short (10-12 minute) recorded presentation on a topic relevant to your future engagement with cognitive psychology. Further detail and a presentation rubric will be provided later in the semester.

Doctoral students will present a mini research proposal relevant to a research question they have in cognitive psychology. The presentation should include, at a minimum, a brief review of previous literature on the topic, identification of dependent and independent variables, and proposed methods that could be used to pursue the question.

Master’s students can present a mini research proposal like Doctoral students (see above), or can instead pursue one of the following alternatives:

- A review and extension of one of the topics we covered in the class. For example, you could review what we learned about memory systems earlier in the semester, then extend this topic into a memory system that we did not cover in the course or to a real-world application of our knowledge of this memory system.
- An article review of an original research article in cognitive psychology. Your presentation will not be able to fully cover everything in the article, but at a minimum should address what research question the article attempted to answer, the methods used in the article to answer the question, what the authors concluded, and why the article is relevant (why does the question matter? What are the real-life implications?).

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

Access and Navigation

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Typically, I will respond to your emails within 24 hours from Mon to Fri. It will take longer during the holidays and weekends. I can also meet with you via Zoom. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

UNIVERSITY SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-code-of-conduct/>.

If you believe someone has engaged in behaviors that do not align with the Code of Student Conduct or you have other concerns, please visit the File a Report page at <https://www.tamuc.edu/office-of-student-rights-and-responsibilities/concerns-incident-reporting/>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Graduate student academic dishonesty policy:
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

Graduate student academic dishonesty form:
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage.

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Artificial Intelligence

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Services

Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5930

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Website: <http://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campusServices/StudentDisabilityServices/default.aspx>

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



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A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-COMMERCE SUPPORTS STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

Counseling Center Services

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

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DEPARTMENT OR ACCREDITING AGENCY REQUIRED CONTENT

Course Outline / Calendar

<u>Week/Module</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignments due</u>
1	Course intro	Sunday, September 1
2	Cognitive Psychology Intro	Sunday, September 8
3	Attention	Sunday, September 15
4	Short-term Memory	Sunday, September 22
5	Executive Attention	Sunday, September 29
6	Memory Systems	Sunday, October 6
7	Learning	Sunday, October 13
8	Midterm	Sunday, October 20
9	Implicit Learning	Sunday, October 27
10	Perception	Sunday, November 3
11	Categorization	Sunday, November 10
12	Language	Sunday, November 17
13	Free will	Sunday, November 24
14	Fall Break	
15	Presentations	Friday, December 8
16	Final Exam (according to university schedule)	

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