



PSY-620-01W INTRO TO HUMAN COGNITION

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2026

ONLINE

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Kevin Diegel, PhD

Office Location: Henderson 209

Office Hours: By appointment (email me)

University Email Address: Kevin.Diegel@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: **Email (INCLUDE PSY620 IN THE SUBJECT!)**

Communication Response Time: Generally, within 24 hours, except weekends.

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required

Cognition, 8th edition by Daniel Reisberg. | ISBN [9780393877601](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9780393877601)

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Critically evaluate major theories, empirical findings, and methodologies in cognitive psychology.
2. Analyze and interpret primary research literature to identify strengths, limitations, and implications for cognitive theory.
3. Integrate knowledge of cognitive processes, such as perception, memory, language, and reasoning with findings from neuroscience and computational modeling.
4. Apply cognitive principles to real-world contexts, including education, technology, and problem-solving in complex environments.

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to human cognition and the scientific study of the mental processes underlying human perception, memory, language, reasoning, and decision-making. Emphasis is placed on the major theoretical frameworks, empirical findings, and methodological approaches that define the field. Students will examine how cognitive processes emerge from neural and computational mechanisms and how these processes support complex behaviors such as problem-solving, learning, and communication. The course also considers contemporary issues in cognitive neuroscience and the broader implications of cognitive research for education, artificial intelligence, and human-computer interaction. By the end of the course, students will be able to critically evaluate primary research and articulate how cognitive theory informs the scientific understanding of mind and behavior.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

EXAMS

There will be **three exams**, each worth **20%** of the final course grade, for a total of **60%**. Exams will be administered online through the **D2L platform** under *Activities > Quizzes*. Each exam will be **75 minutes in length** (with approved accommodations extending as needed) and will consist of **40 multiple-choice questions** covering material from the corresponding unit.

Exams are **not cumulative**; each will assess only the content from its designated portion of the course. All exams are **open-book and open-note**, allowing students to reference their course materials during the assessment.

DISCUSSION POSTS

There are **three discussions**, each worth 5% of the final course grade, for a total of **15%**. For each post, students will respond to a topic prompt and also reply to two classmates. The initial post is worth up to 15 points, and each reply is worth up to 5 points. While you're welcome to reply to more than two posts, only the first two will count towards a grade.

All posts and replies must be meaningful. Responses like "I agree" alone will not earn credit. Your classmates put thought and effort into their posts, and your replies should reflect that. You're welcome to agree but explain why in detail.

SYLLABUS QUIZ

There is a brief quiz based on the syllabus that is worth 5% of the final course grade. All answers can be found within the syllabus.

FINAL PAPER

There are two versions of this paper, one for Undergraduate & Masters students and one for Doctoral students.

UNDERGRADUATE & MASTERS FINAL

Students will complete a formal literature review on a topic of their choosing within the field of human cognition. This assignment demonstrates mastery of the existing empirical and theoretical research related to a specific question or domain of cognitive science.

The paper must follow current **APA formatting and citation guidelines** and be a **minimum of seven full pages of text**, excluding the title page and reference list. Students must locate, read, and synthesize findings from **at least 20 peer-reviewed scholarly sources** directly relevant to their topic. Additional sources may be included as appropriate.

The literature review should:

- Provide a clear rationale for the chosen topic or research question.
- Summarize and critically evaluate major theoretical perspectives and empirical findings.
- Identify key points of agreement, debate, and remaining gaps.
- Conclude with a synthesis articulating the current state of knowledge in the area.

Grading will be based on the extent to which the paper meets the stated criteria, including adherence to APA style, minimum length, appropriate selection of a cognition-related topic, incorporation of at least 20 relevant scholarly sources, and substantiality of the material as presented. This assignment constitutes **20% of the final course grade**.

DOCTORAL FINAL

Students will develop a formal research proposal on a self-selected topic within the field of human cognition. This paper identifies a specific gap or unresolved question in the literature and proposes a study to address it.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

The proposal must follow current **APA formatting and citation guidelines** and be a **minimum of ten full pages of text**, excluding the title page and reference list. Students should engage with **at least 30 peer-reviewed scholarly sources** to support the proposed research question, theoretical framework, and methodology.

The paper should include:

- A literature review as outlined above without the conclusion the master's students provided
- Conclusion replaced with a Current Study section proposing a study and hypothesis based on the literature
- A detailed method section including subsections on: Participants (and a Power Analysis sample estimate), Measures, Procedure, and Data Analysis Plan
- A section labeled Anticipated Results that describes what you believe will happen upon data analysis

Grading will be based on the extent to which the paper meets the stated criteria, including adherence to APA style, minimum length, inclusion of at least 30 relevant scholarly sources, the clarity and feasibility of the proposed research plan, and the detail of the study. This assignment constitutes **20% of the final course grade**.

GRADING

	POINTS	PERCENTAGE
Quiz	25	5
Discussions	75 (25x3)	15 (5x3)
Exams	300 (100x3)	60 (20x3)
Paper	100	20
Total	500	100

GRADE	POINTS	PERCENTAGE
A	450 - 500	90 – 100
B	400 - 449	80 – 89
C	350 – 399	70 – 79
D	300 – 349	60 – 69
F	1 – 299	1 – 59

Course Calendar

WEEK	Reading/Lecture	Activities
8/20 – 8/30	Chapter 1	Syllabus Quiz Discussion 1
8/31 – 9/6	Chapter 2	
9/7 – 9/13	Chapter 3	
9/14 – 9/20	Chapter 4	
9/21 – 9/27	Chapter 5	Exam 1
9/28 – 10/4	Chapter 6	
10/5 – 10/11	Chapter 7	
10/12 – 10/18	Chapter 8	
10/19 – 10/25	Chapter 9	
10/26 – 11/1	Chapter 10	Exam 2
11/2 – 11/8	Chapter 11	Discussion 2
11/9 – 11/15	Chapter 12	
11/16 – 11/22	Chapter 13	
11/23 – 11/29	Chapter 14	
11/30 – 12/6	Chapter 15	Exam 3
12/7 – 12/11		Discussion 3 Final Paper Due

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Course Policies

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE IN THIS COURSE

There are legitimate uses of artificial intelligence (AI), chatbots, or other software capable of generating or suggesting text beyond individual words. In this course, **students are permitted to use AI tools (such as ChatGPT)** as *writing assistants* to improve grammar, clarity, tone, and overall academic style.

However, all AI use must comply with the following requirements:

1. **AI may not be used to generate complete assignments.** Submissions written wholly or primarily by AI will be treated as instances of academic dishonesty under university policy.
2. **AI may not be used to locate or fabricate sources.** These tools can produce inaccurate or non-existent citations, which constitutes academic misconduct.
3. **All AI use must be documented.** Students must include a brief statement in their assignment (e.g., in an author's note or at the end of the document) describing how AI was used.

Students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, including material generated or edited by AI. This responsibility includes ensuring that AI output does not plagiarize other texts or misrepresent sources. Individual instructors may further restrict or disallow AI use for specific assignments or for the entire course; students should follow all instructor guidelines.

Late work & Missed Exams

Late work is **not accepted** under any circumstances. **No make-up exams** will be given.

If a student misses an exam, the grade will be **zero (0)** unless the absence is covered by **official university documentation** (for example, an email from the athletics department confirming participation in a university-sanctioned event).

Personal scheduling conflicts, travel, work obligations, or unverified illnesses are **not** valid reasons for extensions or make-ups.

Extra Credit

There are no extra credit opportunities in this course.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University 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:

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

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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@etamu.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.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

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

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>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID and Password

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@etamu.edu.

Technology-Related Issues

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 ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

Learning Management System (LMS) – D2L

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

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

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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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
 - Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
 - Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
 - Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)
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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

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](#) is described in detail online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

Academic Integrity

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

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Use of Artificial Intelligence

East Texas A&M University 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 Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu
Website: [Office of Student Disability Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University 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 ETAMU 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.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health – Counseling Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, 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

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.



As an Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music, East Texas State A&M University supports the Association's commitment to student health and wellness. The following web address provides links to information for resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventative measures that students can take to avoid serious and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#)

Department and Accrediting Agency Statement:

School of Music Mission Statement:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.

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