Fall 2014 Course Syllabus
PSY 365: Cognition (03)
Tuesday & Thursdays 11:30 am - 12:45 pm, 176 LMH
Department of Psychology

Instructor: Walter C. Sá, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm (and by appointment.)

Course Description
This course concerns itself with the science of mind. The contents and processes of mind such as thinking, reasoning, perceiving, attention, memory, knowledge and language are of central interest to theorists and researchers in the areas of cognitive psychology and cognitive science. This course will provide a historical background to the modern science of mind, illustrate some pertinent research methods, and cover some important empirical findings and theories in the study of cognition.

Course Objectives
1. To provide a comprehensive background to the history, methodology, research findings, theories, and contentious issues in the study of cognition.
2. To encourage the evaluation of current issues in cognition research; to nurture critical thinking about cognition research; to familiarize students with thinking about cognition as a problem to be studied empirically.

Textbook (Required):

E-Reserved Readings (Required):
Stanovich, K. E. (2010a). Falsifiability: "A discourse on how to foil little green men in the head" Chapter 2 (pp. -34) from How to Think Straight About Psychology (9th Ed.)
Stanovich, K. E. (2010b). Operationism and Essentialism: "But, Doctor, What Does it Really Mean?"
Chapter 3 (pp. 35-52) from How to Think Straight About Psychology (9th Ed.)

It is extremely important that you keep up with the assigned readings throughout the entire duration of the course. Assigned readings will be announced in class.

Course Evaluation

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam 1</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam 2</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam 3</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments/Participation points</td>
<td>12 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course paper</td>
<td>8 points</td>
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</table>

Total 100 points*

*Note that since the sum of all points is 100, the terminology “points” and “percentage” are interchangeable in this scheme.

Exams (4): 80% of final grade

There will be four non-cumulative exams. Exams will consist of multiple-choice, fill-in the blank, and short answer questions. Questions will be drawn from both lectures and assigned readings. Although there will be much overlap between lecture materials and assigned readings, I will present some material not found in the assigned readings and will also not cover all assigned reading material in class. A consequence of this is that a significant portion of exam questions will comprise of material that is unique to lectures, and material that is unique to assigned readings. In other words, to do well on the exams you must do both the assigned readings and attend class (which means paying attention and taking good notes—not just physically being there).

On exam days . . .

Make sure you bring to class a black lead pencil (#2 or softer) and a “good” eraser. You will be filling out scantron forms.

A point of caution: Be careful when filling these scantron forms. Bubbles should be filled in properly, and you should thoroughly erase any changed answers. No corrections will be made as a result of errors on your part.

On missing exams . . .

Don’t! Rescheduling exams presents problems for the class as a whole, for me as an instructor, and for support staff in the psychology department. Numerous people may be inconvenienced by modifications to course scheduling.

If, however, you miss an exam for an extremely good reason, be prepared to provide documentation for your justified absence (e.g., a doctor’s note) and be prepared to make up the exam ASAP. This is by no means an issue I take lightly, you must have a very good reason for your absence and you must be able to document it for me.

If you are going to be absent, get in touch with me ASAP—this is your responsibility (do not wait for me to get in touch with you, or simply wait until you see me at the next class). If I do not hear from you within 24 hours of the exam, you have forfeited your opportunity to write the exam.
Emergency closings and exams . . .
In the event that the university closes on the date of a scheduled midterm exam, the affected exam will be held during our next regularly scheduled class. Students should assume the university is open unless they are notified otherwise via the GVSU website.

Assignments / Participation Points: 12% of final grade
Throughout the term I will be handing out some assignments and unannounced in-class assignments/activities. These will be graded on a credit / no credit basis. Make sure you have a personal copy of each completed take-home assignment in addition to the copy you submit to me. Take-home assignments must be submitted in typed form in class. The in-class assignments/activities will vary in nature. Many of these will largely consist of some quick “mini” experiments yielding class data that will serve to illustrate upcoming course concepts/material. Some others will probably be quiz-like assignments that touch upon the material presented in class that day or an assigned reading that should have been completed. Late take-home assignments will not be accepted--No Exceptions. You will also not be able to “make-up” any in-class assignment/activity you miss due to absence (however missing only one in-class activity/assignment will not affect your grade). Think of these in-class assignment/activities as the participation element of this portion of your grade.

Course paper: 8% of final grade
Details concerning the course paper portion of your grade will be outlined in class sometime in the next few weeks. Suffice to say for now, that the content of the research methods unit (topic 2) will be very relevant to the paper.

Attendance
You will not be directly penalized for missing classes. If you must miss a class you need neither secure my consent nor supply me with a reason for the absence. But please note that missing classes will most likely have consequences on your grade in this course: i) I will be presenting material in class that is not covered in the assigned readings; ii) any given assignment must be submitted on the due date in “hard-copy” form at the start of class—no email attachments accepted; iii) any in-class activities/assignments will likely be unannounced (see above section on Assignments / Participation Points); iv) I do not provide lecture notes for missed classes—please do not ask as I can make no exceptions on this out of fairness to all students; v) you may miss important announcements and/or handouts.

Please DO NOT email me the following (or variants of the following) questions:
1. “I missed class today. Did I miss anything important?”
2. “Can you send me the lecture notes that I missed?”
3. “I am going to miss class because . . . will there be an in-class assignment today?”

Answers to above questions will always have to be:
1. YES.
2. Sorry but NO.
3. Maybe.

You can mitigate some of the above consequences—see the A helpful suggestion section below.
On being late for classes
It is a mistake to think that missing the first few minutes of class is harmless. All things being equal, the worst x minutes that you could possibly miss in a lecture is usually the FIRST x minutes. Those first few minutes of class is where the stage gets set—so to speak—for all the remaining lecture material. Your comprehension of lecture material will often be “challenged” when you miss the preceding material—even just a few minutes.

A helpful suggestion
Get to know some of your fellow classmates. Pair up with at least one other student as a Lecture-Notes-buddy. That is, in the event you do miss a class, your “Lecture-Notes-buddy” will allow you to photocopy her/his notes for the missed class and inform you of any announcements you missed. Do not expect the instructor to recap for you an entire missed lecture after class. Do not expect the instructor to provide you the notes for a missed class.

Our responsibilities:
Both the professor and student have responsibilities in the teaching / learning process.
My responsibilities as an instructor include...
• being well organized
• being courteous and helpful with students
• providing an updated and informative course
• returning graded exams promptly
• being fair and unbiased with grading

Your responsibilities as a student include...
• attending classes and being punctual--especially for exams!
• paying attention in class
• taking notes during lectures
• asking questions about material you do not understand
• seeking help with material if you’re having difficulty (e.g., meeting with me during an office hour, and/or getting a tutor
• not creating distractions for other students or the instructor (e.g., excessive talking) Please silence your cell/smart phones.
• doing the assigned readings and studying the course material

A note about student dissatisfaction with grades:
An unfortunate reality of any course is that not all students will obtain the final grade they desire. Some students may even fail the course. As an instructor of the course, my responsibility is to ensure that evaluation procedures were fair. To a very large extent, this can be determined by how the class is performing overall. If your performance as a member of this class is substantially below the general class performance, then you cannot simply claim that the evaluation procedures were unfair. Some careful thought has to be given to what else might possibly be wrong, and how it might be changed.
To minimize any damage to your student records, it is important that you consult with me very early once difficulty arises. Don’t fall asleep at the wheel--make sure you remain vigilant about your progress in the course.
When students approach me late in the term claiming that they NEED a specified grade, what can I (the instructor) do for them? the answer is nothing. As long as the grading procedures are fair, YOU as a student are in control and responsible for your own grade. As an instructor, I
must be fair with the grading procedures, which includes sticking to the same procedures that applied to the entire class. Deviations on my part from the outlined procedures for any single student amounts to cheating those students who were evaluated under the original scheme.

**Order of topics to be covered:**
The following is a list of the topics that will be covered in this course. Although no dates are listed below, we will progress through the topics in the order listed. Exam dates have already been scheduled (see Exam and other important dates section). You will be tested on the lecture and reading material we cover prior to each scheduled exam date (not including the material already covered in a previous exam) **Please note that Topic # ≠ Chapter #.** Throughout the course I will often refer to the topic number as indicated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  History &amp; Foundations of Cognitive Science</td>
<td>Chapter 1 [Shimamura, 2010]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Research Methods in Cognition</td>
<td>Chapter 2 [Stanovich, 2010a &amp; 2010b]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Perception &amp; Consciousness</td>
<td>pp. 73-110 (Chap. 3) &amp; pp. 177-186 (Chap. 5) [Pavani et al., 2000]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Attention &amp; Working memory</td>
<td>pp. 110-115 (Chap. 3) &amp; Chapter 4 [Colom, et al., 2003 &amp; Shipstead et al., 2010]</td>
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<tr>
<td>5  Long-Term Memory &amp; Memory Distortions</td>
<td>Chapters 6 &amp; 8 (Chapter 7 is optional) [Roediger &amp; Karpicke, 2006 &amp; Roediger &amp; Marsh, 2005]</td>
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<tr>
<td>6  Knowledge Representation and Retrieval</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>7  Reasoning, Judgment, and Decision Making</td>
<td>Chapter 12 [De Neys, 2006]</td>
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<tr>
<td>8  Problem Solving</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
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<td>9  Language†</td>
<td>Chapter 10 (portion of)</td>
</tr>
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† While it is unlikely that we will have an entire topic devoted to Language, the psychology of language will in fact often arise in our discussion of several of the covered topics and I will at times refer you to specific page sections of chapter 10 (Language) for material covered in class.

**IMPORTANT:** The above readings may NOT be the official assigned readings that you are responsible for. Some of the above may be scaled back and/or additional readings may be assigned. These modifications will always be announced in class.
Exam and other important dates:

Last day 100% refund

August 29

Labor Day Recess

Aug. 31 – Sept. 2

Midterm # 1 (~Topics 1 & 2)*

Tue Sept. 16

Last day 75% refund

September 19

Midterm # 2 (~Topics 3 & 4)*

Tue Oct. 14

Drop deadline with a grade of “W”

October 24

Midterm # 3 (~Topics 5 & 6) *

Tue Nov. 11

Course Paper

November 18th (in class)

Thanksgiving Recess

Nov 26 – 30

Final Exam (~Topics 7 & 8, [&9?]) *

Wednesday Dec 10

12 noon

* The topic coverage indicated above for midterms & final exam is tentative. The official topic coverage will be announced in the classes prior to upcoming exam.

Suggestion: Keep an organized record of your grades.

Midterm 1 _____/20 points

Midterm 2 _____/20 points

Midterm 3 _____/20 points

Final Exam _____/20 points

Assignments _____/12 points

Paper _____ /8 points

Final Grade = _____/100 points

Course Grade Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-91</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>88-89</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>82-87</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>60-67</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60</td>
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Important: Your continuation in this course indicates your acceptance of the above schedule and procedures. The above schedule and procedures, however, are subject to some modification in the event of extenuating circumstances.