

PSYCHOLOGY 309a
COGNITIVE PROCESSES

Section 001 Winter 2016-17, Term 1
Tu-Th 2:00-3:20

INSTRUCTOR

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TAs

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READINGS, NOTES, AND SLIDES

All readings assigned for each lecture, as well as the lecture slides, can be viewed/downloaded from the course CONNECT website. If you are unfamiliar with CONNECT, you can log on from the official UBC website (<http://elearning.ubc.ca/connect/get-started-with-connect/>) using your CWL account. If you are enrolled in the course, then once you log in, there will be a link to the 309a site. On the home page of the course CONNECT website, you will see a menu on the left hand side of the screen. To access the readings for the course, click on "Course Content." You will see two folders. One is labeled "READINGS: PART 1", and contains links to the articles assigned for Lectures 2-6. For each lecture there is one assigned article: a relatively short, original research article presenting a study or review of findings in a given research area. A portion of each lecture will be devoted to working through key points of the article and answering any questions the class may have. As such, I strongly recommend reading the articles prior to the lecture for which they are assigned. The other folder on the "Course Content" page is labeled "Lecture Slides", which will contain pdf files of the PowerPoint slides presented in each lecture. Although I will always try to post each lecture's slides the evening before each class, I can only guarantee that slides will be posted shortly after each lecture.

SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

On five dates noted in the lecture schedule below, instead of meeting in the regular lecture hall we will meet in smaller, 30-student group sessions, with each session led by a TA. **The location assignments for these will be announced in lecture and posted on Connect prior to the first small group session.** This is a trial program for the Department of Psychology, which is interested in seeing if such sessions improve the student learning experience; as such, we will be asking for brief, written feedback on each session at its conclusion. For 309a, these sessions will focus on doing targeted group exercises built around theatre improv techniques, exercises designed to illustrate and expand on cognitive concepts discussed in lectures and reading. Please note that exercises and issues raised in these sessions are testable material for the exams.

EXAMS

There are **three** non-cumulative exams for the course. Each exam will be worth 60 points. Dates for the exams can be found on the lecture schedule below. The first two exams will take place during the regularly-scheduled lecture time. The third exam will take place during the final exam period at the end of the term, with the time, date, and location TBA.

The following points should be noted regarding exams:

1. Each exam will consist of a mix of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions.
2. For each exam, you are required to bring a photo ID and #2 pencil
3. Exams will begin 5 minutes after the start of the class period.
4. No extra time will be given to those who are late for an exam.
5. **Make-up exams will only be considered for students facing exceptional emergency circumstances that are responsibly communicated to the instructor in a timely manner.** The format of any make-up exam granted will be at my discretion.
6. Cheating on exams will not be tolerated. Any student found cheating will get a "0" for that exam. Please see the UBC Calendar for information regarding academic offences and penalties.
7. UBC accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance or completing scheduled examinations. Please let me know **by email no later than Thursday, September 22** if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss their commitments with the instructor before the drop date.
8. Exam marks will be posted on the course website as soon as scoring is complete, but exams will not be handed back. However, students have the right to view their marked examinations, providing they apply to do so within one month of receiving their final grades. This review is for pedagogic purposes. The examination remains the property of the university.

TERM MARKS

Marks for the term will be based on a total of 180 points (3 exams x 60 points each). However, if the grade distribution for the final course marks fails to meet the Psychology Department's norms, scaling will be applied to final course marks. For details on scaling course marks, please see below.

DEPARTMENT SCALING POLICY

In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology courses are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions for final course marks. According to departmental norms, the mean course mark in a 300-level class is 70 for a good class, 68 for an average class, and 66 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 13. Final course marks may be scaled up or down as necessary by the professor or department in order to comply with these norms. For official UBC policy on grade scaling, please see: <http://students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,42,96,0>

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

After Class: On most days I am available for brief questions immediately following the lecture.

Office Visits: Because many students' schedules inevitably conflict with a set weekly office hour, all office meetings for this course will be by appointment only. Scheduling must be done in advance via email.

Email: To avoid having your emails automatically deleted as spam, the subject header must read "Psych 309." The answers to questions regarding lecture/reading content may often be useful for the entire class to hear. As a consequence, questions may be answered in class at the beginning of lecture rather than via email. Please also note that while I try to be responsive to student emails, there are limits that must be put in place when dealing with large classes. Unfortunately, in a large lecture course I can not respond to students who generate excessive/frequent emails or who generate long lists of questions, as in the name of fairness it would be impossible for me to provide this level of service to all students. **Finally, in order to promote good problem solving skills, I will deduct 1 point from a student's final course mark for each email question that can be answered by consulting this syllabus, the Department of Psychology web page, and/or the UBC web page.** Examples of such questions would be *When is the next exam?*, *Where/when is the final?* and *What are the assigned readings for the next exam?*

OUTSIDE RESOURCES

If you run into trouble and need information on effective studying, preparing for exams, how to take notes, or manage your academic time, free workshops and advice are available from the Student Resources Center, which can be reached through the School and College Liaison Office at 822-4319.

CAVEAT EMPTOR: USE OF LAPTOPS AND TABLETS IN CLASS

Please note that the use of laptops and other electronic devices in this course is a privilege, not a right. Research has shown that the use of laptops in lecture settings (1) distract the user and those around him/her from the lecture, and (2) students who take notes by hand show greater retention of material from lecture, relative to students who take notes on laptops; the studies supporting these points, along with related news articles on the topic, are included for your reference in a folder on the course Connect site. While I thus discourage the use of laptops and tablets in PSYC309a, I will allow them in lecture as long as I do not receive any complaints from students about distracting uses not related to note-taking (e.g., web surfing, Facebooking, etc.). In the event that students do report laptops as a lecture distraction, they will be banned from lecture for the remainder of the term.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

NOTE: See course website for assigned readings for each lecture, as per noted above under *Readings, Notes, and Slides*

Part 1: Cognition and the Brain

Date	Lecture	Topic
9/8	1	Introduction
9/13	2	Body movement and apraxia
9/15	3	Visual pathways and agnosia
9/20	4	Cognition and emotion
9/22	5	Mental mobility in space-time
9/27	6	Language and aphasia
9/29	Small Group Session #1	
10/4	Exam 1: On Lectures 1-7 and Small Group Session #1	

Part 2: Personal Cognition

Date	Lecture	Topic
10/6	7	Semantic associations and priming
10/11	8	Conscious vs. unconscious thinking
10/13	9	Easy vs. effortful thinking
10/18	Small Group Session #2	
10/20	10	Decision fluency
10/25	11	Loss aversion and the endowment effect
10/27	12	The Ikea effect
11/1	Small Group Session #3	
11/3	Exam 2: On Lectures 7-12 and Small Group Sessions #2 & 3	

Part 3: Social Cognition

Date	Lecture	Topic
11/8	13	Reading eyes
11/10	14	Reading minds
11/15	15	Theory of mind and mentalizing
11/17	Small Group Session #4	
11/22	16	Social mimicry
11/24	17	Shared experiences
11/29	18	Social power and status
12/1	Small Group Session #5	
TBA	Exam 3: On Lectures 13-18 and Small Group Sessions #4 & 5	