

# Psychology 207-002

Contemporary topics in Biological and Cognitive Psychology

## Essential Information

**When?** Monday/Wednesday/Friday  
9:00-9:50

**Where?** CIRS 1250

## Your Instructor

### Janel Fergusson

*Office:* Kenny 3203a

*Office Hour:* Wednesdays 1:30-3:00  
or by appointment

*Email:* janelf@psych.ubc.ca

## Teaching Assistants

### Anna Maslany

*Office:* Kenny 3203a

*Office Hour:* Tuesdays 2:00-3:00  
or by appointment

*Email:* annamaslany@psych.ubc.ca

### Natasha Pestonji

*Office:* Kenny 3203a

*Office Hour:* By appointment

*Email:* natashapestonji@psych.ubc.ca

### Nada Alaifan

*Office:* Kenny 3203a

*Office Hour:* By appointment

*Email:* nada.alaifan@psych.ubc.ca

### Michelle Crease Lark

*Office:* Kenny 3203a

*Office Hour:* By appointment

*Email:* mlcrease@psych.ubc.ca

## Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview memory and cognitive changes in older adulthood. We will explore changes that occur in normal, healthy aging and in various disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. We will discuss theories that attempt to explain the causes of these changes and how people cope with changes in memory and cognition, both in themselves and in their loved ones. We will also explore how we can apply what we know about the field of psychology to our everyday lives, including how we interpret media reports about scientific research.

## Learning Goals

By the end of this class you should be able to:

- Describe changes in memory and cognition in normal, healthy aging
- Describe major types of dementia and other disorders of memory and cognition
- Interpret the results of scientific research
- Design an assistive device based on the findings of scientific research

## Required Materials

1. **Connect** - log in to [www.connect.ubc.ca](http://www.connect.ubc.ca). You are responsible for all material posted on Connect. **All course readings will be posted on Connect**, and several evaluations are done through the site.

2. **I>Clicker** – Available used or new from the university bookstore, or subscription to REEF polling

3. **Piazza** – Free online discussion platform. All course discussions will be hosted on Piazza. You can download an app for iPhone/iPad/Android for free, or access through your browser. Set up your account using the link on UBC Connect

## EMAIL POLICY

We will do our best to respond to emails within 24 hours during weekdays and 48 hours on weekends and holidays. Please include "Psych 207" in the subject line of all emails and sign them with your full name. This will make it much easier for us to respond in a timely manner. Questions that require more than a few sentences in response should be handled in person. **If you have a question about general course content (i.e., not about your grades or personal circumstances) please post your question on Piazza for the quickest response.** It is likely that other students share your question, and the TAs will be monitoring the discussion boards regularly.

**Please read your syllabus carefully before emailing – you might find the answer you are looking for!**

If your question is not for a specific member of the teaching team, please email the TA listed beside the first few letters of your family name. This will help the TAs respond in a reasonable period of time.

Family Name	TA
A-G	Anna Maslany
H-K	Natasha Pestonji
L-M	Nada Alaifan
N-Z	Michelle Crease-Lark

## Evaluations

Activity	Points to Earn	Dates
Research Translation Assignment	15%	March 10 <sup>th</sup> , 11:59 pm
Midterm	20%	March 1 <sup>st</sup> , class time
In-class Journal Discussion	15%	Multiple dates (see Course Schedule on last page)
Design Assignment	25%	Multiple dates (see Course Schedule on last page)
Final Exam	20%	TBA
In-class participation (iClicker)	5%	Continuous
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	
Bonus HSP participation points	Up to 3%	Experiments must be completed by April 6 <sup>th</sup> . If you choose the library research option it must be submitted before April 8 <sup>th</sup>

### Research Translation Assignment

Media articles about psychology research are often poorly written and end up confusing the audience or incorrectly interpreting the results of research. Your job is to translate one of the articles assigned in this course into a media article that is appropriate for a general, non-psychology audience.

This assignment has two parts:

1. Choose a media outlet that you are "working" for (e.g., a news website, newspaper,

magazine, etc.). Write a brief statement (150-250 words) that explains who your audience is.

2. Choose a **journal article** that is assigned for discussion in class and write a media article that communicates the background, methods, and findings of the peer-reviewed article in a way that your audience will understand and find interesting. If it would be appropriate given your media outlet, include photos or graphics in your media article.

More details regarding the specific requirements of this assignment are available on Connect. A digital copy of your assignment is due at 11:59pm on March 10<sup>th</sup>. To submit your assignment, please login to Connect and follow the instructions in the document titled "Assignment Submission". The assignment must also be submitted to TurnItIn no later than 11:59pm on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Any assignments turned in after 11:59pm will be considered late and subject to a penalty of 10% per calendar day. No email submissions will be accepted.

If you want to have a draft reviewed, you must bring a complete draft to Janel's office hour or make an appointment to meet outside of office hours no later than March 1<sup>st</sup>. Papers submitted electronically for review or after March 1<sup>st</sup> will not be reviewed. TAs will **not** be reviewing drafts.

## Midterm & Final Exam

Exams will include a mix of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answer questions. You may also have to label diagrams or define terms. The final exam is cumulative. All assigned readings, lecture materials, and in-class discussions are fair game for the exams.

**You are expected to be present at all exams.** If you miss a test for any reason, you will receive a grade of 0%. Make up exams will only be scheduled for documented medical excuses or family emergencies, and only with a doctor's note or other documentation stating that on the date of the exam you were unable to attend. You must contact Janel *before* the start of the exam if you are unable to attend, unless the nature of the emergency prevents you from contact. Documentation must be provided within 5 days of the missed exam or a make up will not be scheduled.

After the midterm exam grades are posted on Connect, we will hold 2 exam review sessions where you can view your exam and ask questions. If you believe an error was made in grading your exam, you must submit a completed and signed Midterm Regrade Request form (available on Connect) to Janel within 10 business days of the exam grades being posted on Connect that details why you

believe you have earned more points than you were given. Your entire exam will be regraded, and your grade may go up or down.

**The final exam is mandatory.** If you absolutely must miss your final exam because of extenuating circumstances, you or your caregiver (in the case of serious illness) must contact your faculty's Advising Office to apply for an Academic Concession. If you have 3 or more exams scheduled to start and finish within a 24 hour period you can request to write the second one on an alternate day. You must give the instructor of the second exam written notice at least one month prior to exam day.

## Journal Article Responses

Seven journal articles have been assigned for reading during the semester. In order to get the most out of each article, we will break off into small groups to discuss during class. You will be given discussion questions to answer and submit on Connect at the end of class. These responses will be graded. If you are not in class, you cannot earn credit for the journal article response assignment that day. You can answer the questions independently and submit them to the TAs for feedback, but a grade will not be awarded for late work.

Journal article responses are worth 10% of your final grade. Only your 6 *best* response grades will count towards your final grade (i.e., your lowest grade will be dropped).

## Design Assignment

As our population ages and technology advances, psychologists are becoming more and more involved in creating assistive technology and devices for people with age-related changes in cognition and memory. Working in groups of 3-6 people, you will design an assistive device for someone who has a memory or cognitive impairment. Each group will do a poster presentation. Groups will be able to indicate their preference for presentation date, and this will be taken into account when assigning dates. More details regarding the specific requirements of this assignment are available on Connect.

Grading will be done through peer assessment. To ensure that peer assessments are done to a high quality, it is important that every student thoroughly understand the rubric. You must complete the rubric quiz on Connect by **March 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:59pm**. Your grade on the quiz will make up 5% of your presentation grade. Completing it earlier is to your advantage, as you will have a better understanding of the requirements before beginning your own project. On each presentation day, students who are not presenting will be assigned to grade the work of a minimum of 3 presentations. These grades will be compiled and the median will be taken. More details will be given in class and on Connect as presentation days near. **It is important that you attend all class presentation days.** The quality of the comments you leave on peer assessments counts towards 15% of your final grade on the project.

## In Class Participation

In-class participation will be assessed using iClickers. In most class periods a number of questions will be asked to help you assess your progress and help Janel assess the progress of the class. Your in-class participation grade will be assessed by the proportion of questions you answer and the proportion you answer correctly (i.e., you will earn some points just for answering, and more if you answer correctly!). Questions missed due to absence, lateness, dead batteries, etc. cannot be made up.

Your participation grade will be calculated based on how many of the available points you have earned. If you complete 85% of the available in-class participation points in the term, you will earn 100% for participation.

Percentage earned	Participation points
85%+	5.0
68%-84%	4.0
51%-67%	3.0
34%-50%	2.0
17%-33%	1.0
0%-16%	0.0

## Bonus HSP Credits

In addition to required course assessments, you will be given the opportunity to earn up to 3 extra credit points (for a possible 3% added to your final grade) by participating in the Psychology Human Subject Pool. To earn bonus credits, you may choose one of the following options:

### **Participate in the Psychology Department Human Subjects Pool:**

Most students will choose to earn their research experience component by spending **three hours participating in psychology studies (worth 1% point for each hour)** through the Department of Psychology's Human Subject Pool (HSP) system. You can locate, create an account, and sign up for studies by going to <https://ubc-psych.sona-systems.com>

**Please register in the system by the end of the first month of classes to have the opportunity to earn your first ½ hour credit with a brief online survey that will increase your eligibility for more studies.**

Once registered in the system, you will be able to browse through and select which studies you wish to participate in, sign up for an available timeslot, and confirm your accumulated credits afterward. At the end of the last day of class for the term, the subject pool is closed. At that point, you will no longer be able to receive credits. I strongly urge you to participate in and confirm your credits long *before* the last week of class. Further instruction on how to use the HSP online system can be found at <http://psych.ubc.ca/internal/human-subject-pool/> in the document entitled "Subject Pool Information for Participants."

### **The Library Option**

As an alternative to participation in psychology subject pool experiments, you may complete a library-writing project. Such projects consist of reading and summarizing 1) the research question, 2) the methods and 3) the results (in written form) of a research article from the peer reviewed journal *Psychological Science*. You will receive one (1) research participation credit for

each article summary that meets the following requirements, up to a maximum of 3.

Requirements:

- The article must have been published in the journal titled "*Psychological Science*"
- The article must have a publication date from the year 2000 to present (i.e. papers from 2001 are acceptable; those from 1999 or earlier are not)
- The article must be a research article; it cannot be a review article, a news item, a notice, or a letter to the editor, for example
- The summary should be approximately 500 words in length
- You must include your name, student number, course, section, instructor and email address on each summary
- You must log on to the Human Subject Pool system (<https://ubc-psych.sona-systems.com>) and create an account before submitting your article summaries. Your credit is assigned using the online system.

Summaries must be submitted **no later than the last day of classes**. You are to submit your article and your summary to [turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com). If you don't have a turnitin account already (from a previous course), you will need to create a user account in Turnitin. For the library assignment the class ID is 14194512, class name is Psychology HSP (2016-2017) (Spring), and password is research. See [www.turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com), and click on the "Training" link at the top of the page for detailed instructions on how to submit papers to Turnitin.

Any student who is suspected of plagiarism will, at a minimum, not be granted credit, and their course instructor will be notified. Further action may be taken at a departmental or university level.

## Grading Policies

In order to meet departmental policy, which states that a 200-level course will have an average of 63-67% with a standard deviation of 14, grades may be scaled. Grades are not final until they appear on your academic record. Grades that are posted on Connect are unofficial and subject to change.

## Expectations

What we expect from you:

**Attendance** Arrive on time and prepared for class. Read the assigned readings prior to class, including any assigned readings that aren't in the textbook. If you miss class, you are responsible for contacting a fellow student to find out what you missed.

**Participation** While this course largely follows a traditional lecture format, there will be numerous opportunities for discussion, problem-solving, and active learning. Exam questions could be drawn from these activities as well as from the lecture and textbook. Success in this course depends on active participation in class.

**Feedback** We welcome feedback on all aspects of this course. If something is not working for you, please let us know! If you do not understand something presented in class, it is likely that others do not understand either. I will be using the clicker questions to assess understanding of concepts throughout the course.

**Respectful & Ethical Conduct** You are expected to treat other members of the course with respect, both in class and in outside-of-class communication (e.g., emails, Piazza posts, office hours, etc.). This includes minimizing disruptions and distractions during class. Cheating and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Please see the Ethical Conduct section of the syllabus for more details.

What you should expect from us:

**Availability** We are available in class, during office hours, on the course Piazza site, and by email. If you absolutely cannot make it to office hours, please email to set up an appointment. If you have questions that take more than a few sentences to answer we will ask you to come in to meet face-to-face. Note that responses to emails may take up to 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends.

**Online slides** I will post lecture slides before each lecture on Connect. The slides are often useful in organizing your own notes, so you may wish to download or print a copy to bring to class. Take notes in class – the lecture slides are not a substitute for notes. If you

have to miss a lecture, please get notes from a classmate.

**Feedback** Feedback on assignments and exams will be as prompt and detailed as is possible, given the size of the class. For written assignments, you will see the initials of the TA who marked your assignment in the comments field so you can contact them for more detailed feedback. If you want more detailed feedback on an assignment or exam, please come see one of us.

## Learning tools

**Connect** Throughout the term lecture slides, announcements, readings, additional information about assignments and exams, and preliminary grades will be posted on the course Connect site. Please make full use of these resources. You will be asked to submit your Applications of Psychology assignment through the Connect site.

**Physical or Learning Disabilities** If you have physical or learning disabilities which affect your learning in the classroom or your ability to write tests in a standard classroom exam setting, accommodations are available. Please contact Access and Diversity (Brock Hall 1203, 604-822-5844) to make arrangements.

## Ethical Conduct

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them. The Department subscribes to *TurnItIn* — a service designed to detect and deter plagiarism. Your study plans will be compared to content located on the Internet or in TurnItIn's own proprietary databases.

During exams, the instructor and invigilators reserve the right to move students with no explanation provided. If we suspect someone of misconduct, we may move them or the person(s) around them. We also may move students simply to prevent opportunities for misconduct in advance.

In all cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>).

All work submitted in this course is to be your own independent and original work unless otherwise specified. You may not submit work that you have prepared for other courses without prior approval. You must cite all of your sources, which should be from peer-reviewed academic journals.

If you have any questions as to whether your work is a borderline case of academic misconduct, please contact Janel or one of the TAs so we can review it before it is submitted.

**This syllabus is also available in electronic format through Connect. If any discrepancy exists between the printed version and electronic version of the syllabus, the electronic version shall be considered correct.**

## Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Connect. You are responsible for reading the assigned chapters/pages before class.

Week	Date	In-Class Topic	Readings/Assignments
1	Jan. 4 <sup>th</sup>	Welcome and Introduction	
	Jan. 6 <sup>th</sup>	Research methods and definitions	<i>What and When of Cognitive Aging</i>
2	Jan. 9 <sup>th</sup>	Brain changes in healthy aging	<i>Cavanaugh Ch. 2</i>
	Jan. 11 <sup>th</sup>		
	Jan. 13 <sup>th</sup>		
3	Jan. 16 <sup>th</sup>	Healthy older adults (HOAs) – Short Term Memory	<b>Journal Article 1</b> <i>Verbal Forward Digit Span in Spanish Population</i>
	Jan. 18 <sup>th</sup>		
	Jan. 20 <sup>th</sup>		
4	Jan. 23 <sup>rd</sup>	HOAs – Episodic & Semantic Memory	<i>Episodic Memory</i>
	Jan. 25 <sup>th</sup>		<b>Journal Article 2</b> <i>Physical Activity and Memory Functions: An Interventional Study</i>
	Jan. 27 <sup>th</sup>		
5	Jan. 30 <sup>th</sup>	HOAs – Autobiographical Memory	<b>Journal Article 3 - Evaluating the Valence of Remembered Events: The Importance of Age and Self-Relevance</b>
	Feb. 1 <sup>st</sup>		
	Feb. 3 <sup>rd</sup>		
6	Feb. 6 <sup>th</sup>	HOAs – Prospective Memory	<b>Journal Article 4 - Aging and the Misinformation Effect: A Neuropsychological Analysis</b>
	Feb. 8 <sup>th</sup>	HOAs – Eyewitness Memory	
	Feb. 10 <sup>th</sup>		
7	Feb. 13 <sup>th</sup>	University Closed – Family Day	
	Feb. 15 <sup>th</sup>	HOAs – Metacognition	
	Feb. 17 <sup>th</sup>	HOAs – Metacognition	<b>Journal Article 5 - Doubly Blessed: Older Adults Know More Vocabulary and Know Better What They Know</b>
	Feb. 20-24 <sup>th</sup>	Reading Break – No Classes	
8	Feb. 27 <sup>th</sup>	HOAs – Interference and Attention	<i>Attention</i>
	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Midterm</b>	
	March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Disorders of Memory (DM) – MCI	<i>Normal and pathological cognitive aging in late adulthood.</i>
9	March 6 <sup>th</sup>	DM – Alzheimer’s Disease	<i>Still Alice (selected passages)</i>
	March 8 <sup>th</sup>		
	March 10 <sup>th</sup>		<b>Research Translation Assignment Due 11:59 pm</b>
10	March 13 <sup>th</sup>	DM – Alzheimer’s Disease	<b>Groups chosen for Design Assignment (in class)</b>
	March 15 <sup>th</sup>	DM – Other Dementias	
	March 17 <sup>th</sup>		

11	March 20 <sup>th</sup>	DM – Other Dementias	<b>Journal Article 6 - Can clock drawing differentiate Alzheimer's disease from other dementias?</b>
	March 22 <sup>nd</sup>		<b>Groups submit presentation preferences, deadline 11:59pm</b>
	March 24 <sup>th</sup>	Caring for people with dementia	<i>Best Practice Guidelines for Accommodating and Managing Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia in Residential Care</i>
12	March 27 <sup>th</sup>	Caring for people with dementia	<b>Journal Article 7 - Activity Involvement and Quality of Life of People at Different Stages of Dementia in Long Term Care Facilities</b>
	March 29 <sup>th</sup>	Review Class	
	March 31 <sup>st</sup>	Time given in class to work on project	<b>Rubric Quiz due on Connect – 11:59pm</b>
13	April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Design Assignment Poster Presentations</b>	
	April 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Design Assignment Poster Presentations</b>	

The final exam date will be set by the registrar.  
Do not book travel during exam period (April 10<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>), including Saturdays.