Syllabus: Psych 2H03
Human Learning and Cognition
Fall Session, September to December, 2004

Instructor: Dr. David Shore
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Psychology 2H03 E-mail account: help2h3@psychology.mcmaster.ca

All e-mail communication should be directed to these specific accounts and should come from your McMaster account (this is to minimize spam). Should we need to communicate with you about individual matters, the e-mail will be sent to your university account. You should monitor this account regularly. E-mail sent from third-party providers will not be received.

Course Objectives and Content:
In this course you will be introduced to the major themes in the field of Cognitive Psychology. A comprehensive overview of the field will be provided, including perception, pattern recognition, memory, mental imagery, concept formation, language, problem solving, reasoning and decision making. Refer to the Psych 2h03 web pages for details about course content and weekly readings.

Required Text: Reisberg, D. (2001). Cognition: Exploring the Science of Mind, 2nd Ed. Chapters that will receive full consideration are 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Chapters 14 and 15 will be covered if time permits.

Exams and grading:
Exams will cover lecture material and textbook material equally. It is important to note that lectures will often present material that is not covered in the textbook and you will also be responsible for material in assigned chapters that is not covered in lectures. There will be three exams: two 50 minute midterm exams and one 3 hour final exam held during the exam period. The final will have two components. The first will cover the final 1/3 of the course material and the second will be a cumulative across the entire course. Thus, there will be four (4) examination components. The lowest of these 4 will be dropped making each of the 3 remaining grades worth 29%. A passing average must be achieved on the examinations to pass the course.

The exam grades thus determined will constitute 87% of the total grade. The web assignment will provide 6% of the total grade (see notes below). The laboratory assignment will provide 4% (see notes below). The final 3% will come from the Reference Assignment (see notes below) Instructors reserve the right to alter the format of the exams and/or assignments if the need should arise.

The term exams will be given on the Tuesday afternoons listed below, during the times reserved in the calendar for tutorial session (13:30-14:30). The final exam will be scheduled by the registrar.

Exam Dates and Assessment Scheme (refer to the Lecture Outlines on the web page for reading due dates):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 24</td>
<td>First post and response due (on a topic from Ch.3 or introductory material)</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 12 (13:30-14:30) room TBA</td>
<td>Exam One (Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5 and associated lecture notes)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Web Assignment:
The web assignment involves accessing the course web-based discussion group where you will find course-related topics posted. A link to the discussion group can be found on the course web page. There will be several topics based on material from lectures and from each chapter in your textbook. The purpose of the web-based discussion group is to foster discussion among students and TAs about course material and to assist you in studying the course material. The discussion topics will relate to the questions you will see on exams, so it is well worth your while to involve yourself in the online discussions. The questions are broader than we can ask on examinations and provide another approach to learning the course material. You will be responsible for posting a minimum of 4 original messages (1 pt apiece) over the course of the term and four responses to other students' messages (1/2 point apiece). The posts must address the specific chapters specified above. Each post must engage the subject material in a meaningful way. Your messages do not have to be 'the correct answer', but it must be clear that you have put some thought into the topic. Each original post must be unique -- they must not be the same as previously posted messages by you or other students. Obviously, the requirement to have unique posts means that it is advantageous for you to start on the assignments early in a section. Each post and response will be worth 1.5%; there will be no part marks and no way to make up for a late post; if your post is late the grade for that 1.5% will be zero, with no exceptions.

Please note! It is your responsibility to learn to access and use the web-based discussion group! If you encounter problems, you must make an appointment with the TAs for a tutorial. You will not be able to post unless you are on the posting list. Do not wait until the last minute to find out you are not on the list. Do this early -- there is no way to make up for a late post. Check the web page for detailed instructions.

Laboratory Assignment:
The laboratory assignment consists of participation in one experiment in cognitive psychology to learn the procedures and experience the process first hand. Experiments will be posted in the Psychology Building, on the bulletin board on the first floor. The assignment will be graded out of 4 points. Two points will be awarded for participating and 2 points will be based on your answer to a question on the final about the experiment you participated in. At the end of the experiment you will receive a "debriefing" sheet that you can use to review the experiment when you are studying for the final. A penalty of 2 percentage points will be applied if you sign up for an experiment but do not show up (without adequate notice). This means that your laboratory grade can only be the amount you earn on the question about the experiment that you did participate in. You may opt to participate without producing data, which involves a walk-through of the experiment. Details about the laboratory assignment and the walk-through option are described in detail on the Laboratory Assignment web page.

Reference Assignment:
The Reference Assignment will require you to use the web-based tools discussed by the librarian on September 17th. You will be required to find any one article that cites one of the articles in the textbook and write a 1 paragraph (4-5 sentence) description. To be specific, you will choose any one of the references in the back of your text book. Go online to the web tools discussed by the librarian and find an article that cites that piece of work. This article can not be
listed in the textbook! Then you will submit the full APA reference of that article and a 1 paragraph description of the work. What was the question, method, and findings. This assignment is worth 3%. 1% will be given for finding a relevant reference (i.e., one that cites a reference from the textbook but is not itself listed in the textbook. The remaining 2% will be given based on the clarity of your one paragraph write-up. Be concise as you will be penalized for wordiness.

Grading Policy: The instructors reserve the right to adjust final marks up or down, on an individual basis, in the light of special circumstances and/or the individual’s total performance in the course. Details of the course requirements may be subject to change. If requirements are altered, a revised course outline will be posted on the webpage and the details will be announced in class. The instructor is not able to reschedule the final exam. If there is a problem with the final exam schedule, students must contact the registrar’s office. Attention is drawn to Statement on Academic Ethics and the Senate Resolutions on Academic Dishonesty as found in the Senate Policy Statements distributed at registration and available in the Senate Office. Any student who infringes one of these resolutions will be treated according to the published policy.

Policy Reminder: All excuses for missed exams must be submitted through the office of the Associate Dean of your faculty/programme. It is then also your responsibility to speak with your professor as soon as possible. Notes for exemption from course requirements must be submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean of your faculty/programme within one week of the original due date of the missed work. After that time, students must appeal to have an exemption. Note that senate regulations for petitions for special consideration have always required that: “40. The student shall make a prompt and timely request for special consideration.” NO REQUESTS FOR EXEMPTION WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER ONE MONTH. Please see the notes on missed work page for further details.

Please note that instructors and TAs cannot return long distance telephone calls. Contact by e-mail is highly recommended.

For the fastest response to your inquiries, send your e-mail to the Psych 2H03 course e-mail address:

help2h3@psychology.mcmaster.ca

Class Times: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30-10:30 AM
TSH B128

Examinations and Review Sessions
Tuesday:13:30-14:30
Room TBA