

SYLLABUS
PSYCH 2H03: Human Learning & Cognition
Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour
McMaster University Winter Term: January – April 2012

Course times: Monday and Wednesday, 2:30-3:20 pm; Friday 4:30-5:20 pm.

Course location: JHE/376 Course web site: Avenue to Learn

Professor: Dr. J.M. Shedden Email: shedden@mcmaster.ca
Office: PC-406. Office hours: by appointment

Teaching assistants: your TA, and your group on Avenue, is determined by first letter of last name:
Group 1: Last name starts with **A to F:** Your TA is Miriam Benarroch: mbenarro@mcmaster.ca
Group 2: Last name starts with **G to M:** Your TA is Kathleen Einarson: einarsk@mcmaster.ca
Group 3: Last name starts with **N to Z:** Your TA is Ye Yuan: yuany4@mcmaster.ca

The Avenue Discussions tool is a great place to ask and answer questions. If you need help with the course that you cannot get in the Discussions, please email your TA for help. **Important:** Please send email from your McMaster account – email from hotmail, yahoo, cogeco and some other service providers is often filtered as spam and may not arrive at its destination.

Course Description: In this course you will be introduced to the major themes in the field of Cognitive Psychology, including topics in perception, attention, memory, concepts, language, imagery, problem solving and reasoning.

Required Text: Reisberg, D. (2010). Cognition: Exploring the Science of the Mind. 4th Edition (older editions are okay, but it is your responsibility to make sure you are not missing anything from the 4th Edition).

Chapters to be covered: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Fridays:

Friday Midterms: Three midterms will be held on Fridays during scheduled class time, at 4:30-5:30pm, on January 27, February 17, and March 16. Exam details can be found below.

Virtual Fridays: On the Fridays that are not midterms, we will be experimenting with MacLive (<http://cll.mcmaster.ca/maclive/>), a web conferencing tool, and possibly with other online methods of information transfer. On Virtual Fridays, you do not need to be on campus if you have a computer and internet access from another location. Schedule/instructions will be posted on Avenue.

Getting started: helpful MacLive information:

You will need the latest version of Java installed on your computer. A headset is required for voice participation. If you do not have a headset, you can still listen with headphones or speakers, and you can ask questions using the chat feature. Recommended reading:

http://cll.mcmaster.ca/maclive/pdf/Participant_Session_Checklist.pdf

<http://cll.mcmaster.ca/maclive/pdf/v10ParticipantGuide.pdf>

<https://www.elluminate.com/Services/Training/?id=70/>

Assessment:

84% of your grade will be based on exams

5% from participation in weekly web-based discussion group assignments

11% from participation in two experiments and a written assignment based on one of these experiments

Assessment Dates:

Friday, Jan. 27, 4:30pm	MIDTERM 1 (Part 1, Chapters 1, 3, 4) (1 hour)
Friday, Feb 17, 4:30pm	MIDTERM 2 (Part 2, Chapters 5, 6, 7) (1 hour)
Friday, Mar 2, 4:30pm	Final date for experiment assignment feedback
Friday, Mar 16, 4:30pm	MIDTERM 3 (Part 3, Chapters 9, 10, 11) (1 hour)
Friday, Mar. 23, 4:30pm	Final date for experiment assignment submissions
Exam period (date TBA)	FINAL EXAM (Part 4, Chapter 12, 13, 14, plus cumulative section) (2 hours)

Class Schedule:

Date	Topic
Jan 4	Introduction (Chapter 1)
Jan 9, 11, 16	Perception (Chapter 3)
Jan 18, 23, 25	Attention (Chapter 4)
Friday Jan 27	MIDTERM 1 (Part 1, Chapters 1, 3, 4) (1 hour)
Jan 30, Feb 1	Acquisition and Working Memory (Chapter 5)
Feb 6, 8	Acquisition and Retrieval: Interconnections (Chapter 6)
Feb 13, 15	Remembering Complex Events (Chapter 7)
Friday Feb 17	MIDTERM 2 (Part 2, Chapters 5, 6, 7) (1 hour)
<i>Feb 20-24</i>	<i>Midterm Recess</i>
Feb 27, 29	Visual Cognition and Imagery (Chapter 11)
Mar 5, 7	Categories and Concepts (Chapter 9)
Mar 12, 14	Language (Chapter 10)
Friday Mar 16	MIDTERM 3 (Part 3, Chapters 9, 10, 11) (1 hour)
Mar 19, 21	Judgment, Decision Making (Chapter 12)
Mar 26, 28	Reasoning (Chapter 13)
Apr 2, 4	Problem Solving, Expertise, Creativity (Chapter 14)
Final Exam Period	FINAL EXAM (Part 4, Chapter 12, 13, 14, plus cumulative section) (2 hours)

Virtual Fridays:

In addition to the dates shown in the table above, you should reserve the following dates for Virtual Friday activities: Jan 6, 13, 20, Feb 3, 10, Mar 2, 9, 23, 30. See previous page for details.

Exams (84%):

You are responsible for the material covered in lectures AND the assigned chapters from the textbook. Please note that you may be examined on material presented in lectures that is not in the textbook, and also material from the textbook not covered in lectures. Powerpoint slides from the lectures will be available on Avenue as PDF files, AFTER the lectures.

There will be four multiple choice exams: three midterm exams, plus a final cumulative exam. Midterms 1, 2, and 3 will be held during the Friday 4:30-5:20pm time slots (see schedule for dates); each midterm is worth 21%, and will cover approximately 1/4 of the course. The cumulative final will be written during the final examinations period (2 hours), and will have two separate sections – one covering only material from the final 1/4 of the course (worth 21%), and a second section covering the entire course (worth 21%). Out of these five examination components, the lowest will be dropped, and will not count towards your final grade. **No examination will be re-scheduled unless there is cancellation of the class by the University, and there will be NO makeup exams** (see Missed Tests below).

Class discussion assignments (5%):

The set of class discussion assignments are all together worth 5% of the grade. Every week (beginning January 9th) a discussion question will be posted to the Avenue discussion board. You will be required to post an original response to the question, or a reply to another student's comment or question. There will be 11 questions (one per week) posted over the duration of the course, each worth 0.5 % of your final grade, up to a maximum of 5 % (i.e., you need to respond to 10 out of 11 questions to earn this 5%). Responses should be a minimum of 150 words, and reflect at least a few minutes of moderate thought regarding the topic. Questions will be posted early in the week; responses to weekly questions are due by the start of class (2:30pm) on Monday. Late responses will not receive credit. Further details will be posted on Avenue.

Experimental assignment (11%):

The experimental assignment is worth 11% of the grade.

- 1) You will take part in, or if you prefer, simply observe TWO experiments through the Departmental Participant Pool **(2%)**. You will need to use Experimetrix (link on the Psychology department's home page) to choose and sign up for experiments. Be sure that an experiment says it is open to 2H03 students before you sign up. Be sure you understand and save the debriefing provided by the experimenter.
- 2) Find an article in the popular media that you can relate somehow to ONE of the experiments that you did. (e.g. an article that talks about Attention Deficit Disorder, and you could relate that to an experiment you did on attention and dual task processing). For this assignment, the popular media is defined as a DAILY NEWSPAPER that has a print edition. (It is fine to access your article via an online edition if the paper has one – e.g. websites of Washington Post, NY Times, Globe & Mail, etc). You should NOT be looking at scientific journals, popular science magazines (e.g. Scientific American), news magazines (e.g. Macleans, Newsweek), online/TV/radio news sources (e.g. CNN website), etc. to find your article.
- 3) Write a paper NO LONGER than 3 pages, double spaced **(9%)**
This should describe the experiment you took part in (the general motivation, the hypotheses, the independent and dependent variables), and also relate the experiment to the article that you found—how the issues might relate to each other. Often, the article will not be DIRECTLY related to the experiment, so you will have to put some effort into thinking about how these issues might be related, and how the kinds of issues addressed in the experiment might bear on the issues brought up in the article. Marks will also be given for the actual writing, not just the content.
- 4) If you submit your assignment (see below for submission instructions) by **Friday, March 2, 4:30pm**, the TAs will mark it, and provide feedback by **Monday, March 12**. You then have the option to revise and resubmit the assignment on the basis of this feedback if you would like to improve your mark. You can also make an

appointment with your TA at this stage to get more feedback. **Important:** Assignments submitted after the March 2nd deadline **will not** get detailed feedback from the TA, and **will not** be allowed to resubmit. The **FINAL** date for all submissions or resubmissions is **Friday, March 23, 4:30pm.**

Marking scheme for experimental assignment:

- 2% Participate in 2 experiments
- 9% Paper
 - 3% Description of experiment, including the general point of the experiment, the hypothesis being tested, and the independent and dependent variables
 - 4% A brief description of the media article, with most of the focus on a discussion of how issues of psychology related to your experiment relate to issues in the real world.
 - 2% Overall quality of writing, including clarity, structure and correct usage

Late submissions: will be penalized by 2 marks for each day overdue, judged at 4:30pm.

Submitting your experimental assignment:

In an attempt to go paperless in this course, your assignment will be submitted in electronic form using the Dropbox in Avenue. Grading and feedback will be provided electronically.

- Your assignment should contain the following:
 - 1) A cover page with **your name and student number**, and **your TA's name**
 - 2) A copy of the debriefing sheet from the experiment (must be included)
 - 3) A copy of the newspaper article you based your paper on (must be included)
 - 4) Your 3 page paper

General Information

Final Grades: All assessment components will be assigned numerical grades, and the total converted to a letter grade according to McMaster's standard grading scheme:

A+ 90-100%	A 85-89%	A- 80-84%	B+ 77-79%	B 73-76%	B- 70-72%	
C+ 67-69%	C 63-66%	C- 60-62%	D+ 57-59%	D 53-56%	D- 50-52%	F 0-49%

Missed Tests:

There will not be a re-examination for missing any of the midterm examinations. Missed exams will receive a "zero" and that grade will be dropped when calculating the best 4 out of 5 exams, assuming the student writes the other 4 exams. If a student misses a second examination, owing to an illness or any other legitimate reason, and provided an official permission is routed through the University Administration or by filling in the McMaster Student Absent Form (MSAF), the student will be required to make up for the second missed examination in the form of an assessment that may differ from the multiple-choice exams (for example, this could be an oral examination with the instructor). The instructor will determine the format of the examination, date, location and time for such an assessment. Further, such students should get in touch with the instructor within 48 hours after the missed second exam by email to shedden@mcmaster.ca. In absence of such an arrangement, the mark on the second missed exam will be a "zero".

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):

The MSAF may be used to report some (but not all) absences. For example, the MSAF cannot be used in the following situations:

1. when the request for relief of missed work is for non-medical reasons (e.g. religious holidays, personal reasons, athletic events as a student athlete, etc), or
2. for a medical situation that lasts for more than 5 days, or
3. for a second or subsequent time in a term, or
4. for a major piece of work (worth 30% or more), or
5. for the final exam.

Please make yourself familiar with the terms of using the MSAF by going to the following web sites:

1. <http://www.mcmaster.ca/health/>
2. <http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>
3. <http://registrar.mcmaster.ca/CALENDAR/current/pg2246.html>

Privacy:

In this course we will be using AVENUE for the online portions of your course. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with your professor.

Academic Integrity Policy:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

A note from the University:

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.