SYLLABUS
PSYCH 2H03: Human Learning & Cognition
Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour
McMaster University Winter Term: January – April 2013

Course times: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30-10:20 am.
Course location: HSC/1A1 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 is determined by group (you can find your group assignment on Avenue):
Group 1: Your TA is Stefan Nazar: nazarsa@mcmaster.ca
Group 2: Your TA is Faria Sana: sanaf@mcmaster.ca
Group 3: Your TA is Michael Slugocki: slugocm@mcmaster.ca

If you need help that you cannot get from the on-line discussions on Avenue, please email your TA.
Important: Please send email from your McMaster account; we cannot respond to email addresses that do not provide you identity. Email from hotmail, yahoo, cogeco and some other service providers is often filtered as spam and may not arrive at its destination. We will use the McMaster email system; please do not sent email from Avenue unless you set the “reply to” your McMaster email address.

Course Description: The course will introduce the major themes in the field of Cognitive Psychology, including topics in perception, attention, memory, concepts, language, imagery, problem solving and reasoning.


Assessment:
80% Multiple-choice exams; all exams are cumulative:
15%: Midterm 1 15% Midterm 2 50% Final
5% Participation in on-line discussions on Avenue
15% Take part in 2 experiments (minimum 2 Experimetrix credits); write paper on one of them.

Assessment Dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Feb 12, 9:30am</td>
<td>MIDTERM 1 (1 hour)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Feb 26</td>
<td>Written assignment due before midnight if you want feedback from your TA prior to the final due date of April 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Mar 26, 9:30am</td>
<td>MIDTERM 2 (cumulative; 1 hour)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Apr 2</td>
<td>Written assignment due before midnight – you have all term to work on it -- don’t wait until the last week!</td>
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<td>End of term</td>
<td>Participation in Avenue on-line discussions will be evaluated</td>
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<td>Exam period (date TBA)</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM (cumulative; 3 hours)</td>
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Exams (15% Midterm 1; 15% Midterm 2; 50% Final):
The exams consist of multiple-choice questions. You are responsible for the textbook as well as the material covered in lectures. 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. All the exams are cumulative. Each midterm will be held during class time; the final will be held during a 3 hour time slot scheduled by the Registrar’s office during the final exam period (April 12-30). 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).

Participation in on-line discussions on Avenue (5%):
- The on-line discussion is a venue for students to help each other. Pose and answer questions, discuss issues related to course material, and help each other study. Read what your colleagues are posting. Can you help with any questions your colleagues are asking? Can you help with understanding? Perhaps take the discussion in a different direction once the original question has been resolved? If you are starting a thread of your own, make the subject line unique and informative.
- Your participation will be evaluated at the end of the term. We will look at the quality and course-relevance of your posts. We will look for professionalism and respect for your peers. Writing skills are important, including grammar and spelling. We will look at the dates of your posts for an indication that your participation is spread across the term and not all in one spurt. There is no “minimum” number of posts required; however, aiming for at least 150 words per week of high quality discussion is a reasonable goal. Try to use this venue as a tool to improve understanding and exchange of ideas, rather than going for the minimum.

Written assignment (15%):
- Take part in, or if you prefer, simply observe 2 or more experiments (minimum of 2 Experimetrix credits) through the Departmental Participant Pool. Use Experimetrix (link on the Psychology department’s home page) to select and sign up for experiments. Make sure the experiment is explicitly open to 2H03 students otherwise you won’t get 2H03 credit for it. Write down the Experimetrix code for your experiments! Understand and save the debriefing provided by the experimenter.
- Choose one of your experiments to write about. Find a primary research article in the library (a primary research article, not a secondary or review paper) that is relevant to the experiment you will write about. Here are two sources to help you discriminate between a primary and secondary research article:
  - [http://www.ithacalibrary.com/sp/subjects/primary](http://www.ithacalibrary.com/sp/subjects/primary)
  - [http://www.library.utoronto.ca/gerstein/tutorial/primary_research1.html](http://www.library.utoronto.ca/gerstein/tutorial/primary_research1.html)
- Write a paper no longer than 3 pages (12 point font, double spaced, 1” margins). Describe the experiment you selected (the general motivation, the hypotheses, the independent and dependent variables). Summarize the primary research article and discuss how the experiment you participated in and the research article are related. How do the issues addressed in the experiment relate to the primary research article? How might you extend the research with a follow-up experiment? How might the research be important to understanding cognition and behavior in everyday life? You will be graded on writing skills as well as content. See marking scheme below.
- Your paper should have a cover page that includes the following information:
  - Your name and student ID number
  - Your Avenue group number and your TA’s name
  - The title of your paper
  - The Experimetrix code and the name of the experiment you are writing about
  - The complete reference (APA format) for your primary research article
- The correct (test it!) permalink to your primary research article; if you can’t generate the correct permalink then select a different article; follow this link to learn how to get the permalink: http://library.mcmaster.ca.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/linking

- Submit your paper via Dropbox in Word format (.doc or .docx). Do not convert to PDF.
- If you submit your assignment by midnight on Tuesday, February 26, your TA will mark it and provide feedback by Tuesday, 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. The FINAL date for all submissions and resubmissions is midnight on Tuesday, April 2.
- Important: If you resubmit, there must be clear improvement or your grade will go down. Assignments submitted after the February 26 deadline will not be allowed to resubmit.

Marking scheme for experimental assignment:
- 2% Participate in 2 or more experiments (minimum 2 Experimetrix credits)
- 13% Paper
  - 4% Description of experiment, including the general point of the experiment, the hypothesis being tested, and the independent and dependent variables
  - 6% Discussion of the primary research article and how it relates to the experiment you participated in, as suggested above. The TAs must be able to access the research article via the permalink on your cover page; if your permalink doesn’t work this section will receive zero, so be sure to test the permalink that you provide. If you can’t find a working permalink, then find a different primary research article.
  - 4% Overall quality of writing, including clarity, structure and correct usage

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

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. If a student misses an 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 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 exam by email to shedden@mcmaster.ca. In absence of such an arrangement, the mark on the 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/

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.