

## SYLLABUS

### PNB 2XA3: Human Perception & Cognition

Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour

McMaster University Fall Term: September – December 2015

**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.

When and where:

Lectures: Monday 12:30-1:20 pm, Tuesday 1:30-2:20 pm, Thursday 12:30-1:20 pm; ITB/137

Tutorials: Monday 9:30-10:20 am; BSB/B136

Midterm Exams: Monday 9:30-10:20 am (see schedule for dates; rooms TBA on Avenue)

Course web site: Avenue to Learn

**Professor:** Dr. J.M. Shedden Email: shedden@mcmaster.ca

**Teaching assistants:** Your TA is determined by group (you can find your group assignment on Avenue):

Group 1: Your TA is Stefania Cerisano: cerisas@mcmaster.ca

Group 2: Your TA is Robert Collins: collinrn@mcmaster.ca

Group 3: Your TA is Melissa Ptok: ptokmj@mcmaster.ca

Group 4: Your TA is Natalie Wagner: wagnernk@mcmaster.ca

The Avenue Discussions tool is a great place to ask and answer questions. 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 your identity. Email messages from hotmail, yahoo, cogeco and some other service providers are often filtered as spam and may not arrive at the destination. We will use the McMaster email system; please *do not send email from Avenue unless you set the "reply to" your McMaster email address.*

**Required Text:** Reisberg, D. (2012). Cognition: Exploring the Science of the Mind, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (available at the Campus Store). Older editions are okay, but it is your responsibility to make sure you are not missing anything from the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition because exams will test material from lectures and the 5<sup>th</sup> edition textbook. A new book comes with ZAPs, but you don't need ZAPs, so a used book without ZAPs is fine. It is possible to rent or buy an electronic version of the textbook, for example:

CourseSmart (<http://tinyurl.com/pj5gdw3>; US\$85.33 for 180 days)

W.W.Norton (<http://tinyurl.com/olhkzlo>; US\$54.16 for 180 days; not compatible with all devices).

#### **Assessment:**

**85%** of your grade will be based on 5 multiple-choice exams

4 midterms (best 3 of 4, worth 18% each)

Final cumulative (worth 31%)

**15%** from 3 written assignments (each worth 5%)

<b>Lecture Schedule: ITB/137: Mondays 12:30pm, Tuesday 1:30pm, Thursday 12:30pm</b> <b>Midterm Exams: Mondays 9:30-10:20am, (exam location will be posted on Avenue)</b> <b>Note: Unless there is a midterm exam, writing and review tutorials will be held in BSB/B136 on Mondays 9:30-10:20am.</b>	
Sept 8, 10	Foundations (Chapter 1, 2)
Sept 14, 15, 17, 21	Perception (Chapter 3)
Sept 22, 24, 28, 29	Attention (Chapter 4)
Oct 1	Acquisition and Working Memory (Chapter 5)
<b>Oct 5</b>	<b>MIDTERM 1 (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4): 9:30-10:20 am</b>
Oct 5, 6	Acquisition and Working Memory (Chapter 5)
Oct 8	Acquisition and Retrieval: Interconnections (Chapter 6)
<i>Oct 12, 13, 15</i>	<i>Midterm Break</i>
<b>Oct 19</b>	<b>Writing assignment 1 due</b>
Oct 19, 20	Acquisition and Retrieval: Interconnections (Chapter 6)
Oct 22, 26, 27	Remembering Complex Events (Chapter 7)
Oct 29	Concept and Generic Knowledge (Chapter 8)
<b>Nov 2</b>	<b>MIDTERM 2 (Chapters 5, 6, 7): 9:30-10:20 am</b>
Nov 2, 3	Concept and Generic Knowledge (Chapter 8)
Nov 5	Language (Chapter 9)
<b>Nov 9</b>	<b>Writing assignment 2 due</b>
Nov 9, 10	Language (Chapter 9)
Nov 12, 16, 17	Visual Knowledge (Chapter 10)
Nov 19	Judgment and Reasoning (Chapter 11)
<b>Nov 23</b>	<b>MIDTERM 3 (Chapters 8, 9, 10): 9:30-10:20 am</b>
Nov 23, 24	Judgment and Reasoning (Chapter 11)
Nov 26	Problem Solving and Intelligence (Chapter 12)
<b>Nov 30</b>	<b>Writing assignment 3 due</b>
Nov 30, Dec 1	Problem Solving and Intelligence (Chapter 12)
Dec 3, 7, 8	Conscious Thought, Unconscious Thought (Chapter 13)
<b>Final Exam Period</b>	<b>MIDTERM 4 (Chapters 11, 12, 13); FINAL EXAM (cumulative)</b> 2.5 hours total

### **Exams (85%):**

Some material presented in lectures is not in the textbook, and some material from the textbook is not covered in lectures. Exams will cover material from BOTH lectures and textbook. There will be five multiple-choice exams: four midterm exams, plus a final cumulative exam. Midterms 1, 2, and 3 will be held during the Monday 9:30-10:20 am time slots (see schedule for dates). Midterm 4 and the cumulative final exam will be written during the final exam period (scheduled by the registrar). Out of the four midterm components, the lowest will be dropped, and will not count towards your final grade. The remaining 3 midterm exams will be equally weighted (18% each). The final cumulative exam is worth 31%.

**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).

### **Writing assignments (15%):**

There are 3 writing assignments worth 5% each, for 15% of the final grade. Each assignment involves selecting a primary research paper and writing a 2 page position paper about that paper. Guidance for preparing and submitting the assignments will be provided during Monday tutorials. Assignments will be submitted electronically using Dropbox on Avenue and are due before midnight on the due date (see schedule). Late submissions will be penalized by 1/5 for each day overdue (e.g. a grade of 4/5 becomes a grade of 3/5 if the assignment is one day late).

The TAs will provide more information about the written assignments during tutorials.

## **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 be no make-up exams. If you miss one midterm exam, that exam will receive a "zero" and that grade will be automatically dropped when calculating the best 3 out of 4 midterm exams, assuming you write the other 3 midterm exams. If you miss a second midterm exam, you will need to submit a McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF, see note below); if the MSAF is approved, the weight of the second missed exam will be shifted to the final cumulative exam which will now be worth 49%. You should contact Dr. Shedden within 48 hours after the second missed exam by email to [shedden@mcmaster.ca](mailto: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):**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "[Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#)".

Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015.

- The MSAF should be used for medical and non-medical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e. no documentation required)
- The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days.
- The upper limit for which an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight.
- The 'one MSAF per term' limit is retained.

**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.