

Syllabus for Cognitive Science
Spring Quarter 2010
PSYCH 140C, Course Code: 68280
PSY BEH 192G, Course Code: 55365

Time/Location

11:00 – 12:20pm, Tue/Th, RH 104, Spring Quarter 2010

Instructor

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Office hours: Wed 1-2pm.

Teaching Assistant

Assal Habibi

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Office hours: Tue/Th 9:30-10:30am

Location: Medical Surge I, room 150 (across science library)

Course Description

This is a core course in the psychology major and introduces students to research in cognitive science with an emphasis on experimental cognitive psychology. We will address three broad questions. How do we acquire knowledge? How do we retain knowledge? How do we use knowledge? Throughout the course, we will discuss experimental findings in areas such as perception, attention, memory, reasoning, and problem solving. Explanations for these findings will come from an interdisciplinary perspective, with insights from cognitive psychology, computer science, and cognitive neuroscience. This course serves as an introduction to additional courses in the learning and cognition area. This course is *not* intended to be a special-topic course for students who seek to gain in-depth knowledge in specific areas of cognitive science.

Required Text

Smith, E.E., & Kosslyn, S.M. (2007). *Cognitive Psychology: Mind and Brain*. Pearson, Prentice Hall.

Course Website

<http://psiexp.ss.uci.edu/research/teachingP140C/> (note: capital P and C)

This website contains updates to the syllabus, advance copies of the lectures, information on the writing assignments, and additional course material.

Lectures

The format of the course will be lectures given in PowerPoint format. In general, copies of each lecture will be posted in powerpoint format on the course website usually the night before the lecture.

Clicker System

During lectures, questions will come up that require a clicker response. Responses based on clicker are *not* graded and are primarily used to encourage class participation. Some of the questions that come up for clicker response might be used for the multiple choice part of the exams. The student is responsible for purchasing the clicker. Currently, a new clicker handset costs around \$33.50 at the UCI bookstore (cheaper ones can be purchased second hand through eBay). Although this is not required, it is a good idea to register the clicker at the website iclicker.com. During the registration, you will need to provide the clicker serial number, your name, and your student id.

Grading Basis

There will be two exams and three writing assignments. The writing assignments consist of two-three page papers on a variety of cognitive science topics. The exams will cover material from the textbook as well some material unique to the lectures. The final exam is *not* cumulative. Both the midterm and final exam will consist of multiple choice questions as well as short-answer questions. Weighting of exams and writing assignments:

Final	40%
Midterm	30%
Writing Assignment #1	10%
Writing Assignment #2	10%
Writing Assignment #3	10%

The final score for the class will be calculated on a total point basis with a 100 point maximum. No extra credit can be obtained in this class through participation in experiments or other projects.

Points to grade conversion

Total class points	Grade	Total class points	Grade
≥ 96.5	A+	≥ 76.5	C+
≥ 93.5	A	≥ 73.5	C
≥ 90	A-	≥ 70	C-
≥ 86.5	B+	≥ 66.5	D+
≥ 83.5	B	≥ 63.5	D
≥ 80	B-	≥ 60	D-
		≥ 0	F

Missed Exams

Missing an exam or writing assignment is strongly discouraged. Under extreme and well-documented circumstances, a missed exam will be handled in the following way. A different version of the missed exam will be administered *during the final exam period*. This means the student will have to complete both the final and the missed exam during the final exam period. No extra time will be given. In addition, a 6 page, double-spaced research paper on a topic related to material covered on the missed exam, must be turned in on the day of the final. The research paper must be based on, and cite a minimum of five original research articles. This research paper will be graded on a pass-fail basis, and must be passed in order for the score on the make up exam to count towards the final grade.

Writing assignments

There are three writing assignments. Details will be posted on the website. Each of these assignments is worth 10% of your grade. The assignments have to be submitted through the *DropBox* utility on *MyEEE* (see below). Handwritten or emailed answers will not be accepted. See the posted class schedules for the deadlines. **All deadlines are set automatically.** Please submit your document in either Word (preferred) or PDF format.

If you would like to collaborate with other students (i.e., turn in the same text for a group of students), that is acceptable. Please keep your collaboration to two or three students, including yourself. If you do collaborate, write the assignment together and put all your names plus student ID's on the assignment. Also, each student should separately submit the assignment to the Dropbox.

Access to the electronic dropbox:

If you are unfamiliar with the dropbox system, please follow the following instructions:
<http://eee.uci.edu/help/student/dropbox/how-to/>

Class Schedule and Readings

<http://psiexp.ss.uci.edu/research/teachingP140C/>

Message Board

There is a message board where students can post questions about the class, book, writing assignments, exams, and also start discussions about topics in cognitive science. Note that any posting in this board will *not* automatically be sent by email, but you can set up the system to do so. The message board can be found here:

<https://eee.uci.edu/toolbox/messageboard/m9692/>