

**PSYCHOLOGY 305:  
COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY  
FALL 2017  
SYLLABUS**

**Instructor: Dr. Alexander Swan**

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Office Hours: MW 10 AM – 5 PM; TR 3 PM – 5 PM; F 10 AM – 12:30 PM AND 2 PM – 5 PM

My Website: [www.swanpsych.com](http://www.swanpsych.com)

**BASIC COURSE INFORMATION**

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**MEETING:**

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 11 AM to 12:15 PM

Where: Burgess Hall 206

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK/MATERIALS:**

Goldstein, E. B. (2014). *Cognitive Psychology* (4th Ed). Cengage Learning.

**COURSE WEBSITE:**

All the course announcements, quizzes, grades, this syllabus, and other resources will be available through the course portal on Brightspace. I will try my best to make the Powerpoint slides used for the lectures available online BEFORE each lecture. However, sometimes life will happen and they might not make it until afterward.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Course catalog description: Introduction to theories, issues and problems in contemporary cognitive psychology. Emphasis is placed on human memory, language, problem solving and related higher-order thinking skills.

Here's my take: the study of cognitive psychology is associated with human thoughts and how they then impact behavior. From how we sense and perceive things and to how our memory systems work to how our knowledge is represented and we think and reason about new information. In this class, we will discuss and participate in class cognitive psychology research, to give you a hands-on experience to the research in this discipline and the findings that impact our understanding of human thoughts and behavior. We will also compare early cognitive theory with new theory and newer methods, such as cognitive neuroscience.

**CLASS FORMAT:**

The course will consist of lectures, demonstrations/activities, videos, and class discussion. Reading assignments should be completed before the chapter is discussed in class.

**INTENDED LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Appreciate cognitive psychology as a behavioral science.
- Spot misconceptions about psychological science.
- Understand and *critically analyze* basic cognitive psychological theories, research, and claims you encounter in the general media.
- Distinguish between pseudoscience and true cognitive psychological research.
- Apply psychological knowledge to better understand events in the world around you while helping

others understand (learning by teaching).

- Understand the factual information and concepts presented in the course as well as the terminology used by psychologists.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

Four (4) In-Class Quizzes	40% (10% each)	<b>Various Dates: Listed on Course Schedule</b>
APA OPL Assignments	15%	<b>Various Dates: Listed on Course Schedule</b>
Blog Post Assignment	25%	<b>DUE (POSTED) by Sunday, December 3, 2017 (11:59 PM)</b>
Auto-graded Reading Checks	10%	Various Dates
In-class Participation	10%	Various Dates

### **GRADING SCALE:**

The grading scale I will use for the course is the following:

≥ 97%	A+	≥ 80% and < 83%	B-	≥ 63% and < 67%	D
≥ 93% and < 97%	A	≥ 77% and < 80%	C+	≥ 60% and < 63%	D-
≥ 90% and < 93%	A-	≥ 73% and < 77%	C	< 60%	F
≥ 87% and < 90%	B+	≥ 70% and < 73%	C-		
≥ 83% and < 87%	B	≥ 67% and < 70%	D+		

**NOTE: Grades will not be changed for any reason, except for clerical errors!**

### **A. QUIZZES:**

- The in-class Quizzes (3 “Units” & Final) consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions and are based on both the lectures and text readings. Each Quiz (including the Final) will only cover material from the unit. Although none of the Quizzes are cumulative, new material tends to build upon previous material. ANY material covered in the lectures or reading may appear on the Quiz, but I will provide a study guide to focus studying. Some of the material in the readings will not be covered in the lecture and some of the material in the lecture will not be covered in the readings. **You are responsible for both!**
- Quizzes must be taken on the date scheduled. Vacation is not a valid excuse, nor is an exam scheduled at the same time. If you must miss a Quiz due to some emergency, then you can make it up by taking an essay exam. A doctor’s note or some other formal verification of absence is required to make up a Quiz. This is the **ONLY** condition under which I will give a make-up. All make-up Quizzes are **ESSAY** in format and must be taken during a make-up period agreed upon by you and me.
- No use of notes is allowed for any Quiz. Please be aware that cheating on a Quiz will result in a grade of 0 for the exam and reporting of the incident to the Division Chair and Provost. Cheating includes use of notes, books, cell phones, or copying from someone else’s Quiz.

### **B. APA ONLINE PSYCHOLOGY LABORATORY (OPL) ASSIGNMENTS:**

Access to APA’s Online Psychology Laboratory (OPL) is free for both teachers and students, and it offers classic cognitive psychology experiments for a robust experience in a college class. Each OPL Module is worth 5 points toward your Total OPL Assignment grade (35 pts total).

There is a detailed instruction manual for accessing the OPL (<http://opl.apa.org>) on Brightspace. **The course code is 11109**, to make sure all the data gets aggregated in the same place (and I can properly track participation in the modules).

Below is a list of due dates for each of the modules. The due dates correspond to the lecture topics we will be exploring throughout the semester.

Lab	APA OPL Experiment Module	Due by 11 AM:
1	Perception: <i>Poggendorf Illusion</i>	Tuesday, Sept 5
2	Attention: <i>Dichotic Listening (Requires headphones)</i>	Thursday, Sept 7
3	Memory Processes: <i>Self Reference</i>	Thursday, Sept 21
4	Memory Errors: <i>Be a Juror</i>	Tuesday, Oct 3
5	Imagery: <i>Mental Rotation</i>	Tuesday, Oct 24
6	Language: <i>Lexical Decision Making</i>	Tuesday, Oct 31
7	Judgment: <i>Monty Hall</i>	Tuesday, Nov 28

### C. COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY FOR EDUCATION BLOG POST:

As we enter this new age of information sharing, I'm increasingly adding blogging to my teaching repertoire. It's a fantastic way to reach audiences everywhere, while at the same time polishing communication skills. For this assignment, you will develop a blog post with one specific purpose: utilize cognitive psychology to help first-year college students with the rigors of studying and learning in college. I will provide you with more information about this assignment later in the semester, including where the blog post will be made, what specific topics you should focus on, and the benefits to both you as the blogger (let's call you a teacher) and the readers (let's call them the learner).

### D. READING CHECKS:

There will be an online, self-graded check on the readings on Brightspace. These will be multiple choice, and 5 questions each. Since these checks are low-stakes and are only meant to help you digest the material for the in-class Unit Quizzes, you will have 2 attempts for each one. The attempt that achieves the highest score will be recorded. Don't fret too much about these checks; just try your best—they are meant to prepare you for the in-classes Unit Quizzes so those aren't too shocking or overwhelming. Though you can use your textbooks on these reading checks (no time limit), try your best to answer the questions without it, since you won't have the texts on the in-class Unit Quizzes!

## COURSE POLICIES

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### 1. GETTING INFORMATION:

- **EMAIL PROTIP:** I use email for almost all communications/announcements. If you do not check your Eureka email often, forward it to an address you do check. **YAHOO ADDRESSES GET SENT TO MY SPAM FOLDER.** The best way to contact me is always via email. If you cannot come to office hours and/or decide to send an email, be sure to use the following format so that I can help you:

To:  
 Subject Line: "PSY 305: (insert your topic here)"  
 From: your full address

*Dear (insert name of person you are contacting here),*

*Hello, my name is (your full name here) and I am a student taking PSY 305/Cognitive Psychology. I have a question regarding (insert your question here).*

(Considerate closing of your choosing),  
Your full name

A word of caution: I will do my best to reply within 48 hours. Depending on the nature (and popularity) of your question, my answer may be direct OR posted as a general class announcement on Brightspace. Please hold off on resending a message until 48 hours have passed. Finally, I may not respond to emails between the hours of 8 PM and 8 AM, so please keep this in mind when deciding whether to resend the message.

- **OFFICE HOURS:** As you may note from the first page of this syllabus, I will be in my office a lot. I will trial an open-door policy: stop by whenever within the time frames and I will be happy to chat. You can check my website for these times rather than emailing me to ask me if I'll be there. You might want to email me to let me know you're coming, but walk-ins are welcome. I will specify whether there are circumstances that will cut into my office time as needed.

## 2. LATE WORK AND MAKE-UP POLICY:

- If participation in university-sponsored events (e.g., athletics) or observance of a religious holiday or other sanctioned event prevents your attendance, you must contact me prior to the relevant date, and you must have any appropriate documentation. If an assignment is due on that date, arrangements must be made to complete the assignment ahead of time.
- Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due at the beginning of class (unless otherwise noted for electronic assignments). Late assignments will only be accepted in the case of extraordinary circumstances and appropriate documentation, and may involve point/percentage deductions. Please alert me to these extraordinary circumstances by email within 24 hours of the missed class, and we will set up a time to discuss these on a case-by-case basis.
- Without appropriate circumstances and documentation, early Quizzes or Quiz make-ups will not be granted.
- However, I recognize that sometimes life happens; therefore, I have built some flexibility into the course to allow for illness, other obligations, and bad days. First, on Quizzes, extra credit will be offered from one Quiz to the next if there is a 10% improvement. For example, if Quiz 1 receives a 60%, a 70% or higher on Quiz 2 will result in an additional percentage increase of extra credit. If you miss a Quiz AND notified me appropriately, and cannot make-up the Quiz prior to the next Quiz, I will count your next Quiz score twice (so no zeroes are given out). In addition, your lowest Reading Check, one OPL Module, and one Participation assignment will be dropped from your final category computation. You will not be able to make these up—they are dropped for whatever reason you missed, no questions asked!

## 3. GRADE DISPUTE POLICY:

- If you disagree about how your term paper was graded, you must dispute the issue *in writing* (not email). Write a paragraph about why you think your attempt was correct/sufficient and turn it (with the original assignment) in to the instructor at the lecture following the return of the relevant assignment. Only reasonable and well-justified complaints will be considered, and all decisions are final. Please note that if you submit a complaint, the instructor will re-grade the entire assignment, and your grade could increase, decrease, or remain the same. **This policy does not apply to final course grades.**

## 4. CLASS ETIQUETTE:

- **Please do not use your cell phones during class.** I would prefer them to be put on silent or off. If your cell phone goes off during class or an exam, please silence it immediately; do not let it ring through. I will remind everyone prior to exams to make sure their phones are turned off. Please

refrain from text messaging during class. I know you think you're being subtle; I assure you that I can see you texting.

- Please do not leave the class partway through unless it is an emergency; it is very disruptive. If you must leave, please sit in the back and at the edge of an aisle so as to not disrupt your fellow classmates.
- Please have respect for the class, your peers, and yourselves by being fully present in the class. Please avoid anything not relevant to the class, such as sleeping, surfing the Internet, or doing homework for other classes.
- **LATENESS:** Please try to arrive a few minutes before the start of lecture. We will begin promptly at 11:00 AM, and it can be distracting to me and to your peers if you arrive late. I will not keep you late.

### 3. LAPTOP POLICY:

- a. Research indicates that taking notes by hand results in significantly better retention of conceptual information than taking notes on a laptop (see Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014), even when students are engaged in the material (i.e., are not also checking their email or Facebook feed).
- b. Further, laptop use can be distracting in various ways to the entire class. Because my goal is to maximize the likelihood of a favorable learning environment, **I strongly recommend that you not use laptops in class.**
- c. However, laptops will be permitted on a probationary basis; should the use of laptops be taken advantage of or prove distracting to other students, I will revisit this policy then.

### 4. PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE:

- Small assignments will be given at the beginning of class on random days throughout the semester. Points will be given out for completing the assignments that will count toward your participation grade. It is highly recommended that you arrive to class on time in order to complete these assignments.
- Students who take notes, ask questions, respond to questions, and come to office hours are typically the ones who succeed in this class.
- Though attendance is not required by College policy, I strongly recommend you attend class prepared and present. As such, you will not be penalized in your grade for missing a class. However, I WILL REWARD folks who arrive to class on time and attend each class, most likely with some helpful exam advice, if you catch my drift. If you do happen to miss a class, that's OK, but you will be responsible for *all* material covered in lecture, some of which will not be covered by the textbooks. If you know about an absence beforehand, please shoot me and email to let me know.

## ADDITIONAL COURSE AND COLLEGE INFORMATION

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### **ACCESSIBILITY (ADA) STATEMENT:**

The Learning Center, located on the first floor of Alumni Hall, provides academic services to all Eureka College students. Consultations are available in the areas of math and writing. Study groups, individual academic counseling, and course specific tutoring are also available by contacting Jason Zimmerman at x6520 or [jzimmerman@eureka.edu](mailto:jzimmerman@eureka.edu).

Any Eureka College student with a disability or other special circumstances requiring accommodations or other consideration in order to successfully complete the requirements of this course is requested to identify himself/herself to the instructor and discuss the matter privately. This disclosure should be made within the first week of the course so proper accommodations can be made.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY STATEMENT:**

Eureka College strives to instill individual responsibility and integrity in its students, and expects its students to behave with integrity throughout their time at the College. Any giving or receiving of unpermitted aid on tests or assignments is considered cheating. If a student is uncertain about how to document sources or incorporate materials into a paper, it is his or her responsibility to seek help by speaking to the faculty member, another professor, or a Writing Center tutor. The College's Academic Dishonesty policy is outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic dishonesty constitutes a major breach of the trust that exists between the instructor and the student. It includes passing off another's ideas as one's own, any attempt to gain information about a test or exam prior to the test or exam date without the instructor's consent, and providing unauthorized assistance on a test, exam, paper, or other assignment to another student. Cheating on a test, exam, quiz, paper, or other assignment will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Further dishonesty will result in failing the course. Students who fail for academic dishonesty will not have the option of withdrawing from the course. If you are in doubt about what plagiarism means, or about how to appropriately document sources in your work, please contact me; I will be happy to help.

**COUNSELING SERVICES:**

Provided by Tazwood Center for Wellness, seeing a professional counselor as a Eureka College student is easy and free. Whatever is on your mind, don't be afraid to talk to someone.

Tazwood Center for Wellness visits campus twice a week for on campus counseling appointments. Each student receives 6 free sessions per semester.

Tazwood Center for Wellness  
3248 Vandever Ave. Pekin, IL 61554  
309-437-5522 (Phone)  
309-347-1148 (Emergency Response Services)

**CHANGES TO SYLLABUS:**

The Instructor reserves the right to make policy and course changes to the syllabus at any time with advance notice to students.

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

*Note:* Schedule is subject to change depending on the progress of the course or at the instructor's discretion.

Week	Day	Date	Lecture	Lecture Topic	Readings	OPL Module (Due Date)
1	T	8/22	----	<b>OPENING CONVOCATION – NO CLASS</b>		
	R	8/24	1	Course Introduction		
2	T	8/29	2	Introduction to Cognitive Psychology	Ch. 1	
	R	8/31	3	Cognitive Neuroscience	Ch. 2	
3	T	9/5	4	Perception	Ch. 3	Poggendorf Illusion
	R	9/7	5	Attention	Ch. 4	Dichotic Listening
4	T	9/12	----	<b>QUIZ #1</b>		
	R	9/14	6	Short-term Memory I	Ch. 5	
5	T	9/19	7	Short-term Memory II		
	R	9/21	8	Long-term Memory I	Ch. 6	Self Reference
6	T	9/26	9	Long-term Memory II	Ch. 7	
	R	9/28	10	Effective Studying; Blog Post Assignment Overview	Ch. 7 (pp. 202-203)	
7	T	10/3	11	Everyday Memory; Memory Errors	Ch. 8	Be a Juror
	R	10/5	12	Memory Errors; Start Film: <i>Memento</i>	Ch. 8	
8	T	10/10	13	Finish Film: <i>Memento</i>		
	R	10/12	----	<b>QUIZ #2</b>		
9	T	10/17	----	<b>FALL BREAK – NO CLASS</b>		
	R	10/19	14	Knowledge	Ch. 9	
10	T	10/24	15	Imagery I	Ch. 10	Mental Rotation
	R	10/26	16	Imagery II		
11	T	10/31	17	Language I	Ch. 11	Lexical Decision Making
	R	11/2	18	Language II		
12	T	11/7	----	<b>QUIZ #3</b>		
	R	11/9	19	Problem Solving I	Ch. 12	
13	T	11/14	20	Problem Solving II		
	R	11/16	21	Judgment (Heuristics)	Ch. 13	
14	T	11/21	----	<b>NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</b>		
	R	11/23	----	<b>NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</b>		
15	T	11/28	22	Decision-making	Ch. 13	Monty Hall
	R	11/30	23	Reasoning I	Ch. 13	
16	T	12/5	24	Reasoning II		
	R	12/7	----	Blog Post Showcase Day		
F	M	12/11	----	<b>FINAL QUIZ (#4) – 10:30 AM to 12:30 AM</b>		