Course Requirements

4 exams: 70% of grade
CogLab experiments: 25% of grade
Class Participation: 5% of grade

Objective. The course objective is to examine how humans acquire, process, and retain information, and communicate and reason about that information.

Daily Reading assignments are listed in the “Lecture Schedule” below. You will also be required to participate in demonstration experiments from the on-line CogLab library. Movies will be assigned as well and these will be discussed in class. Your course grade will be based on exam scores and the on-line CogLab experiments.

Exams. (70% of grade) Exams will be given on class dates noted in the lecture schedule. Exams will cover the lectures, assigned movies, and class discussion since the preceding exam. Exams will combine multiple choice with essay questions. The fourth exam will be administered during the final exam period and will be comprehensive. Individual make-up exams will not be given. Missing an exam will require prior approval as well as an authenticated excuse (only health reasons and family emergency will be accepted). If you are excused from an exam, you will be required to write a paper on an assigned topic to substitute for the exam grade. If an exam is cancelled due to official GMU cancellation, the exam will be given on the next class meeting day. Students who have taken all three term exams may elect to take the final exam. If that choice is made, the final exam grade will replace the lowest term exam grade.

Experiments. (25% of grade) You are required to complete the assigned on-line demonstration experiments from the CogLab library. You must complete the assignment prior to the class for which it is assigned and arrive prepared to contribute to class discussion. I will access the CogLab account and assign credit for each experiment completed on time. This portion of your grade will reflect the number of experiments you complete.
Participation. (5% of grade) Good scholarship depends on class participation. You will be expected to attend class and be prepared to participate verbally by asking questions in a way that shows knowledge of the material. Students will be responsible for material covered in lecture whether or not it is in the text.

Grading. Grades will be assigned as follows: 90-100 A; 80-89 B; 70-79 C; 60-69 D; below 60 F.

Honor Policy. The University Honor Code will be upheld in this course.

Disability. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Last day to add - September 12th; Last day to drop - September 29th

Lecture Schedule (approximation)

FUNDAMENTALS OF COGNITION

August 29…………Organizational Meeting
August 31…………History Ch. 1; CogLab: Brain Asymmetry
September 5 …………Brain and Mind CogLab: Stroop Effect
September 7 ………..Cognitive Neuroscience Methods CogLab: Sternberg Search
September 12…………Perception Ch. 2; CogLab: Apparent Motion
September 14…………Visual recognition CogLab: Attentional Blink
September 19………… Exam 1

ATTENTION AND IMAGERY

September 21………… Auditory attention Ch. 3; CogLab: Spatial Cuing
September 26………… Visual attention, Executive CogLab: Operation Span
September 28…………Mental Imagery Ch. 4; CogLab: Imagery

MENTAL REPRESENTATION

October 3…………Episodic Memory Ch. 5; CogLab: Partial Report
October 5…………Semantic Networks CogLab: Remember-Know
October 10………..Columbus Day Recess
October 12…………Encoding and Storage Ch. 6; CogLab: Brown-Peterson
October 17…………Exam 2
October 19…………Working memory Ch. 7; CogLab: Memory Span
October 24………..Long Term Memory CogLab: Phonological Similarity
October 26…………Memory Distortions CogLab: False Memory
October 31………..Interference & Retrieval CogLab: Serial Position
November 2…………Disorders of Memory

PROBLEM SOLVING, EXPERTISE, & LANGUAGE

November 7………………Problem Solving Ch. 8
November 9………………Expertise & Procedural Learning Ch. 9; CogLab: Implicit learning
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