

Exploring Cognition (summer '23)

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Personal Website: [link](#)

Online q&a discussion: Canvas

Course Mode: Online



Class Times:

- The first half of class will be synchronous. The second half of each class consists of recorded video lectures that students can watch any time at their convenience (asynchronous material).
- On Wednesdays, we will have discussions starting at 5:15pm and ending no later than 7.15pm. Your attendance at these discussion meetings is mandatory. On Mondays, we will have Q&A sessions, also starting at 5:15pm and ending no later than 7.15pm to address questions you or your classmates might have about the course material. Your attendance at these Q&A sessions is optional, and each Q&A session will end when all questions have been answered (& not later than 7.15pm).

Course Description and Objectives

This course provides a broad examination of vision, attention, memory, problem solving, and other cognitive processes, with an emphasis on contemporary theory and experimental research. We will also discuss findings from cognitive research as they apply to diverse fields such as law, health, and education .

In sum, this course has three objectives: (a) To provide you with an understanding of basic processes involved in cognition; (b) to develop your ability to think critically; and (c) to foster your application of this knowledge to issues of both personal and social importance.

Readings

- [*Cognition: Exploring the Science of the Mind*](#) (Eight Edition) by Daniel Reisberg. Norton Publishing Company. ISBN-13: 978-0393877601 or ISBN-10: 0393877604 Earlier editions (7th, 6th) are acceptable and can be found used for as little as \$10.
- Popular press articles, chapters, and primary source articles will be posted on the course website.

Course Website:

Course materials will be posted in the course website in **Canvas**, including video lectures, power-point slides, readings, links to on-line videos, study questions,

quizzes, etc.

Getting Help and Information

Contacting Me: I encourage you to ask questions during Zoom meetings; other students may have the same question and will benefit from hearing/reading your question and my response. If you have a private question to ask, the best way to get in touch with me is by email. I will make every effort to respond to your questions promptly; however, please understand that I cannot always respond immediately; you should expect a response in two business days.

Course Communication: If I need to communicate with you (e.g., change in assignment, etc.), I will often do so by email. It is your responsibility to check your college email account regularly in order to receive such messages. If you prefer to use another email address, it is your responsibility to modify your college account so that your email messages are forwarded appropriately.

Exams & Assignments: There will be two non-cumulative midterm exams, and an optional cumulative final exam, which will include all readings, lectures, videos, and activities.

- Exam 1: Monday, June 12th,
- Exam 2: Monday, June 26th
- Final Exam: Wednesday, June 28th

Assignments and quizzes will be posted periodically in the classroom website with their appropriate description and deadline.

Grading:

There are four possible components to your grade: the two midterms (1, 2), the optional final exam (3), and "assignments" (4) which include homework, quizzes, timely watching of lectures and other educational materials, and thoughtful engagement during class. Your grade will be based on your strongest three of these four components: I will drop the component with your lowest score, and average the remaining three, equally weighted (33.34%). You will know your grades on the two midterms and the "assignments" component before the final exam. If you are pleased with your grade at that time, you do not need to take the final.

Grades will be assigned according to Penn's "Definition of Grades". Grades will not be assigned on the basis of a curve. Instead, letter grades will be assigned on the basis of the following percentages of the possible points that you can accumulate:

| | | | |
|----|----------------|----|------------|
| A+ | = 98 and above | C | = 73 - 76% |
| A | = 94 - 97.9% | C- | = 70 - 72% |
| A- | = 90 - 93% | D+ | = 67 - 69% |
| B+ | = 87 - 89% | D | = 63 - 66% |
| B | = 83 - 86% | | |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|----------|----|---|----------|
| B- | = | 80 - 82% | D- | = | 60 - 62% |
| C+ | = | 77 - 79% | F | = | Below 60 |

Incomplete Grades. Receiving a grade of "incomplete" (N) requires my approval and usually is given only in emergency situations. In any event, do not assume that an incomplete grade will be given automatically if you do not complete all the exams and reports by the time the final exam is given. Nor should you assume that leaving a message on my voice mail or email means you have my approval.

Course Policies

Class Participation: Participation is important and expected. You will have the opportunity to participate through Canvas Discussion ~~Piazza~~ (an online Q&A forum) as well as on Zoom for weekly Q&A sessions and required discussion sessions.

Late Policy: Assignments and quizzes should be completed by the designated deadlines (early work is always accepted). Work turned in late raises difficult issues about fairness and also disrupts the schedule for the class. Unless I have heard from you in advance and have authorized an extension (see below), assignments turned in after this grace period will be penalized by a 10% deduction in your grade for each day they are past due. In the case of an emergency (e.g., sudden serious illness, death in the family) please be in touch with me as soon as possible.

Notes on Netiquette: Zoom: To help with audio clarity, please mute yourself upon entry to Zoom when we are meeting in a large group. If possible (depending on your bandwidth and environmental circumstances), I encourage you to have your webcam on. You should be in a vertical position (sitting or standing up, not lying in bed).

Inclusion and Respect: Differences of opinion are welcome and encouraged. I expect those differences of opinions to be communicated respectfully.

Academic Integrity: I expect all students to understand and uphold the Code of Academic Integrity (<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>).

Accommodations: University of Pennsylvania provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who have self-identified and been approved by Student Disabilities Services (SDS). If you have not yet contacted SDS and would like to request accommodations or have questions, please visit <https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/>. All services are confidential. If you have an accommodations letter already on file, please be in touch with me privately to discuss how I can meet your accommodations given the online format of our course.

Absences for Religious Holidays: Students who expect to miss a class or assignment due to the observance of a religious holiday should discuss the matter with me as soon as possible, normally at least two weeks in advance. Absence from classes or

examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the absence.

Tentative Schedule (subject to change)

| Chapter/ by Date | Topic |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Monday, 5/ 22</i> | <i>First Day of class</i> |
| Ch 1 - 5/24 | Intro: The science of the mind |
| Ch 2 - no date | The neural bases of cognition (optional, read as you feel necessary) |
| Ch 3 - 5/24 | Visual Perception |
| Ch 4 - 5/ 29 | Object Recognition |
| | Face Recognition |
| Ch 5 - 5/29 | Attention |
| Ch 6 - 5/31 | Working Memory |
| | Executive Functions |
| Ch 7 - 6/7 | Long-term Memory |
| Ch 8 - 6/7 | Memory Errors |
| <i>Monday 6/12</i> | <i>Exam #1</i> |
| Ch 9 - 6/12 | Conceptual Knowledge |
| | Social Cognition |
| Ch 10 - 6/12 | Language; Reading, Dyslexia |
| Ch 11 - 6/14 | Visual Imagery |
| Ch 12 - 6/14-19 | Judgment & Decision Making |
| Ch 13 6/19 | Problem Solving, Analogical Reasoning |
| <i>Monday 6/26</i> | <i>Exam #2</i> |
| <i>Wednesday 6/28</i> | <i>Optional Final Exam</i> |