COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY
San José State University
Department of Psychology
PSYC 135, Section 1 (course ID: 40389)
Fall 2017 (Aug 23 [first class] – Dec 11 [final exam Dec 19])

Instructor: Dr. Mark Van Selst
Office: 408 924 5674 (DMH 314)
Office Hours: Office hours: Mon & Wed 12:00 - 12:30 PM
Department of Psychology
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Email: Mark.VanSelst@SJSU.edu
Web-Resources: See SJSU CANVAS page

Class Days/Time: Mon & Wed, 9:00 – 10:15 AM
Classroom: CLARK 117
Prerequisites: General Psychology (PSYC 1)
GE Category: N/A

Course Description
The activity of knowing: acquisition, organization and use of knowledge. Processes involved in that activity, including perception, memory, thinking, and language.

Required Textbook

Course Overview
This course is an introduction to the scientific analysis of how people think. The course will touch upon the history and current understanding of
human cognition. The basic requirement is for students to develop a firm grasp on some of the basic research findings and the theories that have been proposed to account for these findings. As benefits the level of this course, the lectures will cover a broad range of topics, some of which will expand into areas outside of the core content covered in the textbook. The course is primarily lecture-based, as facilitated by class discussion and your independent work on the assignments.

The best way to learn the material will vary across different people. Nevertheless, as we will discover, active information processing leads to better memory (Kellogg, p.133), as does tying the material to real-world examples (Kellogg, p.191). In addition, distributed learning is more effective than “cramming” (the technical term is ‘massed practice’). I suggest that you supplement your class notes and the on-line notes by building your own study guide (I am partial to index cards) as you read through the chapters. It should go without saying that you should read the relevant chapters both before and after they are covered in lecture (interestingly, non-ESL students will benefit more from pre-reading chapters; ESL students benefit more from reading chapters after the fact than pre-reading the chapters). You are strongly encouraged to start on the various assignments (and seek out assistance as appropriate) well before their due date. This is particularly true of assignments that require you to locate and summarize appropriate peer-reviewed empirical journal articles using the PsycInfo database (if you are a new or ‘open university’ student please check with the library reference desk to ensure that you have appropriate access to the electronic database resources required for this course).

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Library Liaison
The library liaison for Psychology is Bernd Becker [408] 808-2348 or Bernd.becker@sjsu.edu (e-mail preferred)]. He is a valuable resource in helping you to access psychology specific data-base searches and with off campus access to library resources.

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Classroom Protocol
I expect appropriate behavior – both social and academic – in the classroom. Social behavior includes pre-notification if you are going to have to step out early (and an appropriate seat near the back of the class), turning off cell phones (or setting to silent if there are legitimate paternal or fiscal responsibilities that require you to remain in immediate contact),
treated others with courtesy, any computer-use restricted to class-
relevant activities, etc. Academic behavior includes following SJSU policies
on Academic Integrity (see below).

**GENERAL SYLLABUS INFORMATION** (see [http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/)):

- General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student
- Workload and Credit Hour Requirements
- Attendance and Participation
- Accommodation to Students’ Religious Holidays
- Dropping and Adding
- Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor
  Material
- Academic integrity
- Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act
- Student Technology Resources
- SJSU Peer Connections
- SJSU Writing Center
- SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services

**Probation, Disqualification, and Falling Behind.**

Invariably one or two students will find that “life happens” during the
semester. If there are life changes or new obligations that develop during
the semester it is possible you’d be eligible for a “late drop” of the course
(i.e., a grade of “W” rather than “WU” (= “F”) or possibly late withdrawal
from the entire semester. Other students simply fall behind – hoping that
things will improve rarely works and I do encourage you to seek out
assistance from both from me, Academic Advising and Retention Services
(AARS), and other appropriate support structures. Do this earlier
(proactively) rather than waiting until things look cataclysmic. The use of
an “Incomplete” grade is only for where there is a small amount of well-
defined work remaining; I do not like to use the “I” option and attempts to
use it as a way of delaying an “F/WU” grade from appearing is
inappropriate.

**Faculty Web Page, MySJSU Messaging, Email correspondence.**

All course materials will be found on the CANVAS page for this course.
You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system
through MySJSU and for ensuring that you have set-up your MySJSU
account with a valid email address. I often use email to highlight changes to deadlines or clarifications of expectations. The Canvas due dates are more likely to reflect up to date changes than the .pdf of the full syllabus.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

Goal 1. Knowledge Base of Psychology: Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in cognitive psychology. (e.g., ASST 1)

- Students completing this course will be able to describe the major concepts and theories of cognitive psychology

Goal 2. Research Methods in Psychology: Students will understand basic methodological approaches used in cognitive psychology, including research design, analysis, and interpretation. (e.g., ASST 2, 4, 7)

- Students completing this course will be able to describe different research methods used in cognitive psychology research.
- Students completing this course will be able to draw appropriate conclusions from psychological research.
- Students completing this course will be able to synthesize and communicate research findings appropriately.

Goal 3. Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology: Students will understand and be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes. (e.g. ASST 10, 11)

- Students completing this course will able to develop arguments for and against positions pertaining to specific debates within cognitive psychology.
- Students completing this course will able to evaluate and defend positions and criticize arguments pertaining to specific issues in psychology.

Goal 4. Application of Psychology: Students will understand and be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues. (e.g., ASST 6, 8)

- Students completing this course will be able to apply concepts from cognitive psychology (both theories and research findings) to everyday life.

Goal 5. Values in Psychology: Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society. (ASST 12)
• Students completing this course will recognize the necessity for ethical behavior in all aspects of the science and practice of psychology.

• Students completing this course will recognize and respect the role of human diversity as it impacts research into, and application of, cognitive psychology.

• Students completing this course will value intellectual curiosity and skepticism.

• Students completing this course will recognize how their knowledge of psychology can inform their roles and responsibilities as members of society.

Relationship to University Learning Outcomes (ULOs)

Course goals 1-5 pertain to the University Learning Outcome (ULO 1) of Specialized Knowledge – to master the depth of knowledge required for a degree, as identified by its program learning outcomes. University Learning Outcomes 2 (Broad Integrative Knowledge 1 of 2) has students producing, independently or collaboratively, an investigative, creative, or practical work that draws on theories, tools, technology, or methods from at least two academic disciplines; This course provides some context and content for achieving ULO 2. This course requires competency in advanced level analysis within Science/Social Science and thus pertains to ULO 3 (Broad integrative knowledge 2 of 2). ULO 4 (Intellectual Skills) has students obtaining skills and abilities necessary for life-long learning: critical and creative thinking, effective communication, literacy in information gathering and processing, mastery of quantitative methodologies, and the ability to engage effectively in collaborative activities; this course develops progress towards achieving ULO 4. This course starts the development of ULO 5 (applied Learning) which is to develop the ability to integrate theory, practice, and problem-solving to address real world issues or contexts. This course does not really focus on ULO 6 (Social and Global Responsibilities) – that is, developing the ability to act intentionally to address a global or local problem in an informed and ethical manner with a historical perspective and a clear understanding of societal and civic responsibilities.

Assignments and Grading Policy

The homework assignments will be graded (see evaluation breakdown below). The assignments will ensure that everyone keeps up with the
reading, and should help you to assess whether you have mastered the basic concepts under study. The exams are (mostly) non-cumulative but, to some extent, the course material builds naturally upon itself. I am generally available to meet with you in order to elaborate on the requirements of the assignments or to answer specific questions that you have. Exams and quizzes will not be rescheduled except in the case of a medical or family emergency; in all cases, documentation will be required. Exams will cover factual information (key terms, methods, research outcomes, etc.), theoretical / conceptual knowledge (understanding methods, theoretical interpretations, etc.), and application of the methods, concepts and principles to “real-world” situations. Scantron forms will NOT be used -- be prepared to answer both multiple-choice and short-answer type questions.

Credit will be penalized a minimum of 25% of the possible grade for late assignments. Papers are generally due to have been uploaded to CANVAS at the beginning (within five minutes of the registrar’s scheduled start time) of the relevant class meeting. If you are falling behind, keep up with all current assignments while working on those that are already late.

Access to a computer word processor is required for the substantive writing assignments. You will need to upload documents in a format that is visible via the CANVAS learning management system (you may want to proof-check any submitted work to ensure readability within CANVAS). Per department policy, poorly written work may be returned without a grade.

If you are unfamiliar with the use of the Psycinfo database, make an appointment with me as soon as possible. Open University students should approach library support services as soon as possible. Neither newspaper or magazine articles nor “information sites” (Wikipedia, etc) on the web are journal articles (you MUST use PSYCINFO where specified). It is your responsibility to verify uploads and to keep adequate back-ups of any computer media.

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Schedule and Evaluation

The points assigned sum to 100 (there are no other ‘bonus’ points available except for (potentially) exceptional exam performance). Your summed score determine your percentage in the course (i.e., score out of 100). The grade cut-offs (e.g., 80% for a B-, 82.5% for a B are ABSOLUTE [i.e., you will not get a “push” into the next category]). If you are close to a cut-point, study hard and be VERY conscientious about your homework. Via CANVAS you can know your grade in the course to date after every test
and assignment is graded. The grade breakdown is:
- 12 assignments (see schedule) 2-5% each
- 4 mostly non-cumulative midterm exams (12-16% each)

The course will be graded out of 100:
- <60 is a fail;
- 60-62.5 D-; <67.5 D; <70.0 D+
- 70-72.5 C-; <77.5 C; <80 C+
- 80-82.5 B-; <87.5 B; <90 B+
- 90-92.5 A-; <95 A; >95 A+

Course Completion
Receiving a grade other than F/WU requires three exams and at least seven of the twelve assignments. I will generally not assign an incomplete unless there is a strong plan in place to cover the minority of material missing at the end of the regular course offering. Any such incompletes may need to be completed within a month. An “incomplete” in the course is reserved for those situations where there vast majority of the coursework is complete and there is a specific plan already in place (by mutual agreement) to complete the remaining work. Note that after-the-fact changes to grades will not positively impact probationary or disqualification status.

Application for University Graduation
If you will have completed more than 90 units of credit towards graduation, you should meet with your major advisor concerning completing an application for graduation (ideally at least a year in advance – see http://www.sjsu.edu/registrar/docs/grad_app.pdf ).

Course Schedule
The schedule and grades assigned are subject to minor modification with fair notice (in class and email when the syllabus is updated).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Chapter (Kellogg Text)</th>
<th>Daily Events / Due Dates</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 23</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 1 Introduction</td>
<td>Introduction and Outline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 28</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 1 Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 30</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 2 Perception</td>
<td>CORE CONCEPTS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 4</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>LABOR DAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 6</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 2 Perception</td>
<td>(last day to drop)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Topic Details</td>
<td>Page</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 11</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>NO CLASS (Travel)</td>
<td>NEUROSCIENCE</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 13</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>MIDTERM 1 (Chapter 1-2)</td>
<td>(PROCTOR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 18</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 3 Attention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 20</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 3 Attention</td>
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<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 3 Attention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 27</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 4 Memory Systems</td>
<td>BINGING</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Oct 2</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 4 Memory Systems</td>
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<td>Oct 4</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 5 Remembering Events</td>
<td>MEMORY SYSTEMS</td>
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<td>Oct 9</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 5 Remembering Events</td>
<td>MNEMONICS</td>
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<td>Wed</td>
<td>MIDTERM 2 (Chapter 3-5)</td>
<td>(PROCTOR)</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Oct 16</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 6 Memory Distortions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 6 Memory Distortions</td>
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<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 7 Imagery and Knowledge Representation</td>
<td>FALSE MEMORIES</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Oct 25</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 7 Imagery and Knowledge Representation</td>
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<td>Oct 30</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 7 Imagery and Knowledge Representation</td>
<td>FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENCY (in vision)</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Wed</td>
<td>MIDTERM 3 (Chapter 6-7)</td>
<td>(PROCTOR)</td>
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<td>Nov 6</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 8 Language</td>
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<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>Wed</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 13</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 8 Language</td>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 15</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 9 Problem Solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 20</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 9 Problem Solving</td>
<td>METACOGNITION</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 22</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 27</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 9 Problem Solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 29</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 10 Reasoning and Decision Making</td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Dec 4</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Chapter 10 Reasoning and Decision Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 6</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Chapter 10 Reasoning and Decision Making</td>
<td>BIASES and HEURISTICS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 11</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>review</td>
<td>(last day of class)</td>
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Note that the Values and Diversity assignment is due at 6 PM on the date of the final exam.

Values and Diversity

One Essay (3 points total).

Write a 400-600 word essay (references not included as part of the word limits), as a self-reflection on how something that you learned within this course could influence the decisions you will make in the future. I specifically want you to address the potential decision/action with respect to the Values in Psychology Learning Objective (provided earlier in this syllabus as LEARNING OBJECTIVE #13), which states “Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.” I am very interested in whether or not you believe that the content of this course, as taught, relates to these desired knowledge and behavioral outcomes for you. To be explicit: the components I am looking for are (1) what was NEW to you, (2) what IMPACT did it have on you, and (3), do you believe you will actually ACT in a different manner having learned this new material?