Instructor: Dr. Collin Scarince  
Email: Collin.Scarince@tamucc.edu  
Phone: (631) 825-5781  
Office Hours: Bay Hall 355A  
  M: 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.  
  W: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Course Information:  
Required Text:  
  ISBN 9781506383866  
Online Content:  
  Blackboard  
Supplemental materials:  
  Other materials for assignments will be provided online through Blackboard.
Prerequisites  
  Psyc 2301 & Psyc 3411  

Course Overview:  
Welcome to Psyc 3342 – Cognitive Psychology at TAMUCC. In this class we will explore how psychologists answer fundamental questions about how we think about and perceive the world around us. We will cover a variety of topics from basic perception and memory, to complex cognitive processes like language and problem solving.

This course is 100% online, which means all quizzes, activities, lectures, discussions, and exams will be administered in an online format. Although there is no class for you to attend at a certain time or place, the pace of this course will still mimic a typical three-meetings-per-week course. Quizzes, assignments, and discussions will be due at predetermined times, so make sure you are up to date on what is expected each week.

This course has been designed to be interactive and more hands on than traditional online classes to help you engage with the material at a deeper and more practical level. My primary goal for this class is for you to not only be able to wow your family with all the fancy words you’ve learned at college, but how to apply the principles of cognitive science outside of the classroom. I hope you enjoy it!
Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, you will be able to...

- Identify the fundamental components of cognitive processes in the context of examinations.
- Construct a model of information processing using current theorized components
- Compare and contrast “top-down” and “bottom-up” processing
- Critique the assumptions of cognitive science
- Compare and contrast different approaches to problem solving and thinking
- Create mnemonics and strategies of elaborative rehearsal to aid in working memory performance
- Critique the universal requirements of language and apply them to humans, animals, and other systems
- Apply your understanding of cognitive processes and theory of those processes to novel situations
- Apply specific components of cognitive psychology in a study plan to aid in your educational efforts

Assessments:

Exams: There will be 3 midterm exams given during the regular semester and an optional cumulative final given during finals week. If taken, the optional final will replace your lowest test score even if your score on the optional final is lower than your previously lower score. The exams will consist of multiple-choice questions and administered through Blackboard.

Weekly Quizzes: There will be 12 quizzes administered through Blackboard over the reading for that week. You will have 5 minutes to answer 5 questions over the reading. Your top 10 quizzes will contribute to your final grade. While you are allowed to use the book and your notes, I suggest completing the reading before opening the quiz, as one minute per question is not enough time for you to look up each answer.

Weekly Discussions: Each week, I will pose a discussion question to the class. These discussions will focus on current(ish) events that relate to the topic for that week with the purpose of the class to engage with the implications of our understanding of cognition. Your grade for the weekly discussion will consist of two parts. First, you will provide an initial response to the question. This post will consist of your initial reactions or (informed) opinions about the topic. After your initial post, you will be able to see your classmate’s posts and will make no fewer than two meaningful responses to other posts. A meaningful response is one that actively engages in the conversation and moves it forward. Post like, “I agree.” are not meaningful posts.

Weekly Activities: There will also be an activity you will complete on your own each week. These activities will often have you think about the theoretical material from the textbook in a more applied setting (e.g., given our understanding of language development, what’s the best way to learn a new language). Your lowest 2 activities will be dropped from your final grade.
**Final Project:** By the end of the term, you will make a study plan utilizing the principles you learn in this class. Your plan will be presented in the form of a formal (APA-style) paper and graded based on a rubric that will be provided after the first exam. There will be iterative in-class activities at the end of each section that will help you build the final product. See more about this assignment below.

**Grade Weights:** To give you some control over how you will be assessed in this course, you will choose how assignments will be weighted, as a class. During the first week, everyone will vote on their preferred grade weight scheme, and the one with the most votes will be how each assignment will be weighted.

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<tr>
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<th>Quiz Kid</th>
<th>Virtuoso</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Discussions</td>
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<td>Activities</td>
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<td>Exams</td>
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<td>Final Group Project</td>
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**Grades:**
Final grades will be based on the cumulative percentage you earn on all assignments using the following scale:

- A = ≥90%
- B = 80% → 89%
- C = 70% → 79%
- D = 60% → 69%
- F = <60%

All raw percentages will be rounded based on the first digit after the decimal. Numbers of X.5 or greater will be rounded up, and those lower than X.5 will be rounded down. This rounding scheme is not negotiable. If you are on the borderline between two grades, this will determine which grade you are assigned. So, make sure you track your grade early and scoop up as many extra credit opportunities as you can to avoid falling short.

**“Curving.”** As stated above, your grade will be based on how well YOU perform in the class. I will not adjust your grade (for better or worse) based on the class average and variance for the course. Also, I will not adjust your scores for quizzes, papers, or team activities based on the class average. Big classes like this tend to have evenly distributed scores right around a C or higher. Study hard so you and your teammates can be sure you get the grade you want.
In-class Policies:

Make-up/Late work: Baring extreme circumstances, no late work will be accepted. The dropped activities and quizzes are built into the course to accommodate unexpected circumstances that inevitably occur during the semester. If you know you will miss a day of class, let me know immediately so arrangements can be made for you to complete the activity for the day you will miss. Also, there are plenty of opportunities to accumulate points through team activities. Missing one or two assignments will not devastate your grade.

Conduct during discussions: Although most of the topics that will come up in discussions are not what most people consider controversial (I mean, I guess people did get pretty heated about #TheDress), it is still important to be polite and professional with all discussion posts and class conduct in general. It’s okay to disagree with what someone writes in a post, and disagreement is good for moving a discussion along; however, make sure you focus your discussion on the content presented in class and the implications of our scientific understanding of cognition. In short, always be respectful.

Contact with Instructor and TAs: You can, technically, reach me through Blackboard; however, I prefer to be contacted through my email address (Collin.Scarince@tamucc.edu). To get the fastest response from me, email me with the following subject: Psyc2314 question – LASTNAME, FIRSTNAME.
This will help keep your messages from being lost in the bottomless voids that are my email and Blackboard inboxes. If you email me after 5 p.m. or during the weekend, you might not receive a reply until the following business day.

Extra Credit: Extra credit opportunities will be offered over the course of the semester and will often be distributed/announced on Blackboard. There will be one extra credit assignment for each unit, and smaller opportunities will occasionally be offered throughout the course. Because all of the extra credit opportunities are available to all students, no special consideration for extra credit will be offered on a student-by-student basis.

On grades, scholarships, academic standing, and the like: I understand that you, as students, are under considerable pressure to get good grades to maintain scholarships, stay in school, be accepted into the nursing program or get into grad school. I really do get it; I’ve been there, too. I don’t want anything bad to happen to you as a result of failing this class, but your grade in this class is YOUR responsibility. I will do our best to assign grades that match the merit of all work that you provide me. DO NOT come to me (or the TAs or graders) asking for better grades, because you need a good grade to keep you GPA at a certain level. It puts unfair pressure on me and the TAs, whether that is your intention or not. If you ever have questions about your grade on a particular assignment, always feel free to ask about it, and do so in a timely manner. Be mindful of your current grade on Blackboard, turn in all the assignments, and take time to study. If you can do all that, you’ll do just fine.
Institution Policies:

Disability Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Plagiarism/Cheating

Put simply, do your own work. You aren’t in this class to get another letter on your transcript; you’re here to learn the content of this class. The best way to do that is to do your own work.

Along with that, never ever, EVER copy work by other people and outside sources. When writing anything for this class, always use your own words. Don’t get on Google and copy definitions and the like. I’m not interested in your copy-and-paste skills; I need to know if you are learning the material, and I can only do that if you do your own work.

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.)

Disciplinary action for academic misconduct is the responsibility of the faculty member assigned to the course. The faculty member is charged with assessing the gravity of any case of academic dishonesty, and with giving sanction to any student involved. Penalties that may be applied by the faculty member to individual cases of academic dishonesty include one or more of the following:

1. Written reprimand;
2. Requirement to re-do work in question;
3. Requirement to submit additional work;
4. Lowering of grade on work in question;
5. Assigning grade of “F” or “0” to work in question;
6. Assigning grade of “F” for course;
7. Recommendation for more severe punishment, such as dismissal from the program or from the University.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules and APA documentation rules is available
at Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. **Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.** Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Academic Advising**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Grade Appeals Process**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on
the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).

**Some Important Dates**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 14</td>
<td>Classes begin Regular Spring and 1st 7-Week Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>Last day to register or add a class</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 26</td>
<td>Last day to apply for Spring graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>Last Day of classes for 1st 7-Week Session and Final Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11-15</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
<td>First Day of Classes 2nd 7-Week session</td>
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<td>April 5</td>
<td>Last day to drop a class</td>
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<td>April 30</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from the University</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Last day of classes Regular Spring &amp; 2nd 7- Week Session and Final exams 2nd 7-Week Session</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td>Reading Day</td>
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<td>May 3, 6-9</td>
<td>Final examinations</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>Spring Commencement</td>
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**Changes to the syllabus:**
The content of this syllabus is subject to change with appropriate notice. Any changes made to the syllabus, including class schedule, assignment due dates, and test dates, will be made to benefit the class if the pace of presenting the material is too fast or too slow. Check Blackboard for the most up-to-date due dates and assignments.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Introduction to Cognitive Psychology</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1/23</td>
<td>Cognitive Neuroscience <em>(MLK Day 1/21)</em></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>Perception</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Attention</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1</strong> and Final Project Activity 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Memory Structures and Processes</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Long-Term Memory: Influences on Retrieval</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Memory Errors</td>
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<td>3/11</td>
<td><em>Spring Break</em></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>Imagery</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td><strong>Exam 2</strong> and Final Project Activity 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>Language</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>4/8</td>
<td>Concepts and Knowledge</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>4/22</td>
<td>Reasoning and Decision Making</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>4/29</td>
<td><strong>Exam 3</strong> and Final Project Activity 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>Optional Final and Final Project Due</td>
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