Course Information

Instructor
Dr. Collin Scarince
Office: BH 351  Office Hours: TBD
Email: collin.scarince@tamucc.edu
Phone: (361) 825-4127

Materials [links will be added when course page is available]

Required Text
Cognitive Psychology: Theory, Process, and Methodology (2nd Edition) by McBride & Cooper Cutting, Sage Publishings,
ISBN: 9781506383866

Software and Material
Microsoft Office Suite (instructions for downloading the suite can be found here)
Top Hat Classroom

Supplemental Material
Other materials for assignments will be provided online through Blackboard.

Course Introduction
Welcome to Psyc 3342 – Cognitive Psychology at TAMUCC. In this class we will explore how psychologists answer fundamental questions about how we think 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 (Blackboard and Top Hat). 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. Our 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 outside of the classroom. We hope you enjoy it.
Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, you will be able to...
  • 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 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 be administered through Blackboard.

Reading Quizzes
Quizzes in this course will be different than probably most of your other classes. Each week there is a reading, there will be an initial quiz over the reading for the week due by the end of the first day of the week. Two additional quizzes will be released on the morning of the second day of the week. If you get full points on the initial quiz, you do not need to take either of the two additional quizzes (each with different questions). If you are unhappy with your score on the initial quiz, you may take either or both of the additional quizzes at any point before the end of the week to try to improve your grade. Your final quiz grade for a given reading will then be the average of the initial quiz and any additional quizzes you decide to take (unless you got full points on the initial quiz). The reasoning for these multiple quizzes is to give students an opportunity to demonstrate improvement after interacting with the additional content throughout the week.

There will be 12 reading quiz grades (one for each chapter) each with 10 questions. All quizzes will be administered through Blackboard. You will have 10 minutes to answer 10 questions over the reading. 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 Activities**
There will also be an assignment you will complete on Top Hat for each reading along with two additional assignment related to the Final Project. Assignments will take one of two forms: activities and discussions. Activities will consist of a series of questions related to the topic of the week and will be graded based on the proportion of correct answers you give. Discussions will involve you interacting with other students in the class through Top Hat’s discussion board. There will be two discussion topics for each discussion assignment, and you must make two meaningful posts at a minimum. Discussions will be graded using a rubric assessing your level of engagement with the course material.

**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 second exam. There will be iterative class activities at the end of the first two units that will help you build the final product.

**Extra Credit**
Extra credit opportunities will be offered periodically 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. Extra credit counts towards your Individual Quiz grade, and a typical extra credit assignment is worth a little less than half of a quiz.

**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. After the first unit of content, everyone will vote on their favorite grade weight scheme. The one with the most votes will be how assignments will be weighted.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quiz Kid</th>
<th>Virtuoso</th>
<th>Set to Engage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
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**Final Grades**

Final grades will be based on the cumulative percentage you earn on all assignments using the following scale:

- A = 90% and greater
- B = between 80% and 89%
- C = between 70% and 79%
- D = between 60% and 69%
- F = 59% and lower

All raw percentages will be rounded based on the first digit after the decimal. Numbers of 0.5 or greater will be rounded up, and those lower than 0.5 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.

**Digital Tools**

**Top Hat**

Top Hat is a digital tool for active student engagement in class settings. You will use your smartphone, tablet, or computer to complete assignments that are posted on Top Hat. This includes activities, discussions, and class polls. Towards the start of the terms, you should receive an email from Top Hat with instructions on how to register for this course, including a registration code. Check your junk folder if you do not see this email in your main mailbox. If you cannot find the registration email from Top Hat at all, please contact the instructor right away so another registration code can be sent.

More information for signing up for Top Hat and troubleshooting can be found [here](#).

**Blackboard**

Blackboard is the course management software used by TAMUCC. We will use Blackboard for quizzes, exams, to distribute supplemental material, make class-wide announcements, and record your grades for all assignments. I highly recommend that you check the course page on Blackboard often so that you are up-to-date on where you stand in the class.
Microsoft Office
All document submissions through Blackboard must be in the appropriate Microsoft Office file format (.docx, .xlsx, or .pptx) or PDF format. Part of your student fees cover access to both cloud versions of the Microsoft Office Suite as well as full downloadable versions of the suite (for both Windows and Mac). I highly recommend you install Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint on your personal computer, as all of these file formats will be used during the semester. You can find instructions on how to get your student access to the software here [link will be inserted when course page is available].

If you prefer other platforms, such as Google Doc/Sheets/Slides or Apple’s Pages/Numbers/Keynote, it is your responsibility to learn how to export your files to the correct format. Submissions that are not Office or PDF formats will be treated as a non-submission, and you will not be able to resubmit after the deadline for a given assignment passes.

In-Class Policies:
Make-Up/Late Work
Baring extreme circumstances, no late work will be accepted without arrangements made before the due date. The dropped assignments 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.

Conduct in Discussion Boards
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 the course and the implications of our scientific understanding of cognition. In short, always be respectful.

Contacting the Instructor or TA’s
You can reach me through Blackboard; however, I prefer to be contacted directly through my email address (Collin.Scarince@tamucc.edu). To get the fastest response from me, email me with the following subject: Psyc3342 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.
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.

Institutional 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. In a course like this, where there is a mix of individual and group work, it is very important that you follow the instructions for each assignment. I will do my very best to make it clear what assignments you should do on your own (papers, quizzes, etc.), but bear in mind, even when working with your group members you should always try to actively contribute and understand the material. 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 (including your teammates) and outside sources. When writing papers 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:

- Written reprimand;
- Requirement to re-do work in question;
- Requirement to submit additional work;
- Lowering of grade on work in question;
- Assigning grade of “F” or “0” to work in question;
- Assigning grade of “F” for course;
- 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. Friday, April 10th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**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, Top Hat, 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf.

**Some Important Dates**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 20</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>Classes begin Regular Spring and 1st 7-Week Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 28</td>
<td>Last day to register or add a class</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 4-25</td>
<td>Mid-Term Grading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9-13</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 12-13</td>
<td>Campus Closed</td>
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<td>April 10</td>
<td>Last day to drop a class</td>
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<td>April 16</td>
<td>Last day to apply for Spring graduation</td>
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<td>May 5</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from the University</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>Reading Day</td>
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<td>May 8, 11-14</td>
<td>Final examinations</td>
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<td>May 16</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.
# Calendar of Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>Introduction to Cognitive Psychology (no reading) (MLK Day 1/20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/27</td>
<td>Cognitive Neuroscience</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Perception</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>Attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/17</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1</strong> and Final Project Activity 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/24</td>
<td>Memory Structures and Processes</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>Long-Term Memory: Influences on Retrieval</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/16</td>
<td>Memory Errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/23</td>
<td>Concepts and Knowledge*</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3/30</td>
<td><strong>Exam 2</strong> and Final Project Activity 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>Imagery*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4/13</td>
<td>Language*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>Reasoning and Decision Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>5/4</td>
<td><strong>Exam 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5/13</td>
<td>Optional Final and Final Project due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*=Chapters out of chronological order