

Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 4270 3.0 Section A: SEMINAR IN MEMORY AND COGNITION

Tuesdays: 11:30am - 2:30pm
Accolade Building West (ACW) 008
Fall 2021

Instructor Information

Instructor: W. Dale Stevens, Ph.D.

Office: 2036 Sherman Health Science Research Centre

Office Phone: (416) 736-2100 ext. 44662 (BUT PLEASE USE EMAIL)

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: stevensd@yorku.ca

Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C.
- HH/PSYC 2021 3.00 (Statistical Methods I) or HH/PSYC 2020 6.00 (Statistical Methods I and II)
- HH/PSYC 2030 3.00 (Introduction to Research Methods) or substitutes
- HH/PSYC 2260 3.00 (Cognition) or HH/PSYC 3265 3.00 (Memory)
- Students must be in an Honours program in Psychology and have completed at least 84 credits (excluding (EDUC) education courses)

Course Credit Exclusions

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

Course website: [eClass](#)

Course Description

This course will survey a variety of topics in the area of human memory and other cognitive processes, such as perception, conceptual processes, and cognitive control, primarily from a cognitive neuroscience perspective. Current theories and research on memory and cognition will be presented and discussed, focusing on the processes and systems involved in encoding, storage, and retrieval, as well as errors of memory and the importance of memory in our everyday lives. Evidence derived from work with clinical populations, healthy older individuals, research involving the use of animal models, and brain-imaging techniques to study the neural basis of memory and cognition will be explored. Students will be required to read and critically evaluate selected articles from the literature, focusing in particular on ongoing debates in the field across a number topics.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of memory and cognition.
2. Critically evaluate, synthesize, and resolve conflicting results in memory and cognition research.
3. Articulate trends in the psychology of memory and cognition.
4. Locate research articles on memory and cognition and show critical thinking about research findings.
5. Express knowledge of memory and cognition in written form.
6. Engage in evidence-based dialogue with course director and peers.
7. Demonstrate an ability to work with others.

Specific Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, students should be able to identify current key debates in the field of memory and cognition; find, understand, and critically evaluate primary source research papers, including empirical studies and reviews; and effectively communicate their knowledge in both written and oral forms.

Required Reading

No textbook is required for this course. Instead, selected articles from the relevant literature will be assigned for reading each week for the various topics. (See list of Readings on Course eClass site.)

Course Requirements and Assessment

(See detailed description of each component below under Description of Assignments)

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Class Participation	Weekly	20%
Thought Papers (×3)*	Submit before classes (4 max.)	15%
Presentation	TBD	25%
Term Paper Outline*	October 26, 2021	10%
Term Paper*	December 7, 2021	30%
Total		100%

*All assignments are **due at the beginning of class**. (Late thought papers will not be accepted.)

See policy for missed classes, presentations, and deadlines below.

Note: The last day to drop the course without receiving a grade on your transcript is November 12, 2021.

Description of Assignments

Class Participation:

An evaluation of each student's participation makes up a considerable proportion of the overall grade for the course. Participation includes attending all classes, having read and thought about the assigned readings, engaging in discussion during class, and providing peer evaluations of three student presentations, to be assigned by the instructor. Students will be expected to discuss their opinions, thoughts, and views on the readings, as well as those expressed by fellow students.

Thought Papers:

Students are required to submit a minimum of 3 "thought papers" based on the assigned readings at the beginning of class (excluding the first and eleventh classes). The purpose of a thought paper is to present your own original view on the readings in at least one of the following ways: describe the interesting or main questions and how well you believe they were addressed by one or more of the papers; critically evaluate the experimental design and/or the authors' interpretation of the findings; discuss ideas for theory or experiments that the paper(s) inspired; describe how the papers complemented or contradicted each other. The thought paper must demonstrate that the student has read and critically evaluated one or more of the readings. Importantly, the thought paper is NOT meant to merely summarize the readings, but rather, to express the students's own critical evaluation and thoughts on the week's topic.

*Finally, you may not submit a thought paper on the same topic as your presentation or term paper.

Thought papers must be 1 (minimum) to 2 (maximum) pages long (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins all around), not including title page and references (at least 1 reference must be included). Three thought papers are required, but you may submit up to 4 (only 1 per class), and the best 3 grades will be counted towards your final grade.

*Thought papers are due before the start of class (i.e., 11:30am) in which the relevant paper(s) was/were assigned – late thought papers will not be accepted.

Presentation:

Each student will serve as a discussion leader and be responsible for presenting a short seminar on one of the assigned topics. This will involve distilling the important issues from one or more of the readings, posing discussion questions for the class, and leading/moderating the discussion. There will typically be ~3 student presentations per class, so presenting students must coordinate with one another to ensure that the presentations are complementary, and not overlapping or redundant.

To lead the discussion, it will be necessary to elaborate on the background and introduction of the paper(s) to provide the theoretical context in which the main questions were asked. To do this well, you may need to read additional articles in order to be fully prepared to discuss the assigned paper. If you choose empirical articles, it will also be necessary to provide a concise summary of the methods, the main findings, and interpretation of the findings. You should also share your perspective on, and evaluation of, the paper(s), and prepare several questions to discuss with the rest of the class. The questions can be points of confusion, issues for further consideration, follow-up research ideas, and so on. The presentation should take approximately 15-20 minutes, with another 5 minutes max. for class discussion/questions during and/or after the presentation.

Additionally, three students will evaluate each presentation and provide feedback via email to the instructor, who will forward the anonymized feedback to the presenter at the end of the term. The

reason for this is to provide valuable feedback to the presenter so that they can learn from the experience and improve their communication and oral presentation skills. Student evaluations will contribute to the participation grade for the evaluators.

Term Paper & Outline:

For your term paper, you may write a comprehensive review, or a research proposal, related to any of the topics covered throughout the course (must be different from your presentation topic). If you choose to write a review paper, it must have a clear thesis and present a novel argument or synthesis of the ideas presented and/or discussed in the course (e.g., you may choose to compare, contrast, and evaluate two competing theories). If you choose to write a research proposal, it must include an introduction, providing the context and rationale for the proposed study, your hypothesis, a methods section (participants, materials, procedures, proposed analyses), and expected results. Your paper must be a maximum of 8 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins all around) not including the title page, abstract, and references. The paper must be written in APA format (see Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association). **Late submissions will be penalized 10% per day.**

Approximately halfway through the term (see Course Schedule), you must submit a 2-page outline that indicates whether you will write a critical review or a research proposal and clearly delineates the proposed topic and structure of your paper. The structure and requirements of your outline will be discussed during class sometime before the due date.

Grading as per Senate Policy

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (i.e., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7...C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of the grading system, see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - [Grading Scheme for 2021-22](#)

Missed Classes, Presentations, or Assignment Deadlines

1. Students must email the instructor in advance of any missed class/presentation/deadline if at all possible; otherwise, within 24 hours following the missed class/presentation/deadline.
2. Appropriate documentation (See A, B below) verifying the circumstances for the missed class/presentation/deadline must be provided within 1 week (7 calendar days). Failure to provide appropriate documentation will result in: a grade of 0 for participation in a given class, thought papers, and presentations; a penalty of 10% per day for late Term Papers and Outlines.
 - A. Classes, presentations, and deadlines for thought papers, term papers, and outlines missed for medical reasons must be supported by an Attending Physician's Statement, which can be downloaded at the following link:
<http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>

NOTE: The instructor and/or Psychology Undergraduate Office will verify the authenticity of medical notes. Falsification of any documentation relating to an absence or missed deadline is a serious academic offence (see “Academic Policies” below).

- B. Classes, presentations, and deadlines missed for legitimate non-medical reasons must be supported by appropriate documentation (e.g., copy of a death certificate, automobile accident report, etc.) **Pre-booked travel is not a legitimate excuse.**

Add/Drop Deadlines

For a full list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2021-22 Important Dates](#)

	Fall (Term F)	Year (Term Y)	Winter (Term W)
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 21	Sept. 21	Jan. 23
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 5	Oct. 26	Feb. 7
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 12	Feb. 11	18-Mar
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of “W” on transcript – see note below)	Nov. 13 - Dec. 7	Feb. 12 - April 10	March 19 - April 10

Add and Drop Deadline Information

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

You may [withdraw from a course](#) using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as 'W'. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.

Email Policy

All email correspondence to Dr. Stevens must include the course code (PSYC-4270) in the subject line, to prevent messages from being filtered as spam, and close with your full name and student number (e.g., "Jennifer Jones, 867530986"). A response from Dr. Stevens can be expected within 48 hours, not including weekends. Please re-send your message if you do not receive a reply within this timeframe. **Before contacting Dr. Stevens, reread the syllabus carefully first to determine if it answers your question.**

Attendance Policy

Attendance in-person on campus is mandatory (unless a given class is delivered remotely via Zoom). To receive full participation marks, a student must:

1. Attend all classes in person (or via Zoom, if class is held remotely).
2. Participate each week, demonstrating knowledge of the assigned readings through class discussion (or a "Topic Summary", if class is missed for a documented legitimate reason).

Please inform the instructor as soon as possible if there are extenuating circumstances that may interfere with the successful completion of the course requirements in order to make appropriate arrangements.

Academic Integrity for Students

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

NOTE: All students must review the [Spark Academic Integrity modules](#): These modules explain principles of academic honesty.

*You must also complete the **Academic Honesty Quiz**, repeating if necessary until a perfect score is achieved, and provide a copy of the results to the Course Instructor (see course eClass site).

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The [York University Accessibility Hub](#) is your online stop for accessibility on campus. The [Accessibility Hub](#) provides tools, assistance and resources. Policy Statement.

Policy: York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs.

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses. Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder.

For Further Information please refer to: [York university academic accommodation for students with disabilities policy](#).

Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC 4270 course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

Additional Resources:

A number of valuable resources are available to students at York University.

Importantly, this includes the Writing Center. Please visit the website:

<https://www.yorku.ca/laps/writing-centre/>

York University also offers both academic and crisis counselling services. For information, visit the Counselling and Development Centre website: <https://counselling.students.yorku.ca>

COURSE SCHEDULE		
DATE:	TOPIC:	ASSIGNMENT:
September 14, 2021	Course Overview	None
September 21, 2021	Approaches & Methods in Memory & Cognition Research	Thought Paper #1
September 28, 2021	Object Concepts & Semantic Memory	Thought Paper #2
October 5, 2021	Neurocognitive Specialization & Plasticity TERM PAPER TUTORIAL	Thought Paper #3
October 12, 2021	NO CLASS Reading Week	None
October 19, 2021	Implicit Memory	Thought Paper #4
October 26, 2021	Priming & Repetition Suppression	*TERM PAPER OUTLINE DUE* Thought Paper #5
November 2, 2021	Memory Encoding & Perception	Thought Paper #6
November 9, 2021	Memory Retrieval & Distortions	Thought Paper #7
November 16, 2021	Time & Space: Prospection & Spatial Cognition	Thought Paper #8
November 23, 2021	Cognitive Control & Working Memory	Thought Paper #9
November 30, 2021	Cognitive Neuroscience Lab Tour	Tour MRI, TMS, & VR labs!
December 7, 2021	Neurocognitive Aging Course Summary	*TERM PAPER DUE* Thought Paper #10

Term Paper Outline and Term Paper are due at the beginning of class!