

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
LONDON CANADA

Department of Psychology
Winter 2027

Psychology 2135B Section 001
Cognitive Psychology

1 Calendar Description

An introduction to empirical, computational, and theoretical approaches to the study of human cognitive processes. The topics that we survey include perception, attention, memory, concepts, language, and problem-solving. The course will show how these diverse psychological processes are related to and influence one another. *4 lecture hours, 0.5 course*

Antirequisites: Psychology 2010A/B, 2180E. Antirequisites are courses that overlap sufficiently in content that only one can be taken for credit. If you take a course that is an antirequisite to a course previously taken, you will lose credit for the earlier course, regardless of the grade achieved in the most recent course.

Prerequisites: A mark of at least 60% in 1.0 credits of Psychology at the 1000 level.

4 lecture hours

Course Weight: 0.5

Unless otherwise stated, students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all prerequisites prior to enrolling. Where prerequisites have not been met, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the course. In accordance with Western policy, this decision is not subject to appeal.

In the event of a discrepancy between this outline and Senate or University policies, the latter shall prevail. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of this course outline for pedagogical or operational reasons. Any such changes will be communicated to students in a timely manner.

2 Course Information

Instructor: Ken McRae

Office: WIRB 5148

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm, Zoom or WIRB 5148

Email: kenm@uwo.ca

Teaching Assistant: TBA

Office: email psych2135@uwo.ca for meeting location

Office Hours: TBA

Email: psych2135@uwo.ca

For all questions, please contact the TA by email at psych2135@uwo.ca. Please include the course number and section in the subject line of your email, along with a brief word or phrase detailing

the nature of the email (e.g., 2135B 001: Midterm Exam Questions). All email correspondence must be from your @uwo.ca email. Emails from other addresses will not be responded to. The TA has weekly Zoom office hours. TA office hours are offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Time & Location of Lectures:

Monday, 2:30-4:30, Middlesex College, room MC-110

Wednesday, 2:30-4:30, Middlesex College, room MC-110

Slides will be available on OWL Brightspace prior to each lecture.

Lectures will be NOT be streamed on Zoom. Lectures will NOT be recorded or posted.

This is a fully in-person course. All lectures and exams will be in person.

Quizzes are completed on OWL Brightspace.

I hold weekly meeting hours Tuesday from 1:00-2:00. We can meet in my office (WIRB 5158) or on Zoom.

These are single person or small group meetings. I will meet with students on a first-come-first-served basis.

3 Course Materials

There is one recommended textbook for this course. *Cognition: Exploring the Science of the Mind, 8th edition*, by Daniel Reisberg is available at the University bookstore, Amazon, and elsewhere. The purchase of this text is not required, but I encourage you to have access to a textbook. You may use other texts or earlier editions of Reisberg's book for the same purpose. The text is not required. The cost ranges from free open source pdf to \$172 from the publisher.

Notes and slides from each class will be available on the course website. A copy of the slides will be available prior to class for review and note taking. Students may share their own notes with others as they wish. Because your notes are your intellectual property, you can share as much or as little as you feel comfortable.

4 Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

An introduction to empirical, computational, and theoretical approaches to the study of human cognitive processes. The topics surveyed include perception, attention, memory, concepts, language, and problem-solving. The course will show how these diverse psychological processes are related, and how they influence one another. The primary mode of instruction is in-person lecture and discussion. Assessment consists of quizzes and multiple-choice exams.

The following table outlines the course learning outcomes and how they are assessed.

Learning Outcome	Learning Activity	Assessment
<i>Depth and Breadth of Knowledge.</i> Understand key concepts, principles, and overarching themes relevant to cognitive psychology.	Encouraged and developed via readings and class participation.	Quizzes and exams

Knowledge of Methodologies. Understand concepts and current states of methods and techniques in both the natural science and social science aspects of cognitive psychology.	Encouraged and developed via readings and class participation.	Quizzes and exams
Application of Knowledge. Apply psychological principles to the understanding of everyday problems and academic / professional success.	Encouraged and developed via readings and class participation.	Quizzes and exams
Communication Skills. Engage in a critical scholarly discussion on a psychological topic using evidence to support claims.	Encouraged and developed via class participation and discussion.	Quizzes and exams
Awareness of Limits of Knowledge. Evaluate the presentation of scientific ideas and research in the popular media.	Encouraged and developed via lecture and class participation.	Quizzes and exams

5 Evaluation

The evaluation and testing formats for this course were created to assess the learning objectives as listed in section 4 and are necessary for meeting these learning objectives. All evaluations listed in this course outline are required components of the course and together account for 100% of the final grade. Weightings and assessment formats may be adjusted where required to support course learning objectives, with appropriate notice to students.

5.1 Quizzes

There are 4 online quizzes according to the schedule below. Each quiz will be available on OWL Brightspace from 5:00 pm - 5:00 pm (for 24 hours). The quizzes are *timed* but *not proctored*. You can take the quiz any time during the posted period. Once you begin, you will have 20 minutes to complete the quiz.

An *optional* makeup quiz is available at the end of the term that will include material from the entire course. If you miss a quiz during the term, you can take the makeup quiz without needing to seek any additional permission. You may also take the makeup quiz to replace a lower scoring quiz from the term. No additional makeup quizzes will be scheduled.

5.2 Exams

There are two in-person exams as shown in Section 6. Each exam will cover the material preceding the exam, and will be multiple choice format. The midterm exam will occur in class on Wednesday, February 24, 2:30 - 4:15 in MC-110. The final exam will be scheduled by the registrar for the April exam period.

If you require or receive accommodation for extra time on course work, please connect with Services for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible, and then let me know so that I can

make accommodations. The midterm exam is worth 30% of the final grade. The final exam is worth 40% of the final grade.

5.3 Policy on Missing Coursework

The evaluation and testing formats for this course were created to assess the learning objectives as listed in Section 4 and are necessary for meeting these learning objectives.

Students who encounter extenuating circumstances affecting their academic responsibilities may submit a request for academic consideration in accordance with Western University's Academic Consideration policies. Requests must be submitted through the [Student Absence Portal](#) and may require supporting documentation.

If you are unable to take an exam as scheduled, you *must* obtain permission from your academic Dean via your counsellor to make up the exam. See Section 10 for information on seeking academic consideration. Please note the [Western Student Information Privacy Policy](#) that instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for medical grounds, or for other reasons.

All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the absence reporting policy must be submitted to your home Faculty or Affiliate Academic Counselling/Advising Office. The current policy on [student absences](#) is available here. Information on [accommodation appeals and medical certificates](#) is available here. Following receipt of approved consideration from Academic Counselling, a makeup exam will be rescheduled to take place approximately one week after the original exam date.

Once I receive the verification of your eligibility for a makeup exam, a makeup exam will be scheduled roughly one week after the missed exam. Any exam not taken or not made up will be scored as "0".

Academic consideration based on self-attestation (an Undocumented Absence) cannot be used for the Midterm exam.

Academic consideration based on self-attestation (an Undocumented Absence) is not relevant for the quizzes because flexibility is provided. That is, there is an optional makeup quiz that can be taken if you miss one of the first four quizzes (or you hope to get a better grade than on one of the first four quizzes).

The expectation is that course grades will be distributed around the following averages:

Grade	Description
70%	1000–level and 2099–level courses
72%	2100–2990 level courses
75%	3000–level courses
80%	4000–level courses

In the event that course grades are significantly higher or lower than these averages, instructors may be required to make adjustments to course grades. Such adjustment might include the normalization of one or more course components and/or the re-weighting of various course components.

The Psychology Department follows Western's grading guidelines (see [the policy here.](#))

Grade	Range	Description
A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

5.4 Policy on Grade Rounding

Course grades are rounded to the nearest whole number. No additional assignments will be offered to enhance a final grade. Requests to change a grade because it is needed for a future program will not be considered.

6 Assessment/Evaluation Schedule

The final grade will be calculated according to the components shown in the breakdown. No grades will be rounded.

Component	Breakdown
Quizzes (4)	30% of final grade
Exam 1 (Midterm)	30% of final grade
Exam 2 (Final)	40% of final grade

Grades will be released on OWL Brightspace. Exams may be reviewed by making an appointment with the TA during their exam review office hours. Neither the TA nor the instructor will re-grade questions or award points after the grades have been released.

Exam/Quiz	Date	Location	Content	Value
Quiz 1	January 20	Online	Classes 1-6	7.5%
Quiz 2	February 1	Online	Classes 7-9	7.5%
Midterm	Feb. 24: 2:30-4:15	MC-110	Classes 1-11	30%
Quiz 3	March 10	Online	Classes 12-15	7.5%
Quiz 4	March 31	Online	Classes 16-21	7.5%
Optional Makeup Quiz	April 5	Online	Classes 1-21	7.5% (optional)
Final	TBA	TBA	Classes 12-21	40%

7 Class Schedule

Section 1: The Brain, Memory, and the Mind

The first section of the course covers the history of cognitive psychology, how and why cognitive psychology developed from the earlier study of psychology, and in what direction the study of cognition is headed. We will also learn about the brain, perceptual systems, basic object recognition, and attention.

Class	Date	Topic	Readings
1	Jan. 4	The Study of Cognition	Reisberg Ch 1
2	Jan. 6	Cognitive Neuroscience 1	Reisberg Ch 2
3	Jan. 11	Cognitive Neuroscience 2	Reisberg Ch 2
4	Jan. 13	Visual Perception	Reisberg Ch. 3
5	Jan. 18	Object Recognition	Reisberg Ch. 4
6	Jan. 20	Attention	Reisberg Ch. 5
Quiz 1	Jan. 20	Online Quiz 1, Classes 1-6	Reisberg Ch. 1-5
7	Jan. 25	Memory Encoding	Reisberg Ch. 6
8	Jan. 27	Memory Systems	Reisberg Ch. 7
9	Feb. 1	Memory for Situations & Events	Reisberg Ch. 8
Quiz 2	Feb. 1	Online Quiz 2, Classes 7-9	Reisberg Ch. 6-8
	Feb. 3	No Class	
10	Feb. 8	Concepts and Categories	Reisberg Ch. 9
11	Feb. 10	Concepts 2	Reisberg Ch. 9
	Feb. 15	Reading Week – No Class	
	Feb. 17	Reading Week – No Class	
Review	Feb. 22	Midterm Review Q&A	Reisberg Ch. 1-9
Midterm	Feb. 24	Midterm, Classes 1-11	Reisberg Ch. 1-9

Section 2: Higher Order Cognition

The second unit covers complex cognitive processes, such as language use and reasoning and other forms of higher order thinking. We'll rely on some of the ideas from earlier classes, such as memory and attention. The exam for this section will be scheduled during final period.

Class	Date	Topic	Readings
12	March 1	Language 1	Reisberg Ch. 10
13	March 3	Language 2	Reisberg Ch. 10
14	March 8	Language 3	Reisberg Ch. 10
15	March 10	Imagery	Reisberg Ch. 11
Quiz 3	March 10	Online Quiz 3, Classes 12-15	Reisberg Ch. 10-11
16	March 15	Probability	Reisberg Ch. 12
17	March 17	Decision Making	Reisberg Ch. 12
18	March 22	Thinking and Reasoning	Reisberg Ch. 12
19	March 24	Problem Solving & Creativity	Reisberg Ch. 13
20	March 29	Intelligence & Expertise	Reisberg Ch. 14
21	March 31	Consciousness	Reisberg Ch. 15
Quiz 4	March 31	Online Quiz 4, Classes 16-21	Reisberg Ch. 12-15
22	April 5	Final Exam Review Q&A	
Optional Quiz	April 5	Optional Makeup Quiz, Classes 1-21	
	TBA	Final Exam: Classes 12-21	Reisberg Ch. 10-15

8 Academic Integrity

Scholastic offences are treated seriously at Western University. Students are expected to understand and comply with the University's standards of academic integrity. Scholastic offences may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the University. Please read [Western's Scholastic Offences](#) policy for definitions and examples of Scholastic offences.

8.1 Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices on any kind may be used during an exam. Laptops, smartphones, and tablet devices may be used during class, and can be used for interactive activities during lecture.

8.2 Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

9 Academic Accommodations and Accessible Education

Western University is committed to providing an accessible learning environment. Students with disabilities or medical conditions requiring accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessible Education as early as possible. Accommodations will be implemented in accordance with University policy. Please review [Western's policy on academic accommodations](#) for student with disabilities. Accessible Education provides supports and services to students with disabilities at Western. If you think you may qualify for ongoing accommodation that will be recognized in all your courses, visit [Accessible Education](#) for more information. Email: aew@uwo.ca Phone: 519 661-2147.

10 Absence & Academic Consideration

Please review Western's policy on [Academic Considerations](#):

Find your academic counsellor here:

https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit required documentation in order to be approved for certain academic considerations. Students must communicate with their instructors no later than 48 hours after the end of the period covered Student Medical Certificate (SMC), or immediately upon their return following a documented absence.

Medical Absences

Submit a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner to Academic Counselling in your Faculty of registration to be eligible for Academic Consideration.

Nonmedical Absences

Submit appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to Academic Counselling in your Faculty of registration to be eligible for academic consideration. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Counselling unit to clarify what documentation is appropriate.

Religious Consideration

Students seeking accommodation for religious purposes are advised to contact Academic Counselling at least three weeks prior to the religious event and as soon as possible after the start of the term.

11 Other Information

Helpful Websites

- Western's academic policies are available at the [Office of the Registrar](#).
- Departmental policies are available at the [Psychology Department website](#).
- Learning supports available at [Learning Development & Success](#).

Well-being

Western University provides a range of supports to promote student well-being. Students are encouraged to seek assistance when needed. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Health and Wellness at Western](#) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you.

Grade Appeals

If you wish to appeal a grade, please read the [policy documentation](#) on requests for relief. Please first contact the course instructor. If your issue is not resolved, you may make your appeal in writing to the Undergraduate Chair in Psychology (psyugrd@uwo.ca).

Copyright Statement

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, videos and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute any course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without the instructor's written consent.

12 Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton. Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.