

WESTERN UNIVERSITY  
LONDON CANADA

Department of Psychology  
Fall/Winter 2026

Psychology 3138G Section 001 FW26

**Human Memory**  
Version 07 Aug 2026

## 1 Calendar Description

A review of data and theories from cognitive psychology and cognitive neuroscience that bear on how people form, retain, and retrieve memory representations. Emphasis will be placed on studies that address cognitive processes, but some research on brain mechanisms will be covered as well.

**Antirequisite(s):** Not applicable.

**Prerequisites:** Prerequisite(s): Both Psychology 2801F/G (or one of Health Sciences 2801A/B, Psychology 2840F/G, Psychology 2855F/G) and Psychology 2811A/B (or one of Biology 2244A/B, Economics 2122A/B, Economics 2222A/B, Geography 2210A/B, Health Sciences 3801A/B, MOS 2242A/B, Psychology 2830A/B, Psychology 2850A/B, Sociology 2205A/B, Statistical Sciences 2035, Statistical Sciences 2141A/B, Statistical Sciences 2143A/B, Statistical Sciences 2244A/B, Statistical Sciences 2858A/B, the former Social Work 2207A/B), or the former Psychology 2820E, or both the former Psychology 2800E and the former Psychology 2810, and one of Psychology 2115A/B, Psychology 2134A/B, Psychology 2135A/B, Psychology 2220A/B, Psychology 2221A/B, Neuroscience 2000. Minimum grade of 60% required in all prerequisite courses.

**Lecture Hours:** 3h

**Course Weight:** 0.5

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

## 2 Course Information

|                          |                                    |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Instructor:              | Dr. Stefan Köhler                  |
| Office and Phone Number: | WIRB 5138; 519-661-2111 ext. 86364 |
| Office Hours:            | by appointment                     |
| Email:                   | stefank@uwo.ca                     |

|                               |                                                      |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Teaching Assistant:           | Daniela Herrera Chaves                               |
| Office:                       | by appointment                                       |
| Office Hours:                 | by appointment                                       |
| Email:                        | <a href="mailto:dherrer3@uwo.ca">dherrer3@uwo.ca</a> |
| Time and Location of Classes: | Thursday 9:30pm – 12:30pm; SSC-3024                  |
| Delivery Method:              | In-Person                                            |

### 3 Course Materials

**Required textbook:** Schwartz, B.L. (2024). Memory. Foundations and Applications (5th Edition). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Earlier editions of this textbook are not suitable for this course. The latest edition is available for purchase as hardcopy at Western Book Store or for purchase/rental in digital format at <https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/memory-bennett-l-schwartz-v9781071930687>

Expected costs for access to the eText are CAD \$126 - \$182.

Additional required readings will be posted on OWL Brightspace.

Reading Guidelines and Lecture Notes will be posted on OWL Brightspace.

### 4 Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

#### *Course Objectives*

1. To provide a comprehensive research-oriented overview of the history, methodology, theories, and contentious issues in the study of human memory in psychology and cognitive neuroscience (what we know; how we know what we know).
2. To encourage reading and provide opportunity for writing about primary source material in memory research; to encourage critical thinking about memory research; to explore and appreciate the limits of current scientific knowledge in the field; to appreciate the limits of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for gaining a full understanding and for developing these critical thinking skills
3. To provide training for public (in-class) presentations on a specific research question and its empirical study; to encourage discussion of contentious issues in memory research.

Any course of this sort contains **material that must be learned from both lectures and readings**. Some material from the text will not be covered in lectures; similarly, some

material from the lectures will not be covered in the readings. **Therefore, it is critical that students attend the lectures, participate in class discussions, and do the readings regularly for successful completion of the course.**

An important component of the present course relates to the in-class discussion of the content covered. Students will be asked to participate actively in this exchange of thoughts and ideas, which may include group discussions in breakout format. The in class-presentations, as well as targeted questions from the course instructor, will serve to stimulate this discussion.

For the **in-class presentations**, students are expected to work in **groups of 2-3 individuals**. It is the responsibility of each group to obtain the reference for the primary research article to be presented prior to starting any work on it.

To offer practice in writing, the course requires the completion of two **thought papers and includes essay-style questions in the exams**. Topics for the thought papers will be assigned by the instructor (see Evaluation section).

### ***Learning Outcomes***

| Learning Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Learning Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Assessment                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Knowledge and Understanding                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                         |
| <p>Describe and explain key concepts and research findings that address how human memory works</p> <p>Describe and explain key methods used to study human memory (how we know what we know)</p> <p>Describe applications of memory research to everyday experiences and to memory disorders</p> <p>Appreciate limits of using AI in gaining understanding as learner</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading</li><li>• Participation in class discussion</li><li>• Preparing class presentations</li><li>• Writing thought papers</li><li>• Writing quiz exam</li><li>• Writing final exam</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Class presentations</li><li>• Thought papers</li><li>• Quiz exam</li><li>• Final exam</li></ul> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                         |

| Critical Thinking                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Summarize and synthesize research findings                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preparing class presentations</li><li>• Participation in class discussion</li><li>• Writing quiz exam</li><li>• Writing final exam</li><li>• Writing thought papers</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Class presentations</li><li>• Quiz exam</li><li>• Final exam</li><li>• Thought papers</li></ul> |
| Identify and describe limits of current knowledge in memory research                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                         |
| Appreciate limits of using AI in developing critical thinking skills                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                         |
| Communication                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                         |
| Communicate ideas, methods, and findings from memory research (without AI support) in oral form                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participation in class discussion</li><li>• Preparing class presentations</li><li>• Writing thought papers</li><li>• Writing quiz exam</li><li>• Writing final exam</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Class presentations</li></ul>                                                                   |
| Communicate ideas, methods, and findings from memory research (with awareness of AI limitations) in written form |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thought papers</li><li>• Quiz exam</li><li>• Final exam</li></ul>                               |

## 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.

**Students are expected (i) to attend all classes, (ii) to read and critically think about all assigned course material, and (iii) to actively participate in class discussions.** Students will be asked to offer a presentation (typically in groups of 2-3 individuals) and prepare questions for in-class discussion. Students will also be asked to write thought papers on a subset of the course readings. A quiz exam will be administered to probe knowledge of foundations and methods early on in the term. A cumulative final exam will be administered that will also include an essay component. Evaluation will be based on four different course components.

#### Grade breakdown for course evaluation:

|    |                                 |                    |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | Quiz exam                       | 20% of total grade |
| 2. | Final Exam with essay component | 30% of total grade |
| 3. | In-class presentation           | 25% of total grade |
| 4. | Thought papers                  | 25% of total grade |

#### *Quiz Exam*

This **60 minute** exam will cover the materials from the lectures, videos, and readings for the classes up until this point. Mixed format: multiple choice and short answers in essay-writing format (i.e., connected prose). **This is a designated assignment that requires formal supporting documentation if the exam is missed. In other words, students cannot use an undocumented absence for this assessment.**

#### *Thought Papers*

Students are required to **write two thought papers (750 words each)** on assigned readings over the course of the term. Thought papers are intended to be brief reflections on presented articles that are meant to increase students' engagement with select research content. Due dates for these papers will be determined for each student in the first two weeks of the course. **Thought papers must be uploaded to the course website by 12 noon on the due dates** (i.e. typically Monday following the presentations on which they are based). **These deadlines follow the new flexible assessment format with an added grace period of 48h (see implications for consideration and missing course work below).**

#### *Presentations*

Students are required to give a **presentation on an assigned primary research paper** (one presentation per paper). Presentations must offer a full summary of the article and will typically be given in **groups of 2-3 students**. Presentations are expected to be 15 min in length, cannot be read, and must be supported by visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint), followed by a Q & A. Students are encouraged to include questions and comments in their presentations so as to stimulate discussion in the Q & A period. They are also expected to be prepared to answer questions about the articles they present in the Q & A. Presentation dates for each student will be determined in the first two weeks of the course.

#### *Final Exam – with essay format questions*

There will be a **3 h final exam**. Mixed format: multiple choice, short answers, essay-style reflections. This exam will cover materials from the entire course; it is a cumulative exam. It will include prompted reflections in connected prose that build on content learned in this course. **The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office.**

#### *Policy on Missing Coursework*

**Thought Papers.** Late submissions of the thought papers will not be accepted unless

submitted within the 48h grace period specified as part of the flexible assessment format. Please note that because the submission deadline for these assessments already includes flexibility in the form of this grace period, **the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for thought papers that are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility.**

**Presentations** will be rescheduled if missed. If rescheduling is not feasible, students may be asked to upload a recorded version on OWL Brightspace instead (at a time determined by the course instructor). If only one of the presenters is available at the assigned presentation spot they will be encouraged to offer their presentation individually. **Presentations missed without rescheduling will be assigned a 0 mark.**

**Quiz and Final Exams** will be rescheduled as make-up exams if missed due to medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances approved for academic consideration. **The Quiz Exam is a designated assignment that requires formal supporting documentation if the exam is missed. Final Exams scheduled by the Registrar's Office always require documentation if missed. Thus, students cannot use an undocumented absence for either exam.**

Because this is an essay course, as per Senate Regulations, you must pass the essay component to pass the course. **That is, the average mark for your written assignments must be at least 50%.**

This course is exempt from the Senate requirement that students receive assessment of their work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade at least three full days before the date of the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty.

The Psychology Department follows Western's grading guidelines:  
[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/general/grades\\_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/grades_undergrad.pdf)

The expectation for course grades within the Psychology Department is that they will be distributed around the following averages:

|     |                                  |
|-----|----------------------------------|
| 70% | 1000-level to 2099-level courses |
| 72% | 2100-2999-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.

### ***Policy on Grade Rounding***

Please note that although course grades within the Psychology Department are rounded to

the nearest whole number, no further grade rounding will be done. No additional assignments will be offered to enhance a final grade; nor will requests to change a grade because it is needed for a future program be considered.

## 6 Assessment/Evaluation Schedule

### *Quiz Exam*

There will be a **60 minute** quiz exam on **February 11 2027 at 9:30 am**.

### *Thought Papers*

Due dates for thought papers will be determined for each student at the start of the course (within first 2 weeks). **Thought papers must be uploaded to the course website by 12 noon on these due dates. These deadlines follow the new flexible assessment format with an added grace period of 48h (see implications for consideration and missing course work above).**

### *Presentations*

Presentation **dates will be determined for each student at the start of the course** (within first 2 weeks).

### *Final Exam*

There will be a **3 hour in-class final exam** in the **final-exam period** that will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office.

## 7 Class Schedule

| Date            | Topic                                         | Assigned Readings  | Student Presentations |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Jan 07</b>   | General course introduction                   | --                 | No                    |
| <b>Jan 14</b>   | Historical overview                           | Textbook Ch. 1     | No                    |
| <b>Jan 21</b>   | Memory and the brain: Basics                  | Textbook Ch. 2     | No                    |
| <b>Jan 28</b>   | Working memory                                | Textbook Ch. 3     | Yes                   |
| <b>Feb 04</b>   | Learning                                      | Textbook Ch. 4, 13 | Yes                   |
| <b>Feb 11</b>   | Quiz Exam followed by: Semantic memory        | Textbook Ch. 5     | No                    |
| <b>Feb 18</b>   | <i>Reading week -- no class</i>               | --                 | No                    |
| <b>Feb 25</b>   | Episodic memory                               | Textbook Ch. 4     | Yes                   |
| <b>March 04</b> | Amnesia and related memory disorders          | Textbook Ch. 10    | Yes                   |
| <b>March 11</b> | Autobiographical memory                       | Textbook Ch. 6     | Yes                   |
| <b>March 18</b> | Memory and emotion                            | TBA                | Yes                   |
| <b>March 25</b> | False memory                                  | Textbook Ch. 7, 12 | Yes                   |
| <b>April 01</b> | Memory and AI: Cognitive Offloading           | TBA                | Yes                   |
| <b>April 08</b> | Lecture leftovers; Final set of presentations | --                 | Yes                   |

## 8 Academic Integrity

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

Possible penalties for a scholastic offence include failure of the assignment/exam, failure of the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

### ***Statement on Use of Electronic Devices***

Use of laptops is allowed only for accessing course material and for taking notes during classes. No other electronic devices are allowed. No electronic devices are allowed during in-class exams.

### ***Plagiarism Detection Software***

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western and Turnitin.com.

### ***Use of AI***

Responsible use of AI is allowed in Psychology. This includes using AI for brainstorming, improving grammar, or doing preliminary/background research on a topic.

AI is **not** to be used in place of critical thinking.

The misuse of AI undermines the academic values of this course. Relying on AI to create full drafts or fabricate sources is prohibited. You are ultimately responsible for any work submitted, so it is highly advised that you critically review any Generative AI output before incorporating this information into your assignments.

If you use AI, you must clearly explain its role in your work. All written assignments will require an AI Usage Statement, in which you will indicate what tools you have used, what you have used them for, and (broadly) how you have modified this information. Assignments without an AI Usage Statement will not be accepted.

Violations of this policy will be handled according to Western's scholastic offense policies.



## 9 Academic Accommodations and Accessible Education

View Western's policy on academic accommodations for student with disabilities at this [link](#).

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: [aeu@uwo.ca](mailto:aeu@uwo.ca) Phone: 519 661-2147

## 10 Absence & Academic Consideration

Academic Considerations:

[https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic\\_considerations/index.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html)

## 11 Other Information

- Office of the Registrar: <https://registrar.uwo.ca>
- Student Development Services: [www.sdc.uwo.ca](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca)
- Psychology Undergraduate Program:  
<https://www.psychology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/index.html>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness@Western <https://www.uwo.ca/health/> 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.

If you wish to appeal a grade, please read the policy documentation at:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf). 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](mailto: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.