

EPSY 4801: Cognitive Foundations for Education
UGA@Gwinnett
Fall 2006

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Class Meetings: Mondays, 8:00-10:45 P.M.
Gwinnett University Center, Building A, Room 1200

Required Text: Brunning, R. H., Schraw, G. J., Norby, M.M., & Ronning, R. R. (2004). *Cognitive Psychology and Instruction*. (4th. ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Course Description:

In this course, according to the UGA bulletin, “cognitive psychology principles are applied to instructional methods. Processes such as attention, organization, intelligence, memory, language, concept formation, critical thinking, and problem solving are examined. Cognitive theories and models are applied to the instruction and learning of content areas and skills.” In other words, you will be learning about how people think and learn and how this impacts those in the education fields.

Some general knowledge of psychology, education, and the scientific method will be very helpful for your performance in the course, although it is not necessary for success. Whatever your background, if you have any problems learning the material please do not hesitate to contact me.

Course Format:

There is a considerable amount of reading associated with this course, on which you will be tested. In addition to the reading, I will ask you to reflect on the readings through discussions, activities, and writing assignments. Hopefully, this will allow you to connect what you have experienced with what we are reading and discussing in class. During each class meeting, one or more students will give a presentation on a topic, I will go more in-depth into the topic, and we will have small and whole class discussions and activities.

Since we only meet fifteen times, you are expected to attend each class meeting. If for some reason you must be absent during one of our class meetings, please contact me by e-mail to explain your situation.

Grading System:

Your semester grade will be an arithmetical average of your scores on the following equally weighted assignments:

Presentations (100 points)

Journal Entries (100 points)
Midterm Exam (100 points)
Final Exam (100 points)

Presentations (50 points each, total 100 points): On the first day of class, you will sign up to give two presentations on two of the topics we will cover, for a possible 50 points each. Your 10-15 minute presentations should include a verbal summary of the assigned textbook pages and at least two examples of how this information can be applied to your specialization (e.g., teaching, counseling, research, etc.) or any other area of your life. You may use PowerPoint, overhead transparencies, or any other media to deliver your presentations. In addition, you must prepare a written summary of your presentation to be given to the class (this can be a bulleted list of talking points, or if PowerPoint is used, this can be the slides in outline form). This summary must be e-mailed to me at least 24 hours before class begins so I can make copies. See the presentation handout for more details.

Journal Entries (100 points): You will write 5 journal entries worth 20 points each for a total of 100 points. These journal entries will be due at the beginning of class meetings (see schedule). They may be handed to me as a hard copy or e-mailed to me as a Word document attachment. Please write a minimum of 2 double-spaced pages, maximum of 5 pages. They may be handwritten if I can easily read your writing! I have posted a “prompt” for each of your journal entries on WebCT. In addition to answering the prompt, please write about one or two things that have really struck you in your reading or class discussion. For example, if you have children or younger siblings, or if you have teaching experience, you may have seen some of the principles of cognition at work. This is a time to make connections, share your stories, and make the study of cognition real to you. You may wish to write about how you disagree with the text, me, or your classmates on something we discussed. A good 20-point journal entry answers the prompt, makes connections to personal events, and shows that you have thought about the topic in some meaningful way. Journals turned in late will be docked 2 points per day late.

Midterm and Final Exams (100 points each): These exams will consist of multiple choice and essay questions covering the reading and class lecture. You will be expected to know the course material, understand its implications, and apply it to real-life scenarios. They will be given in class on **October 16** and at our regularly scheduled final exam time on **December 8**. The midterm exam will cover the material in the first half of the semester and the final exam will cover the last half (i.e., it will not be comprehensive). Once the midterm exam is graded, I will bring it to class for your review. You will not be able to take it out of the classroom. Similarly, you may make an appointment to review your final exam after it is graded but you may not keep it or make a copy of it.

WebCT:

This course has a companion WebCT site. The site includes on-line versions of the syllabus, journal prompts, extra resources, and presentation handouts. If you are having trouble logging onto the site, please see me *immediately*. It is your responsibility to

check the WebCT page frequently. This is my primary means of communicating with the class outside of our class meetings. Your WebCT e-mail can be forwarded to your regular e-mail account if you wish; see me for instructions on how to do this. The URL for WebCT courses at UGA is <http://webct.uga.edu>. If you have never used WebCT before, you can get started by going to: <http://www.student.uga.edu/webct/started.html>.

General Classroom Policies:

The midterm and final can only be made up under the most dire and extreme circumstances (i.e., documented medical or family emergencies). Students wishing to make up a midterm or final must see me as soon as possible to discuss the circumstances of the emergency. If your appeal to make up an exam is denied, you will receive zero points for that exam.

All members of the class are expected to treat each other in a respectful, civil manner. Students who exhibit behaviors that I consider disruptive to the class or its learning activities will be treated according to the Board of Regents Policy on Disruptive Behavior. Making and receiving phone calls during class will be considered disruptive behavior and will be treated according to the standards above. If circumstances beyond your control require that you be available to receive a phone call or page during class (e.g., your child is ill), please notify me *before class*. When the call or page comes in, please leave the room discreetly to answer it. You will not be penalized for such calls or pages.

Students with Disabilities:

The University of Georgia seeks to provide students with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in its educational programs and services. In keeping with this philosophy, it is University policy that students with documented disabilities receive reasonable accommodation by way of access to classroom information and assessment of their knowledge. Please see <http://www.dissvcs.uga.edu/> for more information.

Academic Honesty:

All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. For more information, please see http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/academic_honesty.htm.

This course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note that not all chapters in the text will be covered in this course. Please read the chapter on or before the date assigned.

August 21	Why Think About Thinking? (Introduction to Cognitive Psychology)
August 28	The Human Computer (The Memory Model) <i>Reading: Chapter 2</i>
September 11	Do We Ever Forget? (Long-Term Memory) <i>Reading: Chapter 3</i>
September 18	Getting the Information In (Encoding) <i>Reading: Chapter 4</i> Journal 1 Due
September 25	Getting the Information Out Again (Retrieval) <i>Reading: Chapter 5</i>
October 2	“I Think I Can!” (Beliefs about Self) <i>Reading: Chapter 6</i> Journal 2 Due
October 9	“I Was Just Born Smart!”(Beliefs about Intelligence and Knowledge) <i>Reading: Chapter 7</i>
October 16	MIDTERM EXAM (Chs. 1-7)
October 23	Building Future Einsteins (Problem Solving and Critical Thinking) <i>Reading: Chapter 8</i>
October 30	Of Mice and Media (Technological Contexts) <i>Reading: Chapter 10</i> Journal 3 Due
November 6	Hooked on More Than Just Phonics (Learning to Read) <i>Reading: Chapter 11</i>

- November 13** Beyond the ABC's (Reading to Learn)
Reading: Chapter 12
- November 20** "O Captain, My Captain" (Writing)
Reading: Chapter 13
Journal 4 Due
- November 27** Was Barbie Right? (Mathematics)
Reading: Chapter 14
- December 6** What a Little Green Slime Can Do (Science)
Reading: Chapter 15
Journal 5 Due
- December 8** **FINAL EXAM 7:00-10:00 PM (Chs. 8-15)**