

Cognition  
V89.0029, Spring 2011  
Tuesday, Thursday, 2:00-3:15,  
Meyer 121

Prof. Bob Rehder  
Office: Rm. 858, Meyer  
Phone: 212-992-9586  
Email: [bob.rehder@nyu.edu](mailto:bob.rehder@nyu.edu)  
Office hrs: Wednesday, 12-2PM

## Course Description

This course is a survey of cognitive psychology, the scientific study of the human mind and human thinking. During the course of the semester we will discuss many different aspects of cognition: perception, attention, memory, language, concepts, reasoning, problem solving, expertise, creativity, and decision making. The emphasis in the course will be on how psychologists have used experiments to help construct theories of how the human mind works and how human thinking occurs.

## Textbook

Medin, D.L., Ross, B.H., & Markman, A.B. (2004). *Cognitive Psychology* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition).  
Orlando, FL: Harcourt College Publishers.

## Teaching Assistants

Lisa Fiorenzo  
[lmf347@nyu.edu](mailto:lmf347@nyu.edu)  
Office Hrs.:  
Fri. 10-12  
Meyer 161H

Elyse Helaine Norton  
[ehn222@nyu.edu](mailto:ehn222@nyu.edu)  
Office Hrs.:  
Wed. 3-5  
Meyer 161H

Hang Zhang  
[hang.zhang@nyu.edu](mailto:hang.zhang@nyu.edu)  
Office Hrs:  
Tues. 9-11  
Meyer 275

## Lectures

Class lectures will be done in Powerpoint. The lecture notes will be available on Blackboard (see below) no later than 9AM of the day of the lecture (frequently they will be available the evening before). Many students like to bring the printed Powerpoint lectures to class and then supplement them with own notes. Feel free to do this if you wish.

The course is unfortunately too large to allow much class discussion. However, please ask questions when something is unclear – others are probably having the same problem you are. The lectures are given assuming you have done the reading for that day's class, and you will benefit most from them when you come prepared. Please make sure mobile phones are turned off in the lectures.

Note that although much of what I will cover during class will be on the Powerpoint lecture notes, you are also responsible for what I *say* during lecture that is not on those notes! In other words, what I say in class might appear on the exams. Thus: come to class!

## Blackboard

Associated with this course is a *Blackboard* course management web site. All registered students should already have access to this web site.

First logon to [home.nyu.edu](http://home.nyu.edu). Then, on your home page, click on the *Academics* tab. Underneath the Classes section there should be a button for "Cognition."

Once in the Cognition website you have several options:

Announcements:	<i>See any new announcements for the class I post.</i>
Course Information:	<i>Overview, meeting times, syllabus, etc.</i>
Staff Information:	<i>Information about your instructor and TAs.</i>
Course Documents:	<i>Each week's lecture notes.</i>
Communication:	<i>How to send email to me or other students.</i>
Student tools:	<i>How to check your grades, etc.</i>

The course syllabus may be updated as the semester proceeds.

## Requirements and Grading

Grades will be based on three midterm exams. Exams will be based on material in the assigned textbook chapters *and* in lecture. Note that there is material in the book that I won't cover in the main lecture, and material in the lecture that is not in the book. You are responsible for both.

Exams are graded "on a curve," and the modal grade will be a B. In most semesters the distribution of grades is approximately: 22.5% A's, 45% B's, 22.5% C's, and 10% D's and F's.

Exams are non-cumulative, and are weighed equally. The third and final midterm will be held at the time of the final exam.

## Recitations

Recitation sessions will give you a chance to participate in more discussion. Most sessions will consist of three parts: (a) material in the book not covered in the main lecture; (b) material that is not in the book, (c) review of selected parts of the main lecture, and (d) answering of student questions. New material presented in the recitation sessions may appear on exams. Therefore, attendance is required. Note that to maximize the usefulness of the recitation sessions, **YOU MUST COME PREPARED TO ASK QUESTIONS.**

Lisa's Recitations:	Monday 12:30 - 1:45, Silver 621 [Section 7] Tuesday. 3:30 - 4:45, Silver 407 [Section 2]
Hang's Recitations:	Monday 12:30 - 1:45, 48CS 121 [Section 5]

Elyse's Recitations:           Monday 2:00 - 3:15, Silver 500 [Section 6]  
  Tuesday 8:00 - 9:15, Silver 515 [Section 4]  
  Thursday 3:30 - 4:45, Bobst LL151 [Section 3]

Recitation sessions will start next week.

### **Research Participation Requirement**

This course includes a research participation requirement, consisting of either participating in 2 hours of experimental studies in the Psychology Department or writing a paper . (More about this in our next class meeting.) Relevant documents can be found at <http://www.psych.nyu.edu/research/required.html>.

### **Semester Schedule**

*(Warning: This schedule is tentative and may be updated during the course of the semester.)*

<b>Jan. 25:</b>	<b>Chapter 1, Introduction</b>
<b>Jan. 27 &amp; Feb. 1:</b>	<b>Chapter 5, Memory: Remembering New Information</b>
<b>Feb. 3 &amp; 8:</b>	<b>Chapter 6, Memory: Memory Systems and Knowledge</b>
<b>Feb. 10 &amp; 15:</b>	<b>Chapter 7, Memory: Remembering New Information, Beyond Basics</b>
<b>Feb. 17 &amp; 22:</b>	<b>Chapter 8, Imagery, Visual Memory, and Spatial Knowledge</b>
<b>Feb. 24:</b>	<b>FIRST MIDTERM</b>
<b>Mar. 1 &amp; 3:</b>	<b>Chapter 2, Learning</b>
<b>Mar. 8 &amp; 10:</b>	<b>Chapter 4, Attention</b>
	<i>Spring Break</i>
<b>Mar. 22 &amp; 24 &amp; 29 :</b>	<b>Chapter 9, Language</b>
<b>Mar. 31 &amp; Apr. 5:</b>	<b>Chapter 10, Concepts and Categories</b>
<b>Apr. 7:</b>	<b>SECOND MIDTERM</b>
<b>Apr. 12 &amp; 14:</b>	<b>Chapter 11, Reasoning</b>
<b>Apr. 19 &amp; 21:</b>	<b>Chapter 12, Problem Solving</b>
<b>Apr. 26 &amp; 28:</b>	<b>Chapter 13, Expertise and Creativity</b>
<b>May 3 &amp; 5:</b>	<b>Chapter 14, Judgment and Decision Making</b>