

**Faculty of Health  
Department of Psychology  
PSYC 4270 Section A  
SEMINAR IN MEMORY AND COGNITION  
Fall 2016**

**Tuesdays: 11:30am - 2:30pm  
Sherman Health Science Research Centre: Rm. 1015**

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**Instructor Information**

Instructor: W. Dale Stevens, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: By appointment

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**Course Perquisites: 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 3260 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 website:** [Moodle](#)

**Course Description**

This course will survey a variety of topics in the area of human memory and its relationship with other cognitive processes, such as perception, conceptual processes, and executive function, 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 with memory disturbances, 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 and engage in active discussion during class, with a particular focus on ongoing debates in the field regarding a number of topics.

## 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 of 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 the 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 Schedule of Readings)

## Course Requirements and Assessment

(See detailed description of each component below under Course Evaluation)

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Date of Evaluation</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Class Participation	Weekly	20%
Thought Papers (×4)*	Submit before classes (5 max.)	20%
Presentation	TBD	20%
Term Paper Outline*	October 18, 2016	10%
Term Paper*	November 29, 2016	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 11, 2016.**

## **Description of Assignments**

### **Class Participation:**

A large proportion of each class will be devoted to class discussion. Therefore, an evaluation of each student's participation makes up a considerable proportion of the overall grade for the course. Participation includes showing up on time and being prepared for every class, having read the assigned readings, and engaging in discussion. 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 4 "thought papers" based on the assigned readings at the beginning of class (excluding the first and tenth 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; 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 serve as a stimulus for class discussion. Finally, you may not submit a thought paper on the same topic as your presentation or term paper.

Thought papers should be 1 (minimum) to 2 (maximum) pages long (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins all around), not including the title page and references (at least 1 reference must be included). 4 thought papers are required, but you may submit up to 5 (only 1 per class), and the best 4 will be counted towards your final grade. Thought papers are due at the beginning of each class in which the relevant paper(s) was/were assigned, and will not be accepted late.

### **Presentation:**

Each student will serve as a discussion leader and be responsible for presenting a seminar on one of the assigned topics. This will involve extracting the important issues of 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 their 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 an additional article or two 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 description 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 20 minutes, with another 5-10 minutes for class discussion 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. 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 study, and a methods section (participants, materials, procedures, proposed analyses, and hypothesized 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 (if included), and references. The paper must be written in APA format (see Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association). There will be a penalty for late submissions of 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 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 (e.g., 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 York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar: [calendars.students.yorku.ca/2016-2017/academic-and-financial-information/academic-services/grades-and-grading-schemes](http://calendars.students.yorku.ca/2016-2017/academic-and-financial-information/academic-services/grades-and-grading-schemes) )

## Missed Classes 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://registrar.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 list of all important dates please refer to: [Important Dates](#)

Important dates	Fall (F)	Year (Y)	Winter (W)
Last date to add a course <b>without</b> permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 21	Sept. 21	Jan. 18
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 5	Oct. 19	Feb. 1
Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 11	Feb. 10	March 10
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a "W" on the transcript – see note below)	Nov. 12 - Dec. 5	Feb. 11 - Apr. 5	March 11 - Apr. 5

## Electronic Device Policy

Absolutely no use of personal electronic devices (e.g., texting, email, social media) during class is permitted. Laptops may only be used for legitimate class related activities (e.g., taking notes). Violations of these rules will result in a loss of participation marks

## 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 is mandatory. To receive full participation marks, a student must:

1. Arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class.
2. Participate in class discussion.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the assigned readings.

## Academic Integrity for Students

York university takes academic integrity very seriously, please visit [an overview of Academic Integrity at York University](#) from the Office of the Vice-President Academic.

The following links will assist you in gaining a better understanding of academic integrity and point you to resources at York that can help you improve your writing and research skills:

- [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#)
- [Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity](#)
- [Information for Students on Text-Matching Software: Turnitin.com](#)
- [Beware! Says who? A pamphlet on how to avoid plagiarism](#)
- [Resources for students to help improve their writing and research skill](#)

**NOTE:** Students must complete the [Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity](#), repeat if necessary until a perfect score is achieved, and provide a copy of the results to the Course Instructor.

### **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:** 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](#)

### **Additional Resources:**

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

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

<http://www.yorku.ca/laps/writ/centre/>

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

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.

### **Course Materials Copyright Information:**

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC 4270 3.0A 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](#)

## COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE:	TOPIC:	ASSIGNMENT:
September 13, 2016	Course Overview	None
September 20, 2016	Approaches & Methods in Memory & Cognition Research	Thought Paper: Topic #1
September 27, 2016	Object Concepts & Semantic Memory	Thought Paper: Topic #2
October 4, 2016	Neurocognitive Specialization & Plasticity <b>*TERM PAPER TUTORIAL*</b>	Thought Paper: Topic #3
October 11, 2016	Implicit Memory	Thought Paper: Topic #4
October 18, 2016	Priming & Repetition Suppression	<b>*TERM PAPER OUTLINE DUE*</b> Thought Paper: Topic #5
October 25, 2016	Encoding & Perception	Thought Paper: Topic #6
November 1, 2016	Retrieval & Distortions	Thought Paper: Topic #7
November 8, 2016	Time & Space: Prospection & Spatial Cognition	Thought Paper: Topic #8
November 15, 2016	Cognitive Neuroscience Lab Tour	Tour of MRI, TMS, & VR labs!
November 22, 2016	Executive Function & Working Memory	Thought Paper: Topic #9
November 29, 2016	Neurocognitive Aging	Thought Paper: Topic #10 <b>*TERM PAPER DUE*</b>