

Psychology 2320

Cognition and Perception: Thinking and Seeing

[Dr. Scott Allen](#)
[Department of Psychology](#) ¹
University of Lethbridge

Section A Fall 2012
(Tues. Thurs. 1:40-2:55, PE275)

Objective

The objective of the course is to familiarize you with the two related areas of perceptual and cognitive psychology. Although the main emphasis will be on theoretical aspects of these areas, there will be some discussion of practical aspects of perception and cognition and the relation of perceptual and cognitive psychology to other areas of psychology, including evolutionary and social psychology. Topics to be covered include: visual perception, mental imagery, categorization, short and long term memory, false memories, unaware uses of memory, social perception, and social reasoning.

Textbook

There is no textbook for this course. All readings are available on [Moodle](#).² They consist of a series of articles, many of them “classics” of the discipline, taken from both the professional literature and magazines such as *Scientific American*.

Structure of the course

The course will proceed in roughly the order of the readings in Moodle. The reading for a given lecture will define the core material of the lecture and the “launching point” for discussion of subsequent and related material. Emphasis will be on, first, developing a clear understanding of the readings, and, second, on integrating this understanding with both related material and the broader themes of the course. In no case should the perspective of the authors of the readings necessarily be taken as the “correct” answer on some issue. As with most areas of human endeavour, many of the readings are important or “classics” not because they were or are “right”, but because they identified an important area or phenomenon or because they were so thoroughly wrong that they promoted a flurry of research into what the correct approach should be.

¹ If you’ve printed a paper copy of this document (and thus lost all the links), it is available by logging into [Moodle](#) <<https://moodle.uleth.ca/>> and entering this course.

² To log into Moodle use your uleth username (the part of your email address that precedes “@uleth.ca” and your email password.

Evaluation

Your grade in this course will be based on a midterm exam (worth 50%) and a final exam (worth 50%). Each exam will be computer administered via [Moodle](#). It will be up to you to go to the Testing Centre some time within the allotted period to take the tests (information on the testing centre is available from the top menu of Moodle or [here](#)). The tests will not be administered during class periods. The tests will contain multiple guess questions and may contain short answer questions. The dates during which you will be allowed to write the tests are as follows (These times may change due to the availability of the computer lab for the tests):

Midterm Test: October 23 - 29 (no class October 23)

Final Test: December 10 - 18

No excuses for missed tests will be accepted other than documented, prolonged illness. Make-up tests will not normally be provided.

Grading:

Your final letter grade will be calculated as follows (of course, if you're precisely on the border you will receive the higher grade) there will be no rounding of grades to the next category (i.e., 79.9 is less than 80 so is a B+, not an A-):

% Grade	% Grade	% Grade	% Grade
90 - 100 A+	77 - 80 B+	67 - 70 C+	55 - 60 D+
85 - 90 A	73 - 77 B	63 - 67 C	50 - 55 D
80 - 85 A-	70 - 73 B-	60 - 63 C-	0 - 50 F

Students with Special Needs:

If you are a [student with disabilities](#) and wish help with your classes, you may receive help by contacting the [Disabilities Resource Centre](#).

Experimental Research Participation:

This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to participate in active research programs of faculty members. This participation allows you to get direct experience in how many of the experiments and studies you will read and hear about are actually done, and provides an opportunity for you to see what goes on in the labs, and meet senior undergraduate and graduate students conducting their own laboratory research projects. Calls for volunteers to assist in these projects will be made during the semester, via e-mail. If you are asked to volunteer, and you accept, each project usually requires one hour or less of your time, but this will depend on the individual research project. In recognition of your time, and in recognition that you are learning something about the discipline of psychology beyond what you

would in the normal classroom environment, an extra credit of 1% for each study in which you participate will be added to your total grade to a maximum of 5% (so, it is theoretically possible to score 105%). Note that there is no guarantee that all students will be able to achieve the maximum extra credit. As these are extra credits, students who choose not to participate are not disadvantaged.

The available studies will be listed on the system at <http://psychleth.sona-systems.com>. Your username will be the same one you use to access Moodle. A password will be emailed to you (i.e., it *won't* be your email password). The system should be available starting around September 18th and the deadline for participating in studies is December 4th.

Contacting me

The most effective way of reaching me outside of class is by email at allens@uleth.ca. There is also a [class, email discussion list](#) that you may use to raise questions and discussion with me and your fellow students and that I will use for class announcements; I encourage you to use it.

Welcome to the course. I hope you will have a fruitful and enjoyable semester -S.A.