

PSY453 Cognitive Psychology Laboratory
Course Syllabus
Summer 2008

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Course Overview: PY 453 is designed to give you hands-on experience in scientific thinking, reasoning, and experimentation in the area of cognitive psychology. You will run and participate in classic experiments in human cognition, critically evaluate these experiments, discuss their implications, as well as construct and run your own experiment. In addition, you will analyze and evaluate the data you collect, plus write up the results in the same fashion that a research psychologist would (according to APA guidelines). The course will therefore give you experience in completing the various tasks faced by a modern research scientist in cognitive psychology.

Course Objectives: Toward the general goal of learning about and experiencing the types of tasks faced by cognitive psychologists, the course has three primary objectives:

1. To become familiar with specific research procedures and findings in cognitive psychology, as well as give you a feel for the way knowledge has progressed and accumulated in the field. To achieve this, you will participate in, analyze, and discuss the results of experiments that parallel or replicate classic cognitive psychology experiments published in professional journals.
2. To improve your understanding of scientific methods and experimental research, as well as reinforce your knowledge of key methodological issues (such as correlation vs. causation, independent vs. dependent variables, control variables, confounding factors, variability, statistical power, etc.). These issues are not only important for research in cognitive psychology, but are important in all scientific endeavors.
3. To provide practice in how to report experimental results using the standard structure of research articles in psychology, following the format of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition*. To accomplish this, you will read and evaluate a published journal article, write individual sections of an APA paper, then write a full APA-style paper based on an experiment that *you* design, run, and analyze.

Course Prerequisites: The course requires that you have taken *PSY 250 Research Methods*—it is assumed that you have some background knowledge in experimental psychology, research methodology, and APA-style writing. In addition, you must have taken or be enrolled in *PSY 452 Cognitive Psychology*. PSY 452 and PSY 453 are independent courses and need not be taken at the same time, but the two courses have been designed to complement one another.

Course Material: All of the material that you will need for the course will be available on RamCT in pdf file format. The *APA Publication Manual* is not required, but is recommended if you do not already own a copy, especially if you plan to go to graduate school in psychology.

Evaluation: There will be no quizzes or exams in PSY 453. You will be evaluated based on several projects that you complete throughout the semester. There will be six semester projects worth 20 points each (i.e., 10% each) and drafts of your final paper (graded in all or none fashion) worth another 20 points (10%). Your final paper and presentation will be worth the remaining 60 points (30%). In all, you will complete six short papers (typically 1-3 pages), three drafts for your final paper, and one final paper (typically 7-10 pages). A straight scale will be used (90%=A, 80%=B, 70%=C, etc.).

Late Assignments: In the event that you turn in an assignment late, 10% will be deducted from your point total for each *calendar day* that it is late. Assignments not turned in (or 10+ days late) will be given a zero.

Attendance: Attendance is expected because the course centers on hands-on projects, in-class experiments, and group discussion. *You will not have an opportunity to make up work that was conducted in class. If you have an unexcused absence for the class in which an in-class experiment was conducted, you will not be allowed to turn in a paper on that topic, and will get a zero on the paper.* If you absolutely must miss a class and you know about it in advance, notify the instructor ahead of time and we'll try to work something out in the form of an alternative assignment. If you unexpectedly miss class (due to illness, a family emergency, etc.), you will be allowed to complete a make-up assignment *only* if you have a written excuse from a doctor or the Dean's office *and* you contact the instructor immediately (i.e., the same or next day).

Classroom Etiquette: As stated in the CSU undergraduate catalog, "any person or persons in unauthorized attendance or causing a disturbance during scheduled academic activity shall be identified by the instructor and asked to leave. Persons refusing such a request may be removed by the University police and are liable to legal prosecution and/or disciplinary action." As part of classroom etiquette, remember to turn off your beepers and cell phones.

Academic Integrity: As taken from the CSU undergraduate catalog, "the foundation of a university is truth and knowledge, each of which relies in a fundamental manner upon academic integrity and is diminished significantly by academic dishonesty. *Academic integrity is conceptualized as doing and taking credit for one's own work.* A pervasive attitude promoting academic integrity enhances the sense of community and adds value to the educational process. All within the University are responsible for and affected by the cooperative commitment to academic integrity. Academic dishonesty undermines the educational experience at Colorado State University, lowers morale by engendering a skeptical attitude about the quality of education, and negatively affects the relationship between students and instructors. Instructors are expected to use reasonably practical means of preventing and detecting academic dishonesty. *Any student found responsible for having engaged in academic dishonesty [e.g., cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized possess or disposition of academic materials, falsification] will be subject to academic penalty and/or University disciplinary action.*"

Academic Integrity (continued): In short, do your own work! In this course, copying from a another person, passing off someone else's words as your own by failing to appropriately cite them, or cheating of any sort will result in an *automatic zero* for the assignment, is grounds for an F in the entire course, and will be reported to the University. Note that it is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism. See the APA Style document (Plagiarism Section) on RamCT for an overview of this.

Correspondence: Don't hesitate to contact your instructor (Vanessa Loaiza) or the course coordinator (Ed DeLosh) if you have questions at any time or need help. You can stop by during our office hours or set up an appointment. You may use the phone number or e-mail address given at the top of this syllabus to do this.