

# Cognition

## PSYC 135

Fall 2025 Section 02 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/13/2025

### Contact Information

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<b>Instructor</b>	Mike Dillinger, PhD
<b>Email</b>	mike.dillinger@sjsu.edu [best way to contact me]
<b>Office:</b>	DMH 230
<b>Drop-in Hours</b>	MW 12:30-1:15, or by appointment
<b>Class Days/Time</b>	MW 3:00-4:15
<b>Classroom</b>	Clark 111

### Course Description and Requisites

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The activity of knowing: acquisition, organization and use of knowledge. Processes involved in that activity, including perception, memory, thinking and language.

Prerequisite: PSYC 001.

Letter Graded

### Classroom Protocols

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This is an in-person course.

Each week, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 PM - 4:15 PM, we will meet for in-person class sessions. During these sessions, we will engage in lecture material and content-related discussions, presentations, and activities.

We need to work together to foster an inclusive learning environment in which people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives are recognized, respected, and seen as a source of strength. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity with regard to gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions on how I can make this course more equitable and inclusive to all forms of diversity are encouraged and appreciated.

All students are expected to exhibit professionalism and respect for each other and the instructor. Specifically, this means arriving to class on time, being prepared for class, participating in discussions, being civil to your fellow classmates and instructor, and paying attention to in-class demonstrations and lectures. If you arrive late to class or need to leave early from class, please sit near the door so as not to disturb the rest of the class. Please silence and put away cell phones during class. If I see that you are using your cell phone during lecture, I will ask you to put it away. Repeated violations of the cell phone policy may result in further disciplinary action. You may record lectures only if you obtain my permission first, and such recordings are only to be used for personal study and may not be posted online.

### **Academic Integrity**

SJSU does not tolerate any forms of academic dishonesty in my courses. We all take issues of academic dishonesty very seriously and pursue disciplinary action rigorously, so please take extra care to avoid this sort of unpleasant situation. Any instances of cheating on exams results in an automatic 0 for the exam. Plagiarized assignments automatically receive a score of 0. Plagiarism refers to using materials that you did not create (i.e., published works, work of other students, material created by artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT) and submitting it as your own creation without proper citation/attribution. When in doubt, remember this rule: All assignments in this course must be your own work and you must properly cite any resources that were used. Written assignments will be checked by TurnItIn and may be submitted to AI detection tools, as well. I reserve the right to fail a student in the course if the academic dishonesty transgression is particularly severe. All instances of academic dishonesty are reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development (SCED). Students may appeal any accusations of cheating or plagiarism to SCED.

### **AI Policy**

All text or code submitted in this course must be your own. Contributions from anyone or anything else – including AI sources, must be properly cited every time they are used. Failure to do so constitutes an academic integrity violation, and I will follow our institution’s policy to the letter in those instances. You may use AI programs like ChatGPT or Gemini to help search for sources, generate outlines, and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs is often inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that using them to generate text and arguments is likely to stifle your own independent thinking and creativity. You may not submit any written text generated by an AI program as your own. If you use material generated by an AI program, it must be verified, re-written, and cited like any other reference material.

**Program learning outcomes (PLOs)** are skills and knowledge that students will have achieved upon completion of the Psychology BA degree. Each course in our curriculum contributes to one or more of these PLOs. The PLOs for the Psychology BA degree are:

1. Knowledge Base of Psychology. Students will be able to demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.
  2. Research Methods in Psychology. Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.
  3. Critical Thinking Skills. Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.
  4. Applications of Psychology. Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.
- Values in Psychology. Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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CLO1: Demonstrate knowledge of the different components of cognition, including perception, attention, memory, language, and decision making

CLO2: Identify the cognitive mechanisms that underlie behavior

CLO3: Describe different research methods used in cognitive psychology research

CLO4: Infer appropriate conclusions from cognitive psychology research

CLO5: Communicate findings and implications from cognitive psychology research

CLO6: Synthesize evidence in favor of arguments pertaining to debates in cognitive psychology

CLO7: Evaluate and criticize arguments pertaining to issues in cognitive psychology

CLO8: Articulate how concepts in cognitive psychology apply to their everyday lives

CLO9: Respect the relative nature of empirical evidence

CLO10: Recognize the value of intellectual curiosity and skepticism

## Course Materials

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All Materials will be on Canvas, except for the Textbook:

Goldstein, E. B. (2019). **Cognitive Psychology**. [5th Edition]

It is available at the bookstore. You might also consider getting a used copy of the 4th edition if you want a lower-priced alternative.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

Group Presentations		Points	
	Presentation Outline & sources submitted on time	5	Plan for a 10-min presentation. Submit an outline for 10-15 content slides. Include 4 or 5 bullets per slide and at least 10 sources total.
	Full draft of presentation submitted on time	5	Draft a complete version with all slides and an extra slide for sources.
	Presentation	5	Present your slides in 10 min and answer questions about your topic.
	Teamwork rating	5	Collaborate with your group mates as much as possible.
	total:	20 pts	
<b>Individual Projects</b>			
	Project Outline & sources submitted on time	5	Submit a paragraph-level outline and a list of peer-reviewed sources for each section. Include at least 20 bullets in the outline and 20 sources total.
	Full draft of project submitted on time	10	Write an 8-page (at minimum 2,000 words long) individual paper summarizing the research about a specific cognitive process (across domains) or about a specific domain (across cognitive processes). Include at least 15 references, prioritizing books, book chapters, theses, or review articles.
	Report of project	10	The paper is due on the last day of instruction by 11:59 PM and must be submitted on Canvas where it will be plagiarism-checked by TurnItIn.
	Teamwork rating	5	Collaborate with your classmates on understanding, revising, and bibliographical research but write individually.
	total:	30 pts	

<b>Summaries</b>			
	Chapter Summaries (11 * 2 pts)	22	Write a 1-page summary of the most important points for 11 of the 13 assigned chapters, in the order the modules are discussed -- due before the class in which we will discuss it.
	Presentation Summaries (9 * 2 pts)	18	Write a 1-page summary of the most important points presented in each of the group presentations.
		total: 40 pts	
<b>Final Exam</b>		10	Questions covering the whole semester. Requires a Blue Book for written answers.
		total points: 100	

## ✓ Grading Information

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Standard SJSU grading applies to this course:

Grade : Percentage

- A+ 96.50 – 100%
- A 92.50 – 96.49%
- A- 89.50 – 92.49%
- B+ 86.50 – 89.49%
- B 82.50 – 86.59%
- B- 79.50 – 82.49%
- C+ 76.50 - 79.49%
- C 72.50 – 76.49%
- C- 69.50 – 72.49%
- D+ 66.50 – 69.49%
- D- 59.50 – 62.49%
- F ≤59.49%

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

## Course Schedule

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Day	Date	Summaries Due before Class	Class Topic	Other Assignments Due
Wednesday	Aug 20		Overview: What is Cognition?	
Monday	Aug 25	Chapter 1: Introduction to Cognition	Cognition vs Memory vs Behavior	
Wednesday	Aug 27		Overview: Group Presentations & Individual Projects	
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Sept 1</b>		<b>Holiday -- No class</b>	
Wednesday	Sept 3		Work on Presentations: Outline & Sources	
Monday	Sept 8	Chapter 3: Perception	Sensation: Which characteristics can we sense directly?	
Wednesday	Sept 10		Work on Presentations: How to present	
Monday	Sept 15		Perception	
Wednesday	Sept 17		Work on Presentations	
Monday	Sept 22	Chapter 10: Visual Imagery	Perception without Stimuli: Dreaming & Imagining	

Wednesday	Sept 24		Work on Presentations	Presentations: Outline & Sources due for all
Monday	Sept 29	Chapter 4: Attention	Attention	
Wednesday	Oct 1		Work on Projects	Group 1: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Oct 6	Chapter 11: Language	Language Comprehension	
Wednesday	Oct 8		Presentation Group 1: Acquiring information about Self	Group 2: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Oct 13	Chapter 5: Short-term and Working Memory	Working Memory: Immediate processing	
Wednesday	Oct 15		Presentation Group 2: Acquiring information about Others	Group 3: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Oct 20	Chapter 9: Knowledge	Concept formation: Identification & Conceptualization	
Wednesday	Oct 22		Presentation Group 3: Acquiring information about other things	Group 4: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Oct 27	Chapter 13: Judgement, Decisions, and Reasoning	Reasoning: Decision Making, Logic & Problem Solving, Creativity	

Wednesday	Oct 29		Presentation Group 4: Combining information about Self	Individual Projects: Outline & Sources due; Group 5: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Nov 3	Chapter 12: Problem Solving & Creativity	Becoming an Expert	
Wednesday	Nov 5		Presentation Group 5: Combining information about Others	Individual Projects: Paragraph-level outline due; Group 6: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Nov 10	Chapter 8: Everyday memory	Language Guides thought	
Wednesday	Nov 12		Presentation Group 6: Combining information about other things	Group 7: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Nov 17	Chapter 6: Long-term Memory, part 1	Kinds of Memory: experiences, procedures, facts	
Wednesday	Nov 19		Presentation Group 7: Store/Retrieve information about Self	Individual Projects: Full draft due; Group 8: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Nov 24	Chapter 7: Long-term Memory, part 2	Memory for Language	



Wednesday	Nov 26		Presentation Group 8: Store/Retrieve information about Others	Group 9: Full presentation slides due
Monday	Dec 1		Cognitive Skill Stacks: Experience vs Expertise	
Wednesday	Dec 3		Presentation Group 9: Store/Retrieve information about other things	
Monday	Dec 8		Recap & Synthesis	Individual Projects: Final version due
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Friday, Dec 12</b>	<b>3:15-5:15</b>		