

**PSYC 205**  
**INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE COGNITION**  
**FALL 2014**

**Course Details**

Instructor: Prof. Mary C. Olmstead  
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TA: Amanda Hammons  
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Lectures: Tuesdays, 8:30-10:00  
Location: BioSci 1102

**Calendar Description**

The evolution and function of cognition across species, ranging from invertebrates to humans. Topics include perception, attention, associate mechanisms, categorization, decision making and memory. Each will be examined from a comparative and biological perspective. Laboratory exercises complement topics to be covered in the lectures.

**Course Objectives**

This course provides an introduction to the field of comparative cognition. It begins with an historical view of the field, emphasizing the synergy of different disciplines, both in terms of theoretical foundations and methodological tools. The lectures, reading material and laboratory exercises all emphasize the same principles. These include an understanding of:

- how evolution has shaped cognition.
- how species comparisons can inform discussions of both the function and mechanisms of cognition.
- how experimental techniques, both in the field and in the lab, are used to examine cognitive processes.

## **Moodle**

All of the course material including required readings and laboratory exercises are posted on the course web site. Access to this site is restricted to students who are registered in this course. All communication related to this course, including grades for lab assignments and in-class tests, will be posted on the course web site. Please check this regularly throughout the term. In addition, course announcements are sent through Queen's email addresses so it is important to access this account on a regular basis throughout the term.

## **Readings and Lectures**

There is no formal textbook for this course. The reading material for each lecture is loaded on Moodle under the topic 'course notes'. Students are required to read these notes on their own. Lectures will NOT repeated this material in its entirety, but will be devoted to explaining difficult concepts from the course notes and providing supplementary information related to the course readings. The most effective way to learn the course material is to read each chapter BEFORE the lecture. If you have any questions about the material, email the instructor at: [olmstead@queensu.ca](mailto:olmstead@queensu.ca). Put 'Psyc205 question' in the subject line of the email but do not expect a personal response to these questions. Questions submitted at least 24 hours prior to the lecture will be addressed during the next class.

## **Laboratory Sessions**

Laboratory sessions are an integral part of PSYC 205. Students are required to attend all scheduled lab sessions and to complete each assignment as specified in the lab manual. The lab instructors will explain the requirements and marking scheme for each assignment during the first lab session.

## **Evaluation**

### **In-Class Tests (45%)**

There will be 4 in-class tests, each worth 11% of your final mark. If you write all 4 tests, you will receive a bonus 1%. These tests will consist of 10 multiple choice questions and 10 short answers (worth 2-3 marks each). All of the test questions will be based on the course notes and related lectures (i.e. not the labs). The material covered on each test is non-cumulative. Thus, test 1 covers material from weeks 1-2; test 2 from weeks 4-5; test 3 from weeks 7-8; and test 4 from weeks 10-11. Each test will take 45 minutes and must be written during class time. The dates for these tests are listed in the class schedule below. **THERE ARE NO RE-WRITES FOR THE IN-CLASS TESTS.** If a student misses a test and provides written documentation for their absence (e.g. medical note, death certificate), the remaining tests will be recalculated to constitute 44% of their final mark.

Students who miss two or more in-class tests are required to write the final exam.

**OR**

**Final Exam (45%)**

The 3-hour final exam, scheduled during the exam period, will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions (2-3 marks each), covering material from the entire course. Any student who has missed two or more in-class tests must write the final exam and this mark will constitute 45% of their final grade. The exam is optional for students who have written at least 3 in-class tests. For these students, their mark will be calculated in two ways: 45% from in-class tests and 45% from the final exam. Whichever mark is higher (the final exam or the combined in-class tests) will constitute 45% of their final mark. In other words, opting to write the final exam may increase, but will not decrease, your class mark.

Students who are unable to write the final exam during the December exam period due to a serious, extenuating circumstance (with the supporting documentation required as outlined above) must be available to write a deferred exam during the Psychology Department's *Make up Exam period* January 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

Please see the following webpage under "Exam Absence" for additional information: <http://www.queensu.ca/psychology/Undergraduate/psychdepartmentalpolices.html>

**Laboratory Sessions (55% of final mark)**

Lab #1:	2.5%
Lab #2:	15%
Lab #3:	2.5%
Lab #4:	6%
Lab #5:	8%
Lab #6:	11%
Presentation	5%
Effort/Participation:	5%

The details for the mark breakdown for each lab are provided in the lab manual.

**Request for Academic Accommodation**

Students who require academic accommodation for the in-class tests should contact the TA, Amanda Hammons, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so that these can be arranged for the entire semester. Students who require academic accommodation for the final exam should consult Queen's Disability Service to arrange this process: <http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/ds/students/accommodations.htm>.

## **Academic integrity**

Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see <http://www.academicintegrity.org>). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities at <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senateandtrustees/principlespriorities.html>).

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see Academic Regulation 1 <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academic-calendars/2012-2013-calendar/academic-regulations/regulation-1>), on the Arts and Science website (see <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academics/undergraduate/academic-integrity>), and from the instructor of this course. Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

## **Copyright of Course Material**

All of the course material is for the sole use of students registered in PSYC 205. This material shall not be distributed or disseminated to anyone other than students registered in this course. Failure to abide by these conditions is a breach of copyright, and may also constitute a breach of academic integrity under the University Senate's Academic Integrity Policy Statement.

## **Grading Method**

All components of this course will receive letter grades which, for purposes of calculating your course average, will be translated into numerical equivalents using the Faculty of Arts and Science approved scale:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Numerical Course Average (Range)</b>
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	57-59
D	53-56
D-	50-52
F	49 and below

## **Lecture Schedule**

Sept. 9 <sup>th</sup>	Chapter 1: History of Comparative Cognition
Sept. 16 <sup>th</sup>	Chapter 2: Sensory Systems
Sept. 23 <sup>rd</sup>	TEST 1
Sept. 30 <sup>th</sup>	Chapter 3: Memory
Oct. 7 <sup>th</sup>	Chapter 4: Associative Processes
Oct. 14 <sup>th</sup>	TEST 2
Oct. 21 <sup>st</sup>	Chapter 5: Orientation and Navigation
Oct. 28 <sup>th</sup>	Chapter 6: Timing and Counting
Nov. 4 <sup>th</sup>	TEST 3
Nov. 11 <sup>th</sup>	Chapter 7: Choice and Decision Making
Nov. 18 <sup>th</sup>	Chapter 9: Categorization and Concept Formation
Nov. 25 <sup>th</sup>	TEST 4
Exam Period	FINAL EXAM