



Course Syllabus: PSY409-1 Fall 2018  
**Psychology of Cognition and Learning**  
Point Loma Nazarene University  
Department of Psychology

**Course Information**

Monday Evenings: 4:30-8:00 pm

Semester Units: 4

Classroom: Taylor Hall, Room 314

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Stephanie Salo, PsyD, *Adjunct Professor of Psychology*

Office: Culbertson Hall (*office hours by appointment only*)

Phone: (858) 247-2566

E-mail: ssalo@pointloma.edu

---

**PLNU Mission: To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

As described in the Catalog, this course is: "A study of the major theories and empirical findings in the fields of cognition and learning, as well as practical applications to human behavior. Laboratory activities may be included. Prerequisite(s): PSY 103 and PSY 390 or consent of instructor."

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Gluck, M.A.; Mercado, E.; Myers, C.E. (2016). *Learning and Memory: From Brain to Behavior*. (Third Edition) New York: Worth Publishers.

Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course is designed to introduce you to the complex ways in which animals and humans use their brain, experiences, and memories to learn, which influences behavior and how they navigate in environments throughout their lifetime. You will learn about neuroscience and be able to identify brain structures involved in attention, learning and memory, and describe systems of encoding and recall. The section on cognition will help you understand how systems of thought are used for our benefit and disadvantage when applying to new or future events. Several related topics will be explored, including classical and operant conditioning, language, judgment, and decision-making. Examples of real life application should prove useful in your own life to emphasize how to think, learn, recall, and engage in sophisticated thoughts and behaviors.

## COURSE DESIGN

A combination of lecture, group discussion, and hands-on experiences will be used, and you will be evaluated based on your engagement, knowledge, and ability to apply the material to real-world problems and situations. Lectures will highlight selected topics from the required readings as well as to supplement this material with more recent developments in the field. **Students are responsible for all assigned readings, whether or not discussed in class.** Class discussions are intended to clarify concepts and apply topics to life concerns and enhance learning. Readings will come from the textbook, *Learning and Memory*, assigned text *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, and additional articles, if applicable.

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assignment distribution by percentage:	Grading scale:	
• Quizzes/reflections/project.....25%	A = 93-100	C = 73-76
• Attendance/Participation.....15%	A- = 90-92	C- = 70-72
• Exam #1.....15%	B+= 87-89	D+= 67-69
• Exam #2.....15%	B = 83-86	D = 63-66
• Exam #3.....15%	B- = 80-82	D- = 60-62
• Final Exam.....15%	C+= 77-79	F = 0-59

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

### A. Unit Exams (60%)

There will be 3 examinations plus the Final. The final exam will be cumulative.

### B. Weekly Attendance, Reflections, Quizzes, Character Analysis, Participation (40%)

In each non-exam week there will be a written reflection or quiz at the beginning of class, which also serves as a record of attendance (additional points). For your benefit, for the benefit of your classmates and group discussions, and for enjoyment of the course, please come to class! *There will also be an individual project, and opportunity for extra points for in-class activities (TBD).*

### C. Canvas for Turning in Assignments and Reflections

There will be homework assignments and reflections that may require you to submit reflections or responses using Canvas. If you have any questions about how to use Canvas, please use the Canvas Guides that you can find here: <https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides>

### D. Absences/Attendance

It will be difficult to succeed in this course if you do not attend class. If you must miss class, you will not be able to make up the attendance points. If you miss turning in an assignment or are unable to take a quiz due to extreme sickness or "excused" absence, it is your responsibility to contact me **before class** to alert me of your absence, and to arrange how you can make-up this quiz or turn in the assignment. **Your quiz or reflection must be completed/submitted within 5 working days (i.e., due the following Monday).** No credit will be given for quizzes or assignments after 5 days; no exceptions.

## PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY AND REPORTING

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If you are absent for more than 10% of class meetings the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. (*That would be **after your second unexcused absence in this class.***) If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date,

or after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See Academic Policies in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

### ***What is an "Unexcused" Absence?***

1. "There are no allowed or excused absences except when absences are necessitated by certain University-sponsored activities and are approved in writing by the Provost" (Catalog).
2. In addition, I will excuse (legitimate) illness only with MD note. No exceptions please.
3. Routine Medical and Dental appointments ARE NOT excused absences.

Please notify me prior to the start of class you will miss, preferably by email to notify me of an absence (unexcused or excused) that explains the general nature your absence.

### **PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY**

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

### **PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when, in reality, they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

### **FINAL EXAM POLICY**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the Class Schedules site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

### **OFFICE HOURS**

I want you to succeed in this class! If you have any questions about lecture, readings, or discussions, please do not hesitate to contact me or to schedule an appointment with me. Feel free to talk with me before or after class, during a break, or to call or email me to arrange a time to meet. You may also email me with your available times and telephone number.

**Cell phone:** (858) 247-2566 (no calls between 9pm and 7am please)

**E-mail:** [ssalo@pointloma.edu](mailto:ssalo@pointloma.edu)

### **ELECTRONIC INTERFERENCE**

Because this is a course on learning, memory, and cognition, I would be remiss if I did not discourage practices that will likely interfere with your ability to learn in this class. Based on several research studies, the use of electronics in class, such as laptops and phones, have been demonstrated to impair attention, learning, and retention, and can also distract others around you. Hand-writing notes improves synthesis of information (complex learning), and increases long-term memory retention and recall, and can improve your grade by half of a letter grade. Therefore, I request that you do not use laptops or phones during lecture and group discussion time. If you feel you need to use a laptop, please talk with me about your need for an exception.

## **PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY**

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by email at [DRC@pointloma.edu](mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu). I will coordinate with the DRC regarding your specific accommodations.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS**

*Note: This syllabus is not a contract. The Professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus to accomplish the learning objectives of the course.*

### **Week 1: Tuesday, August 28, 2018**

Lecture: *Introduction/Overview of the Course*

*"The Psychology of Learning and Memory" and "Learning and Memory Across the Life Span"*

**Holiday: Monday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>—No Class!**

**Assignment:** Read Textbook Chapters 1 and 12

### **Week 2: Monday, September 10th**

**Assignment due before this class:** Textbook Chapters 3 and 4

**Quiz #1** (on Lecture and reading assignments thru Ch 4)

Lecture: Learning

*"Habituation, Sensitization, and Familiarization" and "Classical Conditioning"*

### **Week 3: Monday, September 17th** (KOM class visit)

**Assignment due before this class:** Textbook Chapter 5

**Quiz/Reflection #2**

Lecture: Learning

*"Operant Conditioning"*

### **Week 4: Monday, September 24th**

**Assignment due before this class:** Textbook Chapter 6

**Quiz/Reflection #3**

Lecture: Learning

*"Generalization, Discrimination Learning, and Concept Formation"*

Review of Learning Concepts

### **Week 5: Monday, October 1st**

**Exam I (covers Weeks 1-4)**

[Dinner Break]

Lecture: The Brain and Neuropsychology, Part 1

*"The Neuroscience of Learning and Memory"*

### **Week 6: Monday, October 8th**

**Assignment due before this class:** Textbook Chapters 2 and 7

**Quiz/Reflection #4**

Lecture: The Brain and Neuropsychology, Part 2

*"Injury and Dysfunction"*

Lecture: Introduction of Memory

*"Episodic and Semantic Memory: Memory for Facts and Events"*

**Week 7: Monday, October 15th**

**Assignment due before this class:** Textbook Chapter 8

***Quiz/Reflection #5***

Lecture: Memory

*"Skill Memory: Learning by Doing"*

**Week 8: Monday, October 22nd**

**Assignment due before this class:** Textbook Chapter 9

***Quiz/Reflection #6***

Lecture: Memory

*"Working Memory and Cognitive Control"*

Review of Memory Concepts for Exam 2

**Week 9: Monday, October 29th**

***Exam 2 (covers Weeks 5-8)***

[Dinner Break]

Lecture: Introduction to Cognition: Influences on Learning

**Week 10: Monday, November 5th**

**Assignment due before this class:** Textbook Chapter 10

***Quiz/Reflection #7***

Lecture: Cognition

*"Emotional Influences on Learning and Memory"*

**Week 11: Monday, November 12th**

**Assignment due before this class:** Textbook Chapter 11, Text Kahneman pp. 19-128

***Quiz/Reflection #8 and Project Presentations***

Lecture: Cognition

*"Social Learning and Memory"*

**Week 12: Monday, November 19th**

**Assignment due before this class:** Text Kahneman pp. 129-254

***Quiz #9 and Project Presentations***

Lecture: Cognition

*"Systems of Thought" and "Heuristics and Biases"*

**Week 13: Monday, November 26th**

**Assignment due before this class:** Text Kahneman pp. 255-407

***Quiz #10***

Lecture: Cognition

*"Overconfidence" and "Choices"*

Review of Cognition Concepts for Exam 3

**Week 14: Monday, December 3rd**

***Exam 3 (covers Weeks 9-13)***

Final Review

**Week 15: Monday, December 10th at 7:30pm** (\*\*barring conflicts or need to move it earlier\*\*)

Final Exam! Cumulative reflection of the entire course.