FALL 2023 | PSY 316 | RSJ 101 | Tu/Th 9-10:15 AM | 3 CREDITS HOURS/9 WORKING HOURS

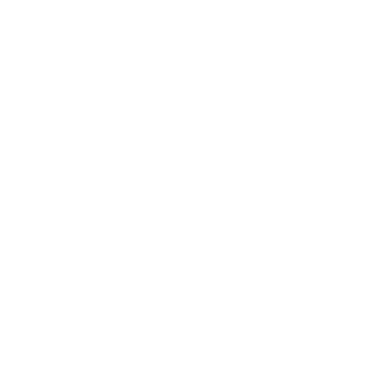
# COURSE DESCRIPTION

Foundations of Cognitive Psychology (PSY 316) is a course designed to introduce you to basic principles of cognitive psychology. This course is the foundation for knowledge you will need to pursue further education or careers in cognitive psychology or cognitive neuroscience. Have you ever wondered if what we perceive is real? How we focus our attention and learn new things? How does creativity work and can I become more creative? Do all people perceive things the same? How do I hack my memory to study more effectively? We will explore the answer to these questions and so much more. We will cover topics such as attention, learning, the best study strategies, perception, sensation, creativity, reasoning and decision making, thinking processes and more!

Cognitive Psychology

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ABOUT ME:



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| --- |
| headshot picture of Dr. AvilaProfessor:  **Dr. Brittany Avila**  **“Dr. Avila, Dr. A., or**  **Dr. B.”**  **Pronouns: she/her** |
| [brittanyavila@unr.edu](mailto:brittanyavila@unr.edu)  @drbrittanyavila (Twitter, IG, TikTok)  Website: [www.brittanyavilateach.com](http://www.brittanyavilateach.com) (tons of free resources for students!)  Office: EMM 405 |
| CoffeeCoffee Hour: Meet me @ Starbucks @ the Joe Thursday’s 2:30 – 3:30 PM, drop by my office, or [schedule a time to chat with me](https://calendly.com/brittanyavila/coffee-conversation)! |
| Internet [Join the Class Group Me](https://groupme.com/join_group/69582877/5zVzUaf7) |
|  |

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, I am hopeful and confident that you will be able to:

* Demonstrate and understanding of the historical, current, and future directions of cognitive psychology.
* Recognize concepts, theories, and key figures from cognitive psychology.
* Demonstrate an understanding of research methods in cognitive psychology and critically evaluate research in this area.
* Apply principles of cognitive psychology to educational, personal, and other life situations.
* [**Work related skills**](https://www.apa.org/education-career/guide/transferable-skills.pdf) **to put on your resume**: communication skills (written and oral), teamwork, creativity, analytical/critical thinking, adaptability, self-management, problem solving, organization, and computer skills (whichever platforms you use for class and projects).

Diagram

Description automatically generatedMATERIALS

You will be reading two books for this course. *Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School*. By John Medina and *Make it Stick* by Peter C. Brown, Henry L. Roediger III, and Mark A. McDaniel. **All readings will be posted on Perusall and WebCampus for free access**! Make It Stick is also available in audiobook from Libby (Washoe County Library) and both are available on Audible for a fee. Both will also be on reserve in the library if you would like to read the physical copy.

**\*Note: This syllabus brought to you by Taylor Swift’s *Midnights* and decaf coffee (I don’t drink caffeine, I know how do I function?!)**

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Class Values

# Class Values

No instructor is neutral in what they value in their classroom, the students they meet, and themselves. However, we often hide these values from you, such that if you wanted to know what I value, you would need to play a guessing game.

Core Values

| **Curiosity** | **Community** | **Creativity** | **Kindness** | **Transparency** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Curiosity is the single most important piece of learning. I strive to increase your curiosity throughout the semester by engaging you in the material | Any class (specifically an online class) cannot foster learning as deeply without a sense of community. We are one community in this class | Creativity is the driver of the future. I strive to help you foster your creativity by allowing choice, freedom to interpret, and curiosity. | We are one community. That means we must treat one another with respect, kindness, and compassion at all times. | I will be completely transparent in how I design my class, why we are doing certain activities, and how I grade. If you need transparency in any other form, I’m here! |

IDEO Core Values

Core Values

IDEO is one of the world’s most influential design and consulting firms (working on things like the iPhone and Apple Mouse), pioneering the process of design thinking. “We wrote this to give you a sense of IDEO’s culture-the ties that bind us together as coworkers and as people. These are the values that get us there.”

* Be Optimistic
* Collaborate
* Embrace Ambiguity
* Talk Less, Do More (though we’ll talk a lot in this class 😊)
* Learn from Failure
* Make Others Successful
* Take Ownership

Advice from Past Students

**Course Work/Planning**

“Do your work early”

“Stay on top of assignments”

“Write down all the assignments in a planner so you don’t forget”

“Just because you don’t have tests, pay attention, because you will learn useful information”

**Attendance**

“Attend every class”

**Participation**

“My advice would be to have fun and participate because the material is interesting”

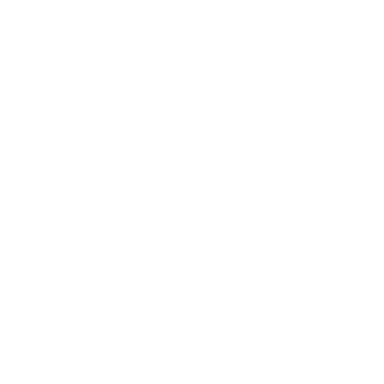
“ENGAGE in class”

“Pay attention in class and ask questions”

Expectations

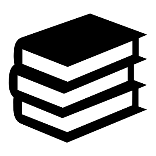
“Know that Dr. A expects a lot from you and you will need to go beyond what you would normally do, but it’s worth it.”

COURSE REQUIREMENTS



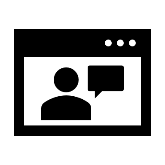
READINGS

Each week you will be directed to Perusall to annotate the weeks reading with the rest of the class. Working weeks do not have a Perusall reading but do include reading you select for your projects.



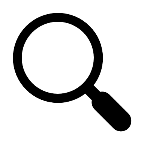
LECTURE/EXIT TICKETS

At the end of each lecture period there will be an exit ticket where you reflect on what you’ve learned and what you’re confused about so that we (me and the TA’s) can be sure to help you. **These are NOT attendance meaning you can miss quite a few and still receive an A in the course.**



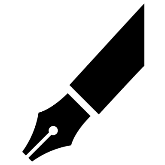
REFLECTIONS

Each week you’ll have a chance to reflect on what you’re learning. These reflections will include a mix of open-ended questions and quiz style multiple choice questions. The goal of weekly reflections is to use critical thinking/analysis (hence reflection) in order to process and analyze what you are learning into a larger context.



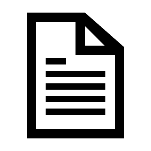
STUDY SESSION SUMMARIES

Several weeks throughout the semester we will hold in-class study sessions where you study for exams/projects you have in other courses. We will use the study techniques we learn from reading and course lectures in these sessions. Following the sessions you’ll write a reflection to apply the course concepts to your learning/studying.



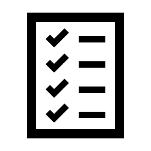
TEAM PROJECT

You will work with a team to create a project to help work toward solving a problem within the world that you are interested in (i.e., climate change, poverty/income gap, fixing education/higher education, changing eyewitness testimony, pandemic responses, etc…). You will work as a team to design a way to present to a chosen audience about ways to tackle the problem.



LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

Throughout the semester, you’ll have several chances to check in on how you’re learning in the course, give me a chance to see what I can do to help you, and check in with your grade in the course.



Read

TEAM PROJECT

# Group brainstorm with solid fillTeam Project

One of the amazing things about psychology is that it transcends other disciplines, life experiences, and major problems facing the world. Principles in psychology can be seen and used in a variety of contexts. Cognitive psychology is no different. The way we think, process information, learn, and interact with our world is guided by cognitive psychology principles.

Therefore, in this course, I want you to explore how what you are learning about cognitive psychology can be applied to the wider world and more specifically to something in the world that matters to you specifically. You will choose a real world problem (i.e., climate change, education, marketing, capitalism, human rights, the law, sports, COVID-19, etc…) that matters to you. Throughout the semester you will apply cognitive psychology principles to this problem to see how cognition plays an important role in the formation of the problem and the solution to the problem.

# person climbing mountain to indicate steps or stageslStages

This project will be completed in 4 different stages including:

1. **Proposal**. A summary of your topic, audience, and presentation method.
2. **First Draft.** A first attempt at your project (does NOT need to be complete, just started), along with the cognitive psych concepts used.
3. **Peer Review.** In class we will quickly present and discuss your project with other groups for feedback.
4. **Final Draft.**
5. **Presentation.** A 5 minute presentation including the completed project and a description of cognitive psych concepts.

\*\***More detailed instructions, guidelines, and grading rubrics of each of these stages of the writing process will be provided on Canvas and discusses in class.**

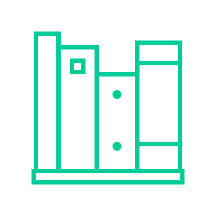
# Team Project Deadlines

| **Stage** | **Due Date/Time** |
| --- | --- |
| Proposal | Sunday September 17th |
| First Draft | Sunday October 29th |
| Peer Review | Sunday November 12th |
| Final Draft | Sunday December 3rd |
| Presentation | December 14th 8:00 – 10:00 AM |

\**All deadlines at 11:59 PM*

Study Session Summaries

# Study Session Summaries

Cognitive psychology provides the perfect content to change your study habits! Cognitive psychology studies things like memory, problem solving, decision making, attention, intelligence, creativity, and so on. All topics that are related to studying. In this course we will link course concepts to studying throughout the semester. You will also be reading a book “Make it Stick” that discussed cognitive psychology research related to studying and memory.

But reading about it isn’t enough! It’s hard to implement new habits, especially for college students with very limited time, energy, and attention due to all of your demands. Therefore, in this course, we will take class time to utilize the study methods you are reading and learning about in this course.

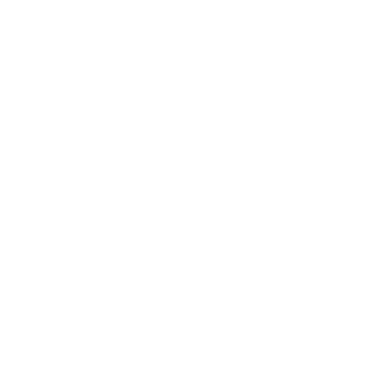
During our first week of class we will plan out our schedule based on everyone’s exam schedules. To the best we can, we will add working weeks into the course the week prior to your exams. Then we will use the study methods learned in the course to study for all of your exams.

Following these study sessions, you will write a summary of each method you used, how well it worked/didn’t work for you, how you did on your exams, what you could have done differently, and other general thoughts. More information will be provided on Canvas at the time the summaries are due , and in class.

# Study Session Summary Due Dates

| **Stage** | **Due Date/Time** |
| --- | --- |
| Summary 1 | Sunday September 24th |
| Summary 2 | Sunday October 22nd |
| Summary 3 | Sunday November 19th |

\**All deadlines at 11:59 PM*



# GRADING POLICY

**Research in cognitive psychology, education, developmental psychology, and Industrial/Organizational Psychology has recently begun to show the negative effects of extrinsic motivators (namely, grades).** When we use an extrinsic motivator (grades) to help us measure a process (learning), it undervalues and even can get rid of intrinsic motivators (curiosity, the desire to learn). Reducing intrinsic motivation leads to decreased motivation, negative perceptions of learning and school, and a focus on the extrinsic motivator (grades) in lieu of the actual task (learning). I’m sure you’ve felt this lack of motivation toward learning, drive only toward your grade and not toward learning, or some other negative effect related to grading policies (namely, anxiety).

Due to this research, there will be limited grades throughout this course, and you will assess yourself with a portfolio of your assignments, learning evaluations, and effort in this class at both the middle and end of the semester in which a grade will be determined by both you and I in collaboration. This may produce anxiety for some of you, but I encourage you to have an open mind, as there might be less anxiety than you anticipate. I am always available to meet to discuss your progress and current grade for the course when needed or wanted.

### 0/1 Format

To help you see your progress in Canvas, we will utilize a 0-1 format for grades. A 0 indicates that you either (1) haven’t turned in an assignment, or (2) it is not yet ready to be accepted as graded. If you receive this second type of 0, extensive feedback will be given for how to improve the assignment and resubmit to receive a 1 grade. A 1 grade demonstrates an assignment has been turned in and accepted.

### Letter Grades

Since we still have to have grades at the end of the semester, here is how I will calculate overall grades. Grades for each type of assignment are weighted per the pyramid below. For you to receive full credit, an A grade, all work from each type of assignment must be (1) complete and (2) of high quality to be considered complete. If an assignment is not high enough quality, you will receive feedback on how to improve and will be allowed to resubmit with edits to achieve the complete grade.



# LATE POLICY

Deadlines in this course are there to help you develop time management skills. Most students report wanting to work on time management, but have difficulty doing so on their own. Therefore, **readings are due on Sunday nights** to ensure you read through all course material. All other project related assignments are due on varying Sunday’s with multiple components to scaffold the assignment so that you break it down into smaller chunks, a very important time management skill.

Now I know that each of you in this course has a different set of outside demands on your life (work, social life, kids, parents, caregiving responsibilities, mental downtime, relaxation (do please try to take these last two when you can), and that’s not even mentioning the fact that we’re going through a global Pandemic and so many other things! So, with all of

that in mind, note that my

deadlines are more for pacing your work throughout the week and less about strict adherence to that deadline. With that being said, here is my standard late policy:

**Any assignment may be turned in within 24 hours with no penalty.** This means if you cannot submit the assignment by midnight on Sunday because you work at that time, your computer froze, or whatever other reason is likely to come up, no worries, either submit it earlier (wow, you can do that!) or submit by Monday at midnight with no points taken off. Anything after 24 hours will be reduced by 20% up until the final day of the course. *This means you can turn anything in late for partial credit all the way until the final day of the semester*. *I also allow re-do’s on all assignments.* The only time there is no late work accepted is for the first draft assignments on both projects as that would hold up the peer review process. If you need an extension beyond the 24 hours, [please fill out this notification of extension form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdMEiILrHRXN5pVTMajf9pE5f3mTQ6pNSgdid0vAKtIEJs-ow/viewform?usp=sf_link).

**IMPORTANT:** This class is not, and should not be, your main priority. There is still a global pandemic, civic unrest in this country, not to mention normal everyday things that you experience as both human and college student. I am happy to grant extensions when needed and to work with you through anything you need in this course.

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OTHER POLICIES & RESOURCES



The following describe various policies that will be enforced during the semester.

Class Participation

This class is designed as being in person. With that being said, I do not do straight lecture. There is too much research that shows how horrible this is (though funny enough research shows students do think it’s more effective). Therefore, class will mostly involve you actively participating in the learning process. Recently, student engagement and attendance has been at an all time low (I had 10 students regularly showing up for an 80 person class last semester). I know that with work, burnout, stress, and everything else, it is difficult to want to come to class and work. I will try my best to make class an engaging place where real learning happens so that you may be more motivated to attend.

My Expectations of You

1. Attend class more often than not
2. Turn in assignments on time, or close to on time
3. Try to learn something new even if it is a new skill and not necessarily course content
4. Read all the assignments (I know you hate reading, but seriously, college really is just one giant book club),
5. Reach out for help if you are struggling and need it. I am here to help you, it’s literally my job, so please let me know if you need anything.

Your Expectations of Me

1. I will respond to email quickly (24 hours during work days, 48 over weekend – self care is just as important for me as it is for you)
2. I will explain any assignment, question, concern at any time with full transparency of my reasoning
3. I will listen to you if something is not working for you and work to change it
4. Email or tweet me your favorite meme and get 1 pt extra credit!

Accommodations

I try to design each course so that everyone can succeed, however, sometimes success requires a different approach, a different deadline, or other ways to complete an assignment. I am more than willing to change structure of the course or assignments to be more beneficial to any student. If you need something, please let me know at any time. If you need something more, please see the DRC if you haven’t already and let me know what accommodations you require and how I can help you succeed. I am more than happy to accommodate with or without a DRC request.

"Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with the Disability Resource Center (Pennington Student Achievement Center, Suite 230; 775-784-6000) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations. “

Advising

In addition to teaching, I serve as an academic advisor in the Psychology Department. I highly recommend seeing an advisor if you need help with scheduling classes, direct learning, career options, graduate school applications, deciding whether or not to go to graduate school, understanding the university, and anything else academic and career related. You can see any advisor in the Psych Department

Call: 775-784-6828 to schedule an appointment

Email: psyhelp@unr.edu for quick questions

Technology

Canvas (WebCampus)

I will be putting all course materials (syllabus, schedule, PowerPoint lessons, grading rubrics, assignment instructions, readings, etc) on Canvas so that you will have access to them at any point. If you need help navigating Canvas (e.g., how to submit an assignment, use the discussion board, etc.), you can contact UNR Information Technology (see below).

Perusall

Perusall is an online software platform where you will be able to annotate the course readings. This means you can make comments, ask questions and discuss the reading with classmates. This will be used to help you generate more questions during your reading and engage in discussion about the readings with your classmates. Links will be provided in Canvas. You can find the link in the left-hand menu on Canvas titled “Perusall” **Perusall has a read aloud feature, a dark mode feature, and you can download and print any reading to ensure that it is accessible for all students.** If you find it not accessible for any reason, let me know immediately and I am happy to find another way for you to do the readings.

Communication

I will communicate with you through both email and Canvas Announcements. Be sure to check both your email and Canvas regularly for updates and communications. If you do not use your University email address regularly, please make sure to change your desired email address in MyNevada so that emails will be sent to the email address you use most frequently. Not receiving communication will not be an excuse for missing or late assignments.

Statement on Audio & Video Recording

"Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped, or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded."

Respect for Diversity

We are all come here with different life experiences, perspectives and viewpoints, which means we have a lot to learn from one another! It is my goal for this course to serve all students and student groups and that diversity can be viewed as a resource and strength. I intend to present materials with respect to diversity including gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race and culture. I welcome and encourage any suggestions or ideas on ways to improve the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. Further, respect should be given to all students during class. This course should be a place where ideas can be discussed in a safe and appropriate manner. That means guidelines for respectful discourse will be upheld. We will discuss and create these guidelines together during the first week of class.

Equal Opportunity & Title IX

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for all. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, whether on or off campus, or need information related to immigration concerns, please contact the University's Equal Opportunity & Title IX office at 775-784-1547. Resources and interim measures are available to assist you. For more information, please visit: https://www.unr.edu/equal-opportunity-title-ix .

Academic Success Services

You are already paying for these services so use them! "Your student fees cover usage of the University Math Center (775) 784-4433, University Tutoring Center (775) 784-6801, and University Writing Center (775) 784-6030. These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student."

@ One in the Library

Poster Printing

Lendable Technology

VR Equipment

Photography Equipment

Computers with Data Programs (SPSS, R) built in (though you have access to these and other Microsoft products for free for being a student)

4K Suite

https://library.unr.edu/atone

Other Cool things included in Tuition

E.L. Weigand Fitness Center

Student Health Center

Campus Escort Service

UNR Police Services

Center for Cultural Diversity

Veterans Services

Office of International Students

Legal Advice

Clubs and Organizations

See <https://www.unr.edu/student-services/enrollment-services/first-in-the-pack-program/campus-resources> for more info

So Much More…

I know there is more available to you than what I have listed. Tuition is expensive, and that doesn’t even begin to cover other expenses you incur as college students, many resources you pay for outside of these expenses might be free for you as a student. Please always double check with the UNR website or call and ask someone, including us advisors, if something out there can be free for you or useful to you before looking elsewhere.

Need Help with Technology

University Office of Information Technology (OIT) . Windows PCs, Mac’s and Laptops are available through

Phone: 775-682-500

Website: <https://oit.unr.edu>

the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center

Counseling Center

Although listed last, this may be one of the most important resources available on campus. The Counseling Center offers individual counseling, group counseling, mental health screening, and even a virtual relaxation room. You are paying for these services already in your tuition, so use them if you want/need to. Counseling doesn’t have to be when you are at your worst, you can use counseling to help plan and keep you on track.

You can even use counseling to help manage test anxiety. Visit the website for more information. <https://www.unr.edu/counseling>.

| **Week** | **Dates** | **Topics** | **Readings** | **Due Sun** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | **8/28-9/3** | Our course  Course Planning Session/Research Methods | Syllabus (12 pp)  BR: Intro (5 pp)  MIS: Preface (3 pp) | **Read 1; Reflect 1**  **Team Survey**  **ILP** |
| **2** | **9/4-9/10** | Cognitive Neuroscience | BR: Exercise (22 pp)  BR: Survival (19 pp) | **Read 2**  **Reflect 2** |
| **3** | **9/11-9/17** | **Working Week**  Introduction to Projects / Study | BR: Wiring (22 pp)  MIS: Learning is Misunderstood (22 pp) | **Read 3; Reflect 3**  **Team Project Proposal** |
| **4** | **9/18-9/24** | Sensation and Perception | BR: Attention (24 pp)  MIS: To Learn, Retrieve (23 pp) | **Read 4; Reflect 4**  **Study Session Summary 1** |
| **5** | **9/25-10/1** | Attention | BR: Short-term memory (25 pp)  MIS: Mix up your practice (21 pp) | **Read 5; Reflect 5** |
| **6** | **10/2-10/8** |  | BR: Long-term memory (26 pp)  MIS: Embrace Difficulty (35 pp) | **Read 6; Reflect 6**  **Learning Assessment 1** |
| **7** | **10/9-10/15** | **Working Week**  **Study / Team Project** | BR: Sleep (18 pp)  BR: Stress (26 pp) | **Read 7; Reflect 7** |
| **8** | **10/16-10/22** | Attention/ Memory | BR: Sensory Integration (23 pp) | **Read 8; Reflect 8**  **Study Session Summary 2** |
| **9** | **10/23-10/29** | Memory | Cognitive Development Noba (19pp) | **Read 9; Reflect 9;** |
| **10** | **10/30-11/5** | Stress / Problem Solving | MIS: Avoid illusions (29 pp) | **Read 10; Reflect 10** |
| **11** | **11/6-11/12** | **Working Week**  **Study / Project** | BR: Vision (18 pp) | **Read 11; Reflect 11; Team Project First Draft**  **Learning Assessment 2** |
| **12** | **11/13-11/19** | Reasoning and Decision Making / Intelligence | MIS: Learning Styles (31 pp) | **Read 12; Reflect 12**  **Study Session Summary 3** |
| **13** | **11/20-11/26** | **Thanksgiving Break**  **NO CLASS ALL WEEK!** | No new reading | **Nothing due, enjoy a break 😊** |
| **14** | **11/27-12/3** | **Working Week**  **Study / Project** | MIS: Increase your abilities (37 pp) | **Read 13; Reflect 13; Team Project Peer Review** |
| **15** | **12/4-12/10** | Creativity / Social Cognition | MIS: Make it Stick (53 pp) | **Read 14; Reflect 14;**  **Final Learn Assess.; Team Project Final Draft** |
| **16** | **12/14** | Final Meeting | Presentations | **8:00 – 10:00 AM** |

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

