



**PSYCHOLOGY 2135A (570)**  
**Cognitive Psychology**  
**Fall/Winter 2025-2026**

Instructor: Dr. Marcie Penner  
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### **Course Information**

#### **Calendar Description:**

An introduction to empirical, computational, and theoretical approaches to the study of human cognitive processes. The topics surveyed will include: perception, attention, memory, concepts, language and problem-solving. The course will show how these diverse psychological processes are related to and influence one another.

**Prerequisite(s):** A mark of at least 60% in 1.0 credits of Psychology at the 1000 level.

**Antirequisite(s):** [Psychology 2010A/B](#), [Psychology 2180E](#).

**Extra Information:** 4 lecture hours.

**Course Weight:** 0.50

**Breadth:** Category A

**Subject Code:** PSYCHOL

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Psychology 2135A (570): Introduction to Cognition  
King's University College at The University of Western Ontario  
Fall 2025-2026

**Calendar Description**

An introduction to empirical, computational, and theoretical approaches to the study of human cognitive processes. The topics surveyed will include perception, attention, memory, concepts, language and problem-solving. The course will show how these diverse psychological processes are related to and influence one another.

**Professor**

Dr. Marcie Penner (she/her)

*How to contact me:* **Email:** [mpennerw@uwo.ca](mailto:mpennerw@uwo.ca) (please include the course number in the subject line). I will try to respond within 2 business days (Monday to Friday, 9 am - 5 pm).

*Office hours:* Consult the course OWL site.

**Course Information**

*Class time:* Consult your schedule or the course OWL site.

*Location:* Consult your schedule or the course OWL site.

*Mode of instruction:* In-person

**Required Textbook**

- Reisberg, D. (2021). *Cognition: Exploring the science of the mind*, 8th ed. New York, NY: Norton.
  - The textbook is available in paperback or as an Ebook. The paperback version is available for \$176.45 from the [campus bookstore](#).
  - The textbook is also available for use in the King's library (FREE!).
  - Students are encouraged to use the 8th edition; older editions may not be sufficient.
- Additional readings are provided on the course OWL site.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Explain the challenges faced by cognitive scientists in the attempt to understand the human mind
- Describe the methods that cognitive scientists use to understand the mind
- Demonstrate knowledge of the vocabulary, research, theories, and concepts in cognitive science
- Think critically about the theories, methods, and findings in cognitive science
- Identify, and (it is hoped) avoid falling prey to, common myths about how the mind works
- Apply findings from cognitive science to better understand themselves and others
- Develop solutions to real-world problems by applying their knowledge of cognitive principles

### Course Evaluation

In-Class Activities (12)	10%
Midterm Test	35%
Final Exam (cumulative)	55%

In-Class Activities. The weekly in-class activities will take many forms (e.g., discussion groups, design projects, etc.). The activities are a chance for you to apply your course knowledge. To be successful, you will need to (1) prepare by doing the assigned readings and/or other homework, (2) attend class, and (3) engage in the activity in a collaborative manner. Each activity is worth 1%, to a maximum of 10% for the course. You may miss up to two in-class activities without penalty. *As such, requests for academic consideration for in-class activities will be denied by the course instructor.*

Midterm Test. The midterm test will occur in class on October 16th and will cover all readings, lectures, videos, and in-class activities to date. The format of the midterm test is primarily short answer with some longer-answer questions. *Academic consideration for the midterm test requires submission of formal supporting documentation to, and approval from, the Academic Advising Office.* For those students who receive academic consideration, the only make-up test will be offered during the Friday make-up session on October 24th.

Final Exam. The final exam will occur during the December examination period (consult the exam schedule for date/time/location). The final exam is cumulative and will cover all readings, lectures, videos, and in-class activities in the course. The format of the final exam is primarily short answer with some longer-answer questions.

### Academic Integrity and Intellectual Property Statement

- **All learning objectives in this course are to be met by the individual student, not outsourced to generative AI.** The use of generative AI in this course will be considered plagiarism, a scholastic offence, consistent with the departmental policy (attached).
- Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:  
[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf) (See also Appendix A below)
- Course content created by a professor is the professor's intellectual property; it may not be distributed, uploaded to generative AI, shared in any public domain, or sold by a student or other third party without prior written consent of the faculty member. Recording of lectures or in-class activities without the explicit consent of the professor is grounds for academic discipline.

### Tentative Schedule

Note: Changes to the lecture schedule will be announced on OWL.

	<b>Before Class</b>	<b>In Class</b>
Week	Read/Watch	Lecture/Activities
Week 1: September 4	Read: Chapter 1	Introduction to Cognitive Science Activity: Black Box
Week 2: September 11	Read: <i>Windows on the Brain and Mind</i> , sections 2.1-2.4 (Kolak et al., 2006)	Basics of Cognitive Experiments Activity: Design an experimental
Week 3: September 18	Read: <i>Windows on the Brain and Mind</i> , sections 2.5-2.6 (Kolak et al., 2006)	Cognitive Complexity & Bias Activity: How the mind fails
Week 4: September 25	Read: Chapter 2	Brains Activity: Mapping the cortex
Week 5: October 2	Read: Chapter 5	Attention 1 Activity: Begin public service announcement
Week 6: October 9	Read: Midterm Guide	Midterm Review Activity: Present public service announcement
Week 7: October 16	<b>MIDTERM TEST</b>	
Week 8: October 23	Read: Chapter 6	Memory Acquisition Activity: Begin study guide
Week 9: October 30	Read: Chapter 7	Memory Types Activity: Case studies
READING WEEK – No class on November 6 <sup>th</sup>		
Week 10: November 13	Read: Chapter 8	Memory Retrieval Activity: Present study guide
Week 11: November 20	Read: Chapter 9	Knowledge Activity: Begin Cog Sci for good
Week 12: November 27	Read: Chapter 12	Judgement & Reasoning Activity: Present Cog Sci for good
Week 13: December 4	Read: Final Guide	Applications of Cognitive Science Activity: User interface
Exam Period: Dec 11-22	<b>FINAL EXAM</b> (see exam schedule for date/time/location)	

Disclaimer: The schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to better ensure student learning. Students will be notified of changes on the OWL site for this course and are responsible for attending to such changes.

## Department of Psychology Policies Related to AI Tools

### 1. Policy on the Use of Generative AI Tools

**The Department of Psychology expects that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial).**

**The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted for any submitted coursework unless express permission has been granted by your instructor.**

Students **should not have AI tools write any part of their assignments or papers, either by copying and pasting or by paraphrasing the output.** Unauthorized use of AI constitutes an academic offence and will be subject to academic discipline.

**Additional information:** Students can use AI tools to clarify questions they have about course content (e.g., you can ask ChatGPT about a course concept to help with your understanding), but students should be aware that the response may be inaccurate or inconsistent with the course content. Asking your instructor is a more effective strategy. Students should note that information provided by AI tools such as ChatGPT can include mistakes, inaccuracies, biases, and outdated information. Whenever these tools are used, students should cross-verify the information provided to them. This means verifying that the sources used by AI exist and have been accurately summarized, consulting multiple original and reputable up-to-date sources to verify information, and being cautious of bias that could be present in the information provided.

### 2. Policy on Use of Translation Tools\*

**The Department of Psychology views the unapproved use of translation or language applications as an academic offence.**

Any usage of translation applications or language generation by students to complete specific assigned work for this course **must be approved** by the instructor **prior** to submitting the work **and noted by the student in the submitted work** itself.

Writing text and then feeding it into a computer application to improve or translate your own words, changing a few words, and then submitting this text as if it was your own **constitutes plagiarism.** You must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs to organize, synthesize, interpret information with your own mind. When you borrow language or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be acknowledged with quotation marks and/or citations.

#### **Why do we have this policy?**

- Translation is intellectual work and produces intellectual property, thus any text which is translated must cite the translator.
- Psychology endeavors to advance students' linguistic, analytic, and reasoning competencies – this can not happen outside of specific language competencies.
- Earning a university degree signals that an individual has advanced literacy and communicative skill in the language of instruction at the university; this is English at King's University College at Western University. If translation machines are used by students without regulation, we will have no way of certifying whether these competencies exist and fewer mechanism for encouraging students to do the hard work to develop them.

*\* Based on the policy developed by the Department of Child and Youth Studies*

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES  
2025-2026

## 1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

### Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

### Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses\\_enrollment/exams\\_and\\_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf)

### Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

## **2. Support Services**

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/)

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

### **GBSV Support:**

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find

information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:  
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing [Care@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Care@kings.uwo.ca) or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

### 3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

**Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom:** King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

### 4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see [https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality\\_Reports - TurnItIn.html](https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports - TurnItIn.html).

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

## **5. Copyright of Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

## **6. Use of Recordings**

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

## **7. Policy on Attendance**

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.