



PSYCHOL 2135A (570)
Cognitive Psychology
Fall/Winter 2026 - 2027

Instructor: Dr. Marcie Penner
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Course Information

Mode of Instruction: in-person

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.

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

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

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): **Cognitive Psychology**
King's University College at The University of Western Ontario
Fall 2026-2027

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 (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 Brightspace site.

Course Information

Class time: Consult your schedule or the course Brightspace site.

Location: Consult your schedule or the course Brightspace site.

Mode of instruction: In-person

Required Textbook

- Reisberg, D. (2026). Cognition: Exploring the science of the mind, 9th ed. New York, NY: Norton.
 - The textbook is available in paperback or as an Ebook. The paperback version is \$189 and the Ebook is \$123 from the [campus bookstore](#). Associated learning tools (InQuizitive and ZAPS) are not required.
 - The textbook is also available for use in the King's library (FREE!).
 - Students are welcome to purchase second-hand copies and to use the 8th edition of this textbook.
- Additional readings are provided on the course Brightspace 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 (11)	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, (2) attend class, (3) actively engage in the activity in a collaborative manner, and (4) complete an in-class reflection. Each activity is worth 1%, to a maximum of 10% for the course. You may miss one in-class activity 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 23rd 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 November 6th. Please note, Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

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 (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.

	Before Class	In Class
Week	Read/Watch	Lecture/Activities
Week 1: September 11	Read: Chapter 1	Introduction to Cognitive Science Activity: Black Box
Week 2: September 18	Read: <i>Windows on the Brain and Mind</i> , Section 2.3 (Kolak et al., 2006)	Basics of Cognitive Experiments Activity: Design an RT experiment
Week 3: September 25	Read: Chapter 3	Cognitive Complexity & Bias Activity: Design an error experiment
Week 4: October 2	Read: Chapter 2	Brains Activity: Design an imaging experiment
Week 5: October 9	Read: Chapter 5	Attention 1 Activity: Begin public service announcement
	READING WEEK – No class on October 16th	
Week 6: October 23	MIDTERM TEST	
Week 7: October 30	Read: Chapter 6	Memory Acquisition Activity: Present public service announcement
Week 8: November 6	Read: Chapter 7	Memory Types Activity: Begin study guide
Week 9: November 13	Read: Chapter 8	Remembering Complex Events Activity: Present study guide
Week 10: November 20	Read: Chapter 12	Judgement & Reasoning Activity: Begin Cog Sci for good
Week 11: November 27	Read: <i>Applied Cognitive Psychology</i> (Benjafield et al., 2010)	Applications of Cognitive Science Activity: User interface
Week 12: December 4	Read: Final Guide	Final Review Activity: Present Cog Sci for good
Exam Period: Dec 11-22	FINAL EXAM (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
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (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 at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** 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 (i.e., you are scheduled to write 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](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their 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.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College:
<https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

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

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

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing 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 (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. 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://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

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.

6. 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 https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.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 you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools 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>.

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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.