

Psyc 4011: Cognitive Psychology

Fall 2026

[note that some formatting may differ from original posted on Canvas]

Instructor:

Dr. Daniel Spieler (spieler@gatech.edu). 132 Coon Bldg, Ofc Hrs: Tuesday, 2pm to 3pm, Thursday 10am to 11am, or by appointment (ideally email me to work out a time). Remote meetings are ok via zoom.

Course Description

This course is intended as an advanced survey of theory and data in cognitive psychology. Typically, a course like this will pick up where basic perceptual processing begins, and ends where human behavior becomes increasingly conditioned by the social context. My goal is to provide a mixture of a current 'state of the field' along with some historical context for how we got to where we are. The study of cognition is undergoing yet another revolution stemming from the greater emphasis on brain-behavior relationships. The result of this revolution is apparent in some areas of psychology where the 'state of the field' may be almost entirely given over to explanations of how particular processes are implemented in the brain. In other cases, current theories remain largely framed in functional information processing terms.

Graduate Teaching Assistants

TBA

Undergraduate Teaching Assistants

TBA

We strongly encourage students to come talk to us. If you have any questions or concerns, it is always better to talk to us sooner rather than later. You can bring your questions to any of us and we have distributed our office hours across the week so hopefully something will work. If you would like to arrange a time outside of office hours, just email one of us to arrange a time.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should:

- Be familiar the major research areas of modern cognitive psychology.
- Understand how psychological data is collected, analyzed, and used to test theories in psychology.
- Explain the empirical basis for major theories in cognitive psychology.

Required Course Materials

TBD

Course Grade Components

Exams

There will be two midterms and one final exam. These exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer/short essay questions. Prior to the exams, I will distribute a study guide to limit any uncertainty about the material covered by the exam. Exams are conducted during class time, in the designated classroom, and are closed book and closed notes.

Quizzes

Throughout the semester, there will be a quasi-randomly distributed in-class quizzes consisting of 1 or 2 questions distributed at the start of class. There are no make-up quizzes will be provided. You will be able to drop one of your quiz scores, hence missing one quiz will have not impact on this component of your final grade.

Explainers

During the semester, you will be asked to identify 3 specific topics in cognitive psychology and research and produce a 5 minute video explainer of this topic.

Weightings for each course component

Midterm 1	.20
Midterm 2	.25
Final Exam	.25
Explainer	.20
Research Exp.	.10

To calculate, each component is converted to a percentage of the possible points and multiplied by the associated weight and summed across components. You should assume a straight grading scale (e.g., 91-100, 81-90, etc...) but I reserve the right to lower the grade cutoffs. I may make a smallish adjustment to the cutoffs and I will announce any such changes.

Disability and Accommodations

Georgia Tech values diversity and inclusion and we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there are aspects of the instruction, distribution of course material, or other aspects of the course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment or achievement, then feel free to contact me, and I would encourage you to do so as soon as possible. I also encourage any students with disabilities to contact the Office of Disability Services to discuss options of removing any

barriers in this course, including accommodations. ODS can be reached at 404.894.2563, dsinfo@gatech.edu, or disabilityservices.gatech.edu

If you have already established accommodations with the Offices of Disability Services, please let me know of your approved accommodations and we will make it work. I am happy to meet with you to discuss your needs in this course.

If you have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts) but have not yet made any arrangements, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 404.894.2563 or dsinfo@gatech.edu or disabilityservices.gatech.edu. ([Links to an external site.](#))

Disability Services offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, me, and Disability Services. It is important to the Georgia Institute of Technology to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

Academic Integrity

All students are assumed to have read the Honor Code and consented to be bound by it. Violations of the Honor Code are taken extremely seriously and violations are always and without exception forwarded to the Dean of Students. Specific violations include (but are not limited to):

- Use or provision of prohibited assistance during exams.
- Sharing of material from quizzes, exams, or research reports.
- Plagiarism. This includes both the use of the words and ideas without attribution. Note that text analysis has gotten quite good so it will be easier to just write it in your own words than risk getting flagged.

All exams administered in this course are to be taken without the use of notes, books, ancillary materials and without the assistance of any other person or group, in the class or outside of the class. Use of any electronic devices during the exams is prohibited. Use of these devices during exams is viewed as a violation. If you have any questions, please ask any of us (instructor and TAs). I will assume that all students enrolled in the course know and understand what constitutes academic misconduct and agree to be bound by these rules.

Courtesy

Please don't do rude things. You know what they are. I have a specific character flaw that causes me to be a little crazy when people come and go during class. I understand that this is sometimes unavoidable and I can deal with that. If you habitually do this, I will notice and it will drive me crazy.

Important Dates

TBD

Draft Schedule:

TBD