

Psychology 242  
Macalester College

**Cognitive Psychology**

Spring 2026  
Prof. R. Brooke Lea  
(he/him/his)

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Class meets on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 2:20 - 3:20 PM in Olin/Rice 352.  
Lab meets on Thursdays from 1:20 - 2:50 in Olin/Rice 349

**Course Objectives:**

This course has two main objectives: 1) to provide you with an in-depth examination of human mental processes; and 2) to give you the experience of participating directly in every phase of a theoretically interesting study, from collecting the data to realizing its final form as a scientific report written in APA style. We will achieve the first objective through readings in textbook and primary source journal articles, and especially through class discussions in which the content of the readings will be reviewed and analyzed. Your diligent preparation before class, and active participation in class discussions, are fundamental to success with the first objective. The second goal of the course will be addressed mainly in the lab portion of the class. Briefly, we will work as a group to conduct experiments that bear upon several major theoretical debates in cognition. You will participate in all aspects of the project, though a special emphasis will be placed on the process of transforming the experimental ideas, actions, and results into a form from which other scientists can benefit, i.e., a written report.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Regular attendance and participation at all classes.
2. Attendance and participation in the weekly lab sections.
3. Timely completion and submission of the writing assignment.
4. Participation in a final group project.
5. Adequate performance on two essay-question examinations.

**Grading:**

Your grade for this course will be based on the following components:

- 10% - Class attendance and participation
- 5% - Lab attendance and participation
- 15% - Lab Paper
- 15% - Group Presentation
- 25% - Midterm Exam
- 30% - Final Exam

Grades will be assigned based on the percentage of available points:

93-100 %	90-92%	88-89%	82-87%	80-81%	78-79%
A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+
72-77%	70-71%	68-79%	62-67%	60-61%	<60%
C	C-	D+	D	D-	NC

## **Course Policies**

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work; violations of academic integrity are serious offenses. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty — including, for instance, forgery, cheating, and plagiarism — are subject to disciplinary action. Examples of behavior that violates this policy, as well as the process and sanctions involved, can be found on the Academic Programs website, <https://www.macalester.edu/academic-programs/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/>.

### **Accommodations**

I am committed to ensuring access to course content for all students, including those with disabilities. If you have a disability, please meet with me early in the semester to discuss your accommodation plan. If you have not yet obtained a plan or are unsure if you have a disability that requires accommodation, please contact Disability Resources: [disabilityresources@macalester.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@macalester.edu), or call 651-696-6275.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy**

Using AI can impede your learning. The assignments in this class challenge you to develop creativity, critical-thinking, and problem-solving skills that AI does not have. Using AI technology could limit your capacity to do this type of work, and as the instructor, I urge you not to miss out on the educational opportunities that this course will provide. As is the case for all courses at Macalester College, work submitted by you for this class should reflect both your own *ideas* and your own *language* and you should properly cite any resources you have consulted. If you have any questions about citation or about what constitutes academic honesty in this course or at Macalester College in general, please feel free to raise these questions in class and/or contact me to discuss your concerns.

### **Health and Wellness at Macalester**

I strongly encourage you to make your well-being a priority. Investing time in thinking well about yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being with your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing; these can be emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and can affect your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that you have a body with needs. It is important to eat when you are hungry, drink water, use the restroom, and step out of (or away from) class if you are upset or need some air. Please do what is necessary so long as it does not interfere with your or others' ability to be present in the course. Outside of the classroom, strategies to support your well-being include eating and sleeping well, moving your body, and connecting with others. If you are having difficulties, please don't hesitate to contact me and/or find support from other resources, including those offered by the [Hamre Center](#).

### **Disabilities**

I recognize that course design may pose barriers to a student's ability to access or demonstrate mastery of course content. I honor academic accommodations as outlined via Disability Services, and in discussion regarding what is reasonable for this course. Students with long or short term disabilities should schedule an appointment by emailing [disabilityservices@macalester.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@macalester.edu), or calling the Disability Services Office, 651-696-6275.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Macalester College works hard to ensure that all facilities and programs are accessible to all students. Accommodations are based on individual need substantiated by the appropriate process. What is reasonable is also determined by what is essential to this course. Any students who believe that they may need accommodations due to disability impacts should contact the Disability Services office by emailing [disabilityservices@macalester.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@macalester.edu), or by calling 651-696-6974 to schedule an appointment to discuss your individual needs. Students should then follow up with me directly to discuss accommodations for this course.

## Overview of Class Topics, Labs, and Assignments

**JANUARY 23<sup>RD</sup> 2026 VERSION**

Date	Class Topic	Lab	Assignments
1 <sup>st</sup> Week (1/23)	Introduction to the course		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Week (1/26 - 1/30)	History of Cognitive Psych Sensation & Perception	More Class	Solso Chap 1
3 <sup>rd</sup> Week (2/2- 2/6)	Sensation & Perception	“How the Mind Works” Video	Solso Chap 3
4 <sup>th</sup> Week (2/9 - 2/13)	Attention	Attention Experiments	Moray (1959); Wood & Cowan (1995)
5 <sup>th</sup> Week (2/16 - 2/20)	Attention	Attention Experiments	Solso Chap 6 Atkinson & Shiffrin (1971)
6 <sup>th</sup> Week (2/23 2/27)	Memory	<i>Memento</i>	Solso Chapter 7 Craik & Lockhart (1972)
7 <sup>th</sup> Week (3/2 - 3/6)	Memory	<b><i>Midterm Exam in lab 3/5</i></b>	Usher & Neisser (1993)
8 <sup>th</sup> Week (3/9- 3/13)	Memory Autobiographical Memory	Class catchup	Loftus “Desperately Seeking...” (1993) Belli et al. (1998)
	Spring Break!		
9 <sup>th</sup> Week (3/23 - 3/27)	Autobiographical Memory; Memory Illusions	Group Work	<i>Mistakes Were Made (but not by me)</i> Chapters 3-5
10 <sup>th</sup> Week (3/30 - 4/3)	The Organization of Knowledge	Group work Memory Experiments	Solso Chapter 9 Smith, Shoben, & Rips (‘74)
11 <sup>th</sup> Week (4/6 - 4/10)	Language Comprehension	Analyze SSR Data Group work on presentations	
12 <sup>th</sup> Week (4/13 - 4/17)	Language Comprehension	Group work on presentations	McKoon & Ratcliff (1992) Kintsch (1994)
13 <sup>th</sup> Week (4/20 - 4/24)	The Cog Science of Learning Decision-Making	Class Presentations	<b><i>Lab write-up Due 4/24</i></b> Make it Stick Chaps 1&2 Tversky & Kahneman
14 <sup>th</sup> Week (4/27 - 5/1)	Class Presentations	<b><i>Final Exam in lab 4/30</i></b>	
15 <sup>th</sup> Week (5/4)	Class Presentations		