

PSB4250 (U01) – Animal Cognition
FIU – Department of Psychology

CLASS MEETINGS

Tuesday/Thursday 5:00 – 6:15 pm (PCA 150)

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Eliza Nelson

Office Hours: Tuesday 2:00 – 4:00 pm
or by appointment (DM 276)

Email: elnelson@fiu.edu

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Sandy Gonzalez

Office Hours: Mon/Fri 2:00 – 3:00 pm
or by appointment (DM 248)

Email: sgonz219@fiu.edu

NOTE: For a timely reply, email us directly. Do not send a message via Blackboard.

COURSE GOALS

Throughout this course, we will try to answer the question *what makes humans unique?* We will explore similarities and differences between humans and other animals for a variety of cognitive abilities such as perception, attention, learning, memory, reasoning, tool use, and language using primary scientific evidence and an evolutionary framework.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Describe and explain basic and complex processes in cognition
- Critically compare and contrast cognitive abilities in animals
- Understand comparative research methods and interpret original data

REQUIRED READING

- *Fundamentals of Comparative Cognition*, Sara J. Shettleworth (2013)
- *Animal Cognition*, Clive D.L. Wynne (2001)
- Other assigned readings will be posted on Blackboard

GRADING

Pop Quizzes	15%	Unannounced throughout semester
Exam 1 = Sep 17 th	20%	Material from 8/27 – 9/12
Exam 2 = Oct 8 th	20%	Material from 9/19 – 10/3
Exam 3 = Nov 5 th	20%	Material from 10/10 – 10/31
Exam 4 = Dec 3 rd	25%	Material from 11/7 – 11/26
		<i>Take-home essay is due Dec 5th at 5 pm</i>

LETTER GRADE CONVERSION

A: 94-100%	A-: 90-93%	B+: 87-89%	B: 83-86%	B-: 80-82%	
C+: 77-79%	C: 73-76%	C-: 70-72%	D+: 67-69%	D: 60-66	F: 59 & below

POP QUIZZES: There are 15 unannounced pop quizzes worth 5 points each throughout the semester based on the assigned readings. Quizzes will take place at the start of class. You cannot complete the quiz if you arrive late. Quizzes are worth 15% of your total grade. Therefore, you will not do well in this course if you do not attend class meetings.

NON-CUMMULATIVE EXAMS: There are 4 in-class exams (100 points each) throughout the semester. Exams are always on Tuesday. *Any material covered during the dates for each exam is fair game including, but not limited to, readings, slides, videos, and guest lectures.* The format for exams may include multiple choice, matching, true or false, short answer, or interpreting original data (i.e., figures and tables). **I will test material covered only in class.**

TAKE-HOME ESSAY FOR EXAM 4: For the last exam, there will be a take-home essay. The essay is worth 5% of your total grade. You may use any materials you wish for the essay, but you must cite your sources and provide a reference list. The essay must be at least 1,000 words. *You are required to type your essay and provide a word count.* Failure to meet one or both of these requirements will result in a deduction. The essay is due in hard copy form at **5 pm** on the last day of class. You must also upload a copy to TurnItIn, which will check for plagiarism. No electronic copies will be accepted. You will be penalized if the essay is late.

EXTRA-CREDIT: Should you miss a quiz or receive a lower grade than you'd like on an exam, you can earn extra-credit points by reading and summarizing scientific articles. Each article summary is graded for content and worth up to 5 points. There is a maximum of 5% (25 points) that you can earn towards your final grade. All extra credit is due in hard copy form by **5 pm** the last day of class, but you can turn in assignments any time during the semester.

INSTRUCTIONS: Search for an interesting article in the journal *Animal Cognition* that was published in the past 5 years (2009 – 2013, including Online First). Write a 500-word press release for the article. Your newspaper-worthy summary should be written for a popular audience, aka assume your reader has absolutely no scientific training. The press release should cover who, what, where, when, why, and how for the study you are summarizing. End your article with an APA citation for the original paper. Don't forget a catchy title!

MAKE-UP POLICIES & DISABILITY ACCOMODATIONS: Make-up quizzes and exams are only permitted for excused absences with documentation. This includes, but is not limited to, doctor's excuses (for yourself or immediate relatives), athletic events, FIU-related scholarly events (e.g., conference), death in the family, religious observances, or auto accident. For unexcused absences, you are welcome to submit extra-credit work. Disability students must submit DRC paperwork in the first week of class for accommodations: **drc.fiu.edu/students**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any instance of academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, collusion, dishonesty) will be reported to the University and Department of Psychology for further action. Please refer to your student handbook, or ask me if you are unsure about what constitutes misconduct. Details can also be found at this website: **https://ugrad.fiu.edu/academic_misconduct/**

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Please be respectful of my time and of your peers. Kindly refrain from talking, texting, or using technology for non-class related activities. If you are disruptive, I will ask you to leave.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

Subject to change. All readings are due on the date indicated and are quiz material.

PowerPoint presentations are not posted. An outline for taking notes will be posted before class. If you miss class, you must make an appointment with the TA to obtain the notes.

S = Shettleworth text

W = Wynne text

B = Reading on Blackboard

TopicReading Due

08/27: Welcome

08/29: Introduction

09/03: Perception and Attention

09/05: Learning

09/10: Categories and Concepts

09/12: Short-Term Memory

09/17: EXAM 1

09/19: Long-Term Memory/Spatial Cognition

09/24: Timing

09/26: Number

10/01: Planning and Foraging

10/03: Reasoning

10/08: EXAM 2

10/10: (FILM) "So Human, So Chimp"

10/15: Theory of Mind

10/17: (FILM) "Becoming Us"

10/22: Tool Use

10/24: Tool Use

10/26: Social Learning

10/31: Imitation

11/05: EXAM 3

11/07: (FILM) "Brain Matters"

11/12: Cooperation

11/14: Culture

11/19: Communication and Language

11/21: Communication and Language

11/26: Conclusions

11/28: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving

12/03: EXAM 4

12/05: TAKE-HOME ESSAY DUE

S1 & W1

S2 (pp. 17-20), W4

S2 (pp. 34-41), W3

S2 (pp. 41-48), W5 (pp. 81-96)

S2 (pp. 20-34), W6 (pp. 115-126)

S (pp. 26-34; 49-57), W6 (pp. 126-134)

S3 (pp. 57-61), W5 (pp. 96-102)

S3 (pp. 61-66), W5 (pp. 102-111)

S3 (pp. 66-72)

W7

S4 (pp. 81-89), W2 (pp. 23-30)

S3 (pp. 73-79)

B1

S4 (pp. 93-95)

S4 (pp. 95-99), W2 (pp. 18-23)

S4 (pp. 89-92), B2

S4 (pp. 99-101)

S4 (pp. 101-111), W8

B3

S5, W9