



Faculty of Science
School of Psychology

PSYC3241
Psychobiology of Memory and Motivation
Semester1, 2013

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4. Aims of the Course

This course examines the psychobiology of memory and motivation, with an emphasis on memory. Behavioural experiments demonstrating the basic concepts associated with memory, and forgetting, will be described as will experiments that are aimed at determining the neural bases of memory and forgetting. Much of the research described in the course involves non-human animals, but the implications of this research for our understanding of memory, and forgetting, in humans are highlighted in most sections of the course.

The course is divided into the following broad topics

- (1) Basic concepts of memory; consolidation and reconsolidation
- (2) Fear memory
- (3) Spatial memory
- (4) Extinction
- (5) Forgetting

Lab course:

The laboratory component of the course has two primary goals: (1) to provide “hands on” experience in observing various aspects of rodent behaviour that are frequently used in studies on the psychobiology of memory, and (2) to provide an opportunity for small group discussion/debate on various issues relevant to the material described in the lecture component of the course.

Note that the “hands on” part of the tutorial will involve handling and experimentation on animal subjects (rats); this work will be groupwork (e.g., groups of students will be doing any particular task, and only some will need to actually touch the rats). Please contact your tutor as soon as possible if you would prefer to not take part in these activities (alternatives will be arranged for those particular tutorials)

5. Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you will be able to

<p>1. Critically evaluate experiments and hypotheses about memory and forgetting enabling you to:</p>	<p>1.1. Apply knowledge of the scientific method in thinking about problems related to behaviour and mental processes underlying memory and motivation.</p> <p>1.2. Identify and question claims that arise from untested assumptions.</p> <p>1.3. Demonstrate an attitude of critical thinking that includes persistence, open-mindedness, and intellectual engagement.</p> <p>1.4. Demonstrate a capacity for higher order analysis, including the capacity to identify recurrent patterns in behaviour or inconsistencies in patterns of reported research findings</p> <p>1.5. Evaluate the quality of information, including differentiating empirical evidence from speculation.</p> <p>1.6. Identify and evaluate the source and context of behaviour.</p> <p>1.7. Use reasoning and evidence to recognise, develop, defend, and criticise arguments and persuasive appeals.</p> <p>1.8. Demonstrate creative and pragmatic problem solving.</p>
<p>2. An advanced knowledge of research methods in psychology, enabling you to:</p>	<p>2.1 Describe, apply and evaluate different research methods used to study memory.</p> <p>2.2. Demonstrate practical skills in laboratory based behavioural research with rodents.</p> <p>2.3. Locate, evaluate, and use information appropriately in the research process.</p> <p>2.4. Design basic studies to address psychological questions; undertake literature searches; critically analyse theoretical and empirical studies; formulate testable hypotheses; operationalise variables; choose an appropriate methodology to test questions of interest; describe and interpret results.</p>

<p>3. Develop effective communication skills, including the ability to:</p>	<p>3.1. Write effectively in a variety of formats (essays, research proposals) and for a variety of purposes (e.g., informing, arguing).</p> <p>3.2. Demonstrate effective oral communication skills in various formats (e.g., group discussion, debate, presentation).</p> <p>3.3. Demonstrate effective interpersonal communication skills including : listening accurately and actively; provide constructive feedback to others; adopt flexible techniques to communicate sensitively and effectively with diverse ethnic and cultural partners, including in the context of teamwork.</p>
<p>4. A knowledge and understanding of psychology at an advanced level with regard to:</p>	<p>4.1 The biological basis of behaviour, memory, and forgetting.</p> <p>4.2. Psychobiology of memory and motivation as a discipline and its major objectives.</p> <p>1.3. Major themes in the study of memory and forgetting from both the behavioural and neural perspectives.</p> <p>1.4. The ability to explain psychological phenomena using concepts, language and major theories drawn from psychobiology.</p>

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		ability to act ethically in the development of experiments involving animals
5. Communication skills		Development of in-class presentations of research literature review and proposal will encourage you to communicate

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10. Assessment								
Assessment Task	Weight	Learning Outcomes Assessed	Graduate Attributes Assessed	Date of		Feedback		
				Release	Submission	Who	When	How
Mid-session exam	20			Week 5, lecture 1	Week 5, lecture 1	Lecturer	Week 7	Blackboard
Final exam	40			Exam period	Exam period	Lecturer	When marks released by University	University
Research proposal	30			Week 1	Friday of Week 12	Tutor	21 June	Written, Blackboard
Tutorial participation	10			Week 1	Friday of Week 12	Tutor	21 June	blackboard

1. Mid-session exam: This 45 min exam (could consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or fill-in-the-blank questions; more specific details provided prior to the exam) will be given on Wednesday at 4-5 (i.e., in regularly scheduled lecture time period). This exam will be based on lecture material covered in lectures from March 27 (first 7 lectures, all by RR), and the readings for those lectures.
2. Final exam: This 2 hr exam (which could consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or fill-in-the-blank questions; more specific details will be provided prior to the exam) will be given during the formal exam period. This exam will cover material covered in lectures from April 3 - May (all the lectures after the mid-session exam) and the readings for those lectures.
3. Research proposal: This involves a written research proposal (1,500-2,000 words in length, and following general APA guidelines) on a proposed experiment (based on material/ideas covered in the course). A hard copy of this assignment, with the signed copy of the School's "Assignment Submission Form" firmly attached to the front, should be submitted to the Psychology General Office, Mathews 009, on Friday in Week 12). An electronic version of the assignment also must be submitted to the course's Blackboard module by May 10 to protect against accidental loss of the hard copy, and to allow for plagiarism checks (via Turnitin). Penalties will be imposed for late submission of this assignment. See the Psychology Student Guide for details.
4. Tutorial participation: These marks will be determined by regular attendance, and active participation, in all tutorials. However, an emphasis will be placed on attending, and providing constructive feedback to fellow students, in those tutorials where oral presentations have been scheduled. Note that mere attendance will only result in 1 out of 10 marks being awarded.

11. Expected Resources for Students

TEXTBOOKS	none
COURSE MANUAL	none
REQUIRED READINGS	These are provided on the course Blackboard page
RECOMMENDED INTERNET SITES	none

12. Course Evaluation & Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students' feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered through various means including UNSW's Course Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

13. Plagiarism & Academic Integrity

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- x Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the

students submit their work into Turnitin when they hand it in, but academics can also use it to check student's work when they are marking it. You can find out more about Turnitin here: <http://telt.unsw.edu.au/turnitin>.

What if plagiarism is found in my work?

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student's work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in a honours thesis) even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here

www.unsw.edu.au/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf

Examples of plagiarism

Using the internet appropriately

A first year student handed in an assignment where she had copied from a website. The lecturer realised she didn't understand you have to reference websites in the same way you reference books and journal articles. The lecturer explained how to reference and sent her to a workshop at the Learning Centre to help her improve her skills.

Working together on a math assignment

A group of Mathematics students worked together on an assignment when they had been told this was allowed. All questions where the students had worked together were given zero, and this led to some students failing the assessment.

No referencing in an assessment

A third year student submitted a major assessment that included material from a journal article published

14. Administrative Matters