

## Learning & Memory

PSYC310WA

Spring 2021

Instructor: Robin Hopkins, PhD  
Office: Pearce 207      Office hours: by appointment (virtual available)

Email: rfhopkins@marybaldwin.edu

I usually check my email throughout the day, and I will respond within 48 hours of receiving any emails. *Please include PSYC310 in the subject line of any emails you send to me.*

**Optional/recommended** texts: Schwartz, B. (2017) *Memory: Foundations and Applications, Third edition*. Thousand Oaks, California. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Galvan, J. & Galvan, M. (2017). *Writing Literature Reviews: A Guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Seventh edition*. New York, New York. Routledge.

**Required** text: Required articles will be available on canvas

Additional resources: Lecture slides and assignments will be available on canvas

**Course Objectives:** (1) Students will understand how psychologists study learning and memory, and (2) what we currently know about learning and memory phenomena. (3) Students will have opportunities to develop their written communication skills while following APA guidelines. (4) Students will gain experience finding, reading, and thinking critically about scientific writing. (5) Students will practice creating a study proposal based on gaps and limitations in the literature. (6) Students will make connections between research findings and experiences in their own lives.

**Learning Outcome:** This course fulfills the Research: In Context (R) requirement.

### Descriptions of Assignments:

**PUREMEMs.** At the end of every lecture you will complete an assignment called a PUREMEM (pronounced “pure mem”). PUREMEM officially stands for Practicing Unassisted Retrieval to Enhance Memory for Essential Material. If you prefer, you can think of PUREMEM as standing simply for “Pure Memory”, because PUREMEMs are intended to enhance your memory. On PUREMEMs, you will be asked some questions about the most important or essential material presented in the lecture you heard that day, and you will have to answer the questions *without looking at your notes*. This will allow you to practice retrieving the information from memory, as opposed to from your notes (hence the

“unassisted” part of the idea). This retrieval practice is vital because, ultimately, you will want to be able to bring the information to mind without looking it up; that is the essence of learning. Memory research has produced compelling evidence that practicing retrieval of information is a key to remembering information over long periods of time and making the information come readily to mind (and we will discuss this research in class!).

PUREMEMs will be due on Mondays at 11:59 PM EST every week, although I recommend you take them right after watching the associated lecture. Lectures will be posted during the course of each week. You will receive feedback on your answers and a grade shortly after the deadline passes. If you miss a PUREMEM there will be no opportunity to make it up. You will simply receive a zero for any PUREMEM you miss.

**Participation Opportunities (POs).** Frequently, I will request for students to respond to questions either during the lecture or prior to class on canvas, which should generally take less than five minutes to do. The class’ responses will be used to demonstrate psychological phenomena that we discuss or to create an opportunity to engage with the topic being discussed. If you complete the questions by the deadline, you will receive full credit. If you do not answer all of the questions fail to submit your answers by the deadline, you will receive a zero for that participation opportunity.

Similar to PUREMEMs, POs are due by 11:59 PM EST on Mondays, and no late POs will be accepted.

**Article Discussion Prompts.** Four times during the semester you will be assigned to read a couple of articles related to the topics we cover in lecture. For each article, you will submit a summary and the correct APA citation and reference for the article. You will also need to answer some discussion prompts provided in a discussion board which will ask you to critically evaluate the article, make connections, and consider remaining questions. The aims of the article discussion prompts are to have you practice reading articles for *content* while also *evaluating* it critically and making connections with other content and personal connections-which is what real researchers must do.

You will be required to submit your summary and APA citations/references to me and your answers to the discussion prompts to the discussion board. Your article discussion grade will come from submitting an accurate and sufficient summary along with proper APA citations and references, as well as posting thoughtful and complete answers to the discussion board on time. If you fail to submit this assignment by the deadline, you can submit it up to a week late with an automatic 15% deduction. After a week past the deadline, I will not accept late work.

Article discussion prompts will account for 10% of your grade.

**Research Assignment.** You will have a research assignment which will consist of a literature review *and* a study proposal based on gaps in the literature on a learning and memory topic of your choice. You will turn in “check in” assignments during the semester to ensure you’re progressing appropriately, including a draft for peer feedback. Submitting complete check-in assignments will account for 5% of your grade.

The research assignment prompt and grading rubric will be provided to you and *you will be required to “grade” yourself using the rubric before submitting your second draft.* Your

first draft submitted to me will account for 10% of your grade. I will give you feedback on your first draft and you will need to submit a revised final draft (15% of your grade).

If you fail to submit the first draft by the deadline, you can submit it up to a week late with an automatic 15% deduction. Past one week, first drafts will not be accepted for a grade. I will not accept late submission for the final draft.

**Exams.** Exams will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching, and short answer/essay questions. There will be three semester exams, each of which is worth 10% of your grade (30% combined). If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero.

**Cumulative Final Exam.** The same types of questions used on semester exams will be used on the cumulative final exam, which is worth 20% of your grade.

**Extra Credit.** There will be several extra credit opportunities during the semester. *These will be the only extra credit opportunities that will be offered in this course, so do not ask for individualized or additional extra credit.* These opportunities will be listed on assignments and/or announced in class/via email.

### Grading:

Grades will be determined by the following:

RA: Check-in assignments	5%
RA: First draft	10%
RA: Final draft	15%
In-class: POs	5%
In-class: PUREMEMs	5%
In-class: Article discussions	10%
Semester exams	30%
Final exam	20%

Grading Scale (percentage):

A	= 93-100
A-	= 90-92
B+	= 87-89
B	= 83-86
B-	= 80-82
C+	= 77-79
C	= 73-76
C-	= 70-72
D+	= 67-69
D	= 63-66
D-	= 60-62

*A note about canvas grading:* While the course grade and assignment group averages that canvas calculates for you are usually *fairly* representative of your grade, it cannot be set up to grade exactly as I calculate the grades. For example, while I can tell canvas to weigh your PUREMEM average to be 5% of your course grade, it gives PUREMEMs with 6 questions more weight in calculating the assignment *average* than PUREMEMs with say 3 questions. The same issue arises with all exams (e.g., one exam might be out of 32 points and another one out of 36 points). However, when I calculate your grades, your exam and PUREMEM average will be based on *percentages* rather than points.

## **Policies:**

**Engagement.** At a *bare minimum*, you should check Canvas and your MBU email 2-3 times a week. If you anticipate needing an extension for weekly work (e.g., because you get COVID or some other extenuating circumstance) please let me know as soon as you are aware of the conflict so we can discuss any potential deadline extensions. *You and I may have different definitions of what an allowable reason to receive a deadline extension is, so it is best to find out ahead of time if your conflict is a reasonable excuse to me.*

**Honor code.** You must observe the provisions of the Honor Code. Cooperative study and discussions are encouraged, but aids of any kind are not allowed during tests or quizzes. Until the instructor has informed you that everyone has taken a quiz or test, you are not to discuss it with anyone. You are allowed to discuss papers with each other, but each student must write his or her own. When writing papers, you must be careful not to plagiarize others' work- use quotations if you are using direct words (you will be submitting to SafeAssign). If you do not cite properly, it is considered an act of plagiarism and is a potential honor code violation.

Should I become aware of an Honor Code offense in this classroom, I will encourage the student(s) to self-report by e-mailing the Honor Council chairwoman or by filing an incident report at <https://publicdocs.maxient.com/incidentreport.php?MaryBaldwinCollege>. If the student(s) does not self-report within 24 hours, I will submit the report myself.

If the Honor Code offense is related to a course assignment, the assignment will not receive an official grade until the Honor Council investigation (and, if necessary, hearing) is complete. I will not assess a grade penalty for an Honor Code infraction unless a student is found responsible by (or admits responsibility to) the Honor Council

## **Resources:**

**Student Accommodations.** Any student with documented accessibility needs who feels they may need academic accommodations while taking this course, should first contact Dr. Carey Usher, Associate Provost ([cusher@marybaldwin.edu](mailto:cusher@marybaldwin.edu), 540-887-7064) or [Accessibility@marybaldwin.edu](mailto:Accessibility@marybaldwin.edu).

**The Academic Resource Center.** The ARC is your one-stop-shop for writing, math, and all other subject and studentship tutoring. Residential students can meet with tutors virtually or face-to-face in the Center for Student Success, on the first floor of Grafton Library. Online and remote students can work virtually with tutors on papers, assignments, and test-taking strategies. Appointments are scheduled through TutorTrac ([tutortrac.marybaldwin.edu](http://tutortrac.marybaldwin.edu)). For more information, contact Dr. Carey Usher, Associate Provost ([cusher@marybaldwin.edu](mailto:cusher@marybaldwin.edu), 540-887-7064) or [ARC@marybaldwin.edu](mailto:ARC@marybaldwin.edu).

**Your professor.** Please feel free to contact me about any questions or concerns.

## Important Dates

<b>Week</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Assignments due (other than POs &amp; PUREMEMs)</b>	<b>Due date</b>
<b>1</b>	Syllabus History & types of learning & memory RA Day #1: Overview of RA	Read RA prompt & rubric; Submit two potential topic options	<b>Jan 18</b>
<b>2</b>	How researchers study learning & memory Working Memory (1)		<b>Jan 25</b>
<b>3</b>	Working Memory (2) Types of LTM; encoding RA Day #2: Research + annotated bibliography	Final topic + 1 RA article w/ APA reference	<b>Feb 1</b>
<b>4</b>	Encoding & Retrieval (1) Encoding & Retrieval (2) Encoding & Retrieval (3) & source monitoring	4 RA articles w/ APA references	<b>Feb 8</b>
<b>5</b>	Study strategies (1) ( <i>Exam 2 content</i> )	Exam 1 Article 1 & 2 summaries, APA practice, and discussions	<b>Feb 15</b>
<b>6</b>	Study strategies (2) General Knowledge (1) RA Day #3: Student examples + writing		<b>Feb 22</b>
<b>7</b>	General Knowledge (2) Eyewitness memory (1)	Article 3 & 4 summaries, APA practice, and discussions	<b>Mar 1</b>
<b>8</b>	Eyewitness memory (2) Eyewitness memory (3) RA Day #4: writing		<b>Mar 8</b>
<b>9</b>	Flashbulb memories; Emotional memories RA Day #5: Peer feedback	Article 5 & 6 summaries, APA practice, and discussions Full draft sent to peer; read peer's draft	<b>Mar 15</b>
<b>10</b>	Autobiographical memories ( <i>Exam 3 content</i> ) Habituation & sensitization ( <i>Exam 3 content</i> )	Exam 2 Send peer feedback	<b>Mar 22</b>
<b>11</b>	Classical conditioning (1) Classical conditioning (2)	First draft due to Dr. Hopkins	<b>Mar 29</b>
<b>12</b>	Operant conditioning (1) Operant conditioning (2) Operant conditioning (3)		<b>Apr 5</b>
<b>13</b>	RA day # 6: Feedback meetings	Article 7 & 8 summaries, APA practice, and discussions Exam 3 Final draft	<b>Apr 12</b>
<b>14</b>		Final Exam	<b>Apr 19</b>

**Disclaimer:** I reserve the right to make modifications to this information during the semester.