

M A Y 2 0 1 7

# PSY 225: The Cognition of Game Playing

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## Welcome to the course with the most fun at UT!

Game playing meets a variety of human psychological needs, such as cognitive, social, and emotional, leading every human culture to play games. Centered on the cognitive aspects of games, this course examines how humans interact with these creative endeavors. Students study how our psychology influences the games we play, and how our cognitions affect our responses to and within those games. All types of games are considered, from board games to games of chance to video games.

### Texts

#### Required:

Kellogg, R. T. (2015). *Fundamentals of Cognitive Psychology* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1483347585

Madigan, J. (2015). *Getting Gamers: The Psychology of Video Games and their Impact on the People Who Play Them*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. ISBN: 978-1442239999

## Useful Info!

**Office location:** Plant Hall 324

**Office hours:** After class every day

**Prerequisites:** PSY 200 (General Psychology)

**Resources:** Please contact either myself or the Saunders Writing Center for help with any writing questions. We can both help you develop a good writing style and offer suggestions and comments on drafts you have written

Course material will be available on Blackboard. You have already been enrolled in the course. Please make a habit of checking the Blackboard site and your UT email account at least once every 2 or 3 days.



## Course Objectives

Successful students will meet the following four learning objectives at the conclusion of the course (adapted from the American Psychological Association guidelines for the psychology major):

- **Knowledge Base of Psychology: demonstrate fundamental knowledge and comprehension of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, historical trends, and empirical findings**
  - 1) Describe examples of relevant and practical applications of psychological principles to everyday life (1.3a)
- **Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking: develop scientific reasoning and problem solving skills, including effective research methods**
  - 2) Use psychology concepts to explain personal experiences and recognize the potential for flaws in behavioral explanations based on simplistic, personal theories (2.1b)
- **Communication: demonstrate competence in writing**
  - 3) Express ideas in written formats that reflect basic psychological concepts and principles (4.1a)
- **Professional Development: apply psychology-specific content and skills, effective self-reflection, project-management skills, teamwork skills, and career preparation**
  - 4) Recognize the value and application of research and problem-solving skills in providing evidence beyond personal opinion to support proposed solutions (5.1a)

## Grading

**Exams.** There will be 3 exams delivered across the two weeks. Each exam may be comprised of multiple choice, short answer, and application questions. No make-up exams will be given without prior approval, except under extreme, documented circumstances (e.g., hospitalization, a death in the family). Without a doctor's note, your self-report of feeling ill is not sufficient.

**Game Write-ups.** You will be tasked to write 7 Game Write-ups throughout the two weeks. Each Write-up is worth 10 points. In a Write-up, you will pick a game, describe it, and then relate it to the principles we have talked about during that part of the class. You will be provided with a rubric regarding how these will be scored. The top 5 will count towards your grade.

**Discussion Lead.** During the second week of class we will discuss Madigan's book *Getting Gamer*. We will pair up, and each pair will be responsible for presenting two sections of the book. You will also need to prepare short study guides to go along with your discussions. Each presentation (expected to be about 30 min for the pair of you) will be worth 20 points. A rubric will be provided.

**Exit Interview.** We will reflect on our experience during the last day of class. As part of this, you will fill out a self-evaluation and we will do a group exit interview. This experience will be worth 10 points.

### Point Distribution

Type	Points	Quantity	Total Points
Exams	100	3	300
Game Write-Ups	10	5	50
Discussion Project	20	2	40
Exit Interview	10	1	10
<b>Total</b>			<b>400</b>

### Grading Scale

	F	D	CD	C	BC	B	AB	A
Points	0-237	238-269	270-289	290-309	310-329	330-349	350-369	370-400
Percent	0-59%	60-67%	68-72%	73-77%	78-82%	83-87%	88-92%	93-100%
Category	Failing	Passing	Below Average	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Outstanding

### Attendance and Comportment

We only have 10 days of class. They are long days, so we will take breaks every hour or so. To miss a day would be to miss 10% of class. You are expected to be on time, ready to participate. While in class, conduct and attire yourself appropriately—no sleeping, no talking out of turn, and no texting. In short, treat each other and me respectfully.

### Academic Integrity

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty will at minimum receive a 0 for the assignment. The infraction will be treated in a manner consistent with University policy (see the Academic Integrity Policy at [www.ut.edu/provost](http://www.ut.edu/provost)). Please refer to the student handbook or see me if you are unsure what constitutes any of these violations. As a simple rule, if any part of your process involves selecting text, hitting ctrl-c, switching documents, and then typing ctrl-v, you should be concerned. If not handled properly, this might be plagiarism and I will catch you. Cutting and pasting is what you do in kindergarten. In college you write and properly use and cite other people’s ideas.

### Students with Disabilities

If there is a student who requires accommodations because of any disability, please go to the Academic Success Center in North Walker Hall for information regarding registering as a student with a disability. You may also call (813) 257-5757 or email [disability.services@ut.edu](mailto:disability.services@ut.edu). Please feel free to discuss this issue with me, in private, if you need more information.

### Final Words

As in with any class, come prepared to learn. Read the book regularly and come to class with any questions you may have. Make use of available resources: myself, Blackboard, fellow students (form study groups!).

Changes to this syllabus and schedule may be necessary as the semester progresses. You will be advised of such changes, in a timely manner, in class and on the Blackboard site.

A blank page can be very powerful. Use it wisely.

# PSY 225: The Cognition of Game Playing

May 2017

## Week 1

## Week 2

<i>Monday</i>	Ch. 1: Introduction Ch. 2: Perception Ch. 3a: Attention  <i>Monstrosity, Guesstures, Captain Sonar</i>	<b>Exam 2 (Chapters 5 - 8)</b>  Ch. 9: Problem Solving  <i>Werewolf, One Night Werewolf, Pictionary, Mancala, Tic-tac-toe, Checkers</i>  <b>Game Write-up 5</b>
<i>Tuesday</i>	Ch. 3b: Attention Ch. 4: Memory Systems  <i>Exploding Kittens, Happy Salmon, Princess and Goblin, Dead Last</i>  <b>Game Write-up 1</b>	Ch. 10: Reasoning & Decision Making  <i>Sleuth, Antidote, Blackjack</i>  <b>Game Write-up 6</b>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<b>Exam 1 (Chapters 1 - 4)</b>  Ch. 5: Memory Remembering Events  <i>Codenames, Scattergories, Taboo</i>  <b>Game Write-up 2</b>	Getting Gamers (Part 1) Getting Gamers (Part 2)  <i>Secret Hitler, Knit Wit, Hearts</i>  <b>Game Write-up 7</b>
<i>Thursday</i>	Ch. 6: Memory Distortions Ch. 7a: Imagery & Knowledge Representation  <i>Two Rooms and a Boom, Dixit, Outburst, Tsuro</i>  <b>Game Write-up 3</b>	Getting Gamers (Part 3) Getting Gamers (Part 4)  <i>Playstation VR, Sheriff of Nottingham</i>
<i>Friday</i>	Ch. 7b: Imagery & Knowledge Representation Ch. 8: Language  <i>Concept, Boggle, Carcassonne, Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes</i>  <b>Game Write-up 4</b>	<b>Exam 3 (Chs. 9 - 10, Getting Gamers)</b>  <i>Escape the Room</i>  <b>Exit Interview (done in-class)</b>