Cognitive Psychology is the study of how people perceive, process, remember, and use information. It attempts to understand how the brain works from a functional, as opposed to physiological, perspective. Some of the topics that we will address in this course are pattern recognition and perception, attention, short and long term memory, speech perception, language understanding, knowledge representation, problem solving, and decision making. We will survey each of these fields in this course, but we also plan on going into greater depth in one or two areas and review in detail some current research in Cognitive Psychology. The course is primarily lecture-based, but we liberally sprinkle it with demonstrations. Students will also have the opportunity to try out themselves some of the experiments that we discuss in class.

Students enrolled in the honors section will also need to complete a project, or related set of projects, that will count towards 25% of your grade. The exact nature of that paper has not yet been decided. In the past, I have had students write a paper on some topic of cognitive psychology that especially interested them, delving into an unresolved research question, and proposing an experiment that would help resolve that question. We may do that again this year. Alternatively, we may read a set of seminal papers in cognitive psychology and critically evaluate them. (The decision concerning which course to pursue will not be made until sometime during winter break.)