



PSYCHOLOGY 490-01 – Seminar: Topics in Psychology
Memory in Natural Contexts
Spring 2023
1:00-1:50 p.m. MoWeFr

Instructor Contact Information:

Instructor: Robert J. Nemeth, Ph.D.

Office hours: Monday 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. & Wednesday 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. or by appointment.

Phone: (715) 346-2883—this is the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences phone number. Please leave a message. Email is the better way to contact me.)

Email: rnemeth@uwsp.edu

Required Textbook

Schwartz, B. L. (2021). *Memory: Foundations and Applications*. (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

General Philosophy of Teaching

- Promote life-long learning (**thinking for yourself**).
- Foster an intellectual curiosity about questions of human behavior and the mind.
- Develop an appreciation of diverse viewpoints in psychology, including alternative and minority views.
- Help my students develop the following skills that typify an educated adult:
 - organizational skills,
 - critical thinking skills,
 - quantitative skills, and
 - verbal and writing skills.
- Emphasize **partnership** in learning. I am a facilitator of your learning, so think of me as a valuable resource rather than the “voice of authority.”

Goals/Objectives

Topics in Psychology: Memory in Natural Contexts (PSYC 490) will explore applied topics of memory including significant memories, flashbulb memories, autobiographical memory, memory for trauma, eyewitness memory, false memory, déjà vu, childhood memory, and people with exceptional memories. The focus will be on the naturalistic study of memory, often called the “Everyday Memory” approach. Although the naturalistic study of memory examines aspects of memory that have direct real-world analogues, both quantitative and qualitative methodologies are used, including laboratory experiments.

Memory in Natural Contexts is designated a Communication in the Major and Capstone course. Thus, a significant component of the class will involve writing. In addition, you will have the opportunity to develop your writing skills through feedback. As Communication in the Major course, you will also get an opportunity to practice your oral presentation skills.

Below I enumerate the goals of the class along with associated APA Learning Outcomes in parentheses (see http://www.apa.org/ed/psymajor_guideline.pdf)

By the end of the semester, you will

1. understand the major phenomena examined by the Naturalistic Study of Memory (APA Learning Outcome 1.2),

2. critically evaluate the variety of methods used to study questions of Everyday Memory (APA Learning Outcomes 2.3 & 3.1),
3. discuss and debate the different theories and conclusions offered to explain naturalistic memory phenomena, including controversial topics (e.g., recovered memory of abuse; APA Learning Outcomes 5.3 & 7.4),
4. develop your ability to communicate your ideas in writing and verbally through journal entries, discussion sessions, and a major paper with revision (APA Learning Outcome 7.1 & 7.2), and
5. gain insight on your own memory from the readings, lectures, and class discussions (APA Learning Outcome 4.4).

Class Format

While the class will include traditional lectures, I envision the class primarily centered on discussion. For discussion to be successful, your full participation in the class will be required. We will be a smaller class, offering the opportunity for you to give your input, ideas, questions, and so forth. Please come prepared to participate in class!

Reading Assignments

Textbook reading assignments are indicated in the class schedule. To gain the most out of our time together, it is essential that you keep up with the course readings. For most weeks, you will be required to write a short journal entry of your impressions of the readings for that week. This will be a graded component of the class. Thus, for you to do well in the course, you will need to read the assigned chapters of the textbook.

If you are ever confused about what you read in the textbook, please ask questions in class, in the relevant Discussion on Canvas, or through email. Additional short readings (e.g., journal articles) may be assigned at my discretion to explore a topic more in depth.

Attendance

According to UWSP's attendance policy, students are required to attend classes regularly (<http://www.uwsp.edu/regrec/Pages/Attendance-Policy.aspx>). Attendance is not a direct part of your grade in this class; however, the class is primarily discussion based so regular absences will greatly impact the course. In addition, participation in the discussions is part of your grade. **If you miss a class, you are responsible for the material you missed.**

Guidelines for Courtesy and Respect in the Classroom

- Please **ask questions** if you are unclear about anything presented in lecture.
- Please **minimize disruptions** during class (e.g., conversations, doing other classwork, mobile devices, or other electronics, etc.).
- Please **show respect for your fellow students and your instructor** during classroom discussions and activities by attending, listening, and being open to diverse perspectives.
- I will let you out on time; please **do not get ready to leave** before the class is over.
- If you wish to use any **electronic device** to record class lectures and discussions, please speak with me first to get permission. In addition, the use of electronic devices during exams will be prohibited unless approval has been documented by the Disability and Assistive Technology Center.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Grading

Rubrics explaining the criteria for each of the graded components of the class will be distributed in class and on Canvas.

Participation. Starting week 4, you will be required to write a weekly journal entry reflecting on the readings for that week. These journal entries will show that you have read the chapters for the week. Your reflection will not be a simple review of the readings, but more an opportunity to generate questions, critique the points raised in the readings, and so forth. In addition, part of your grade will depend on contributing to class discussion each week.

Mid-Term & Final Exams. The mid-term and final exam will cover only the first half or second half of the semester, respectively (i.e., the final is not cumulative). Questions will come from the readings and any in-class lectures, discussions, or activities. The exact break-down of the types of questions will be announced later, but will include multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions.

Discussion Session. Students will be expected to lead a discussion of the topic for the week. The discussion sessions will begin week 4 and will take place on the Friday class of the respective week. Student-pairs will be expected to briefly summarize what we learned about the topic from the readings and discussions during the week, present new research on the topic (since 2005 if possible) and lead the class in a discussion of the important questions still unanswered about the topic.

Research Paper. Students will write a paper that will review the relevant literature on a topic of choice from a list of suggested topics (students may propose additional topics/ideas for approval). Students will receive feedback on their paper and will be expected to make changes based on that feedback.

Graded Components of Psych 490	Point Values	Percentage of Grade
Participation (Journal Reflection and In-class Contribution) 10 × 4 points	40	10%
Mid-Term & Final 2 × 100 points	200	50%
Discussion Session	60	15%
Research Paper	100	25%
TOTAL	400	100%

Final grades will be given according to the following scale:

Grade	Points	% Total
A	370 – 400	93%-100%
A-	358 – 369	90%-92%
B+	346 – 357	87%-89%
B	330 – 345	83%-86%
B-	318 – 329	80%-82%
C+	306 – 317	77%-79%
C	290 – 305	73%-76%
C-	278 – 289	70%-72%
D+	266 – 277	67%-69%
D	238 – 265	60%-66%
F	≤ 237	≤ 59%

Academic Honesty

- I treat academic honesty seriously. In short, academic honesty means that academic work you submit for your classes is yours alone (unless explicitly allowed by your instructor to work together with another and submit your assignment jointly), that you have properly cited sources of information in your work, that you have not misrepresented, in whole or in part, another person's work as your own, and that you respect the academic work of others.
- If I suspect that a violation of academic honesty has occurred, I will pursue disciplinary sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion from the university as permitted in Chapter UWS 14, "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures," of the *Wisconsin Administrative Code, Rules of the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System*.
- Copies of Ch. UWS 14 can be found in electronic form at <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/UWS%2014-1.pdf> and in paper form at The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, each residence hall desk, the Reserve Desk of the Learning Resources Center, the University Center Information Center, and the office of each academic dean. I recommend that you get a copy and read about your rights and responsibilities. In addition, Ch. UWS 14 provides specific examples of academic misconduct.
- For additional information about academic misconduct, please see <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/AcademicIntegrityBrochure.pdf>

Course Withdrawal

- If you wish to drop the class, you must do so within published deadlines to avoid a failing grade or loss of reimbursable tuition. The published deadlines can be found at <http://www.uwsp.edu/regrec/Pages/Cancellations.aspx>.

For Assistance:

- If you find that you are having academic difficulties in this course, please contact me. I am interested in helping you succeed in this course.
- For personal difficulties or concerns (e.g., stress, depression, etc.), please consider seeking the professional counseling from the UWSP Counseling Center, 715-346-3553, <http://www.uwsp.edu/counseling/>. These sessions are being held virtually for the time being due to covid.
- If you need additional accommodations (e.g., extra time on an exam), please contact me and the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (DATC) within the first two weeks of the semester. The DATC can be contacted at 715-346-3365, <http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx>.

Abuse and Sexual Assault:

Due to recent legislation, if any disclosure of unreported neglect or abuse of a child, elder, or disabled individual is made to a university instructor, he or she is required to report such information to the appropriate administrative or law enforcement officials. This includes instances of sexual assault of an adult.

Class Schedule

- I reserve the right to make changes to the class schedule as circumstances dictate (e.g., class is canceled due to an emergency). Any cancellations will be announced on Canvas.

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS/DUE DATES
1	Jan. 23	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Objectives and Expectations 	
	Jan. 25	Intro to The Study of Memory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Study of Memory 	Chapter 1
	Jan. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History and Argument for Naturalistic Study of Memory 	Banaji & Crowder (1989)
2	Jan. 30	Autobiographical Memory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of Autobiographical Memory 	Chapter 6
	Feb. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involuntary Memories 	Chapter 6
	Feb. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant Memories 	Pillemer (2001)
3	Feb. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diary Studies of Everyday Experiences 	Chapter 6
	Feb. 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diary Studies and Life Story Memories 	Thomsen et al. (2012)
	Feb. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Autobiographical Memory</i> 	Topic and Research Question Due
4	Feb. 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flashbulb Memories: Overview 	Brown & Kulik (1977) Journal 1 Due
	Feb. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flashbulb Memories: Accuracy 	Chapter 6
	Feb. 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Flashbulb Memories</i> 	
5	Feb. 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distortion in Memory for Past Performance 	Bahrack et al. (2008) Journal 2 Due
	Feb. 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Differences in Autobiographical Memory 	Schulkind et al. (2012)
	Feb. 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Distortion or Differences in Autobiographical Memory</i> 	
6	Feb. 27	Eyewitness Memory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reliability of Eyewitness Testimony 	Chapter 12 Journal 3 Due
	March 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Eyewitnesses 	Chapter 12
	March 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Eyewitness Memory</i> 	
7	March 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyewitness Testimony and Identification 	Sporer (2008) Journal 4 Due
	March 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Studies of Eyewitness Memory 	Yuille & Cutshall (1986)
	March 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Child Eyewitnesses</i> 	Outline and Annotated Reference Section Due
8	March 13	Memory for Trauma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accuracy and Forgetting in Memory for Trauma 	McNally (2005)
	March 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make-up Day/Review 	
	March 17	Mid-term Exam	Covers class material from 1/23 – 3/15 and all reading from the first half of the semester

9	March 27	False Memory in the Real World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> False Memory of Childhood and Adult Experiences 	Chapter 7 Journal 5 Due
	March 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Recovered Memory Debate 	Chapter 7
	March 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: False Memory</i> 	
10	April 3	Déjà vu <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition and Research 	Chapter 8 (pp. 272-274) Journal 6 Due
	April 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory and Explanations 	
	April 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Déjà vu</i> 	Draft of Introduction, Headings, & Annotations Due
11	April 10	Memory for Childhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childhood Amnesia 	Chapter 6 (pp. 182-188) Journal 7 Due
	April 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Autobiographical Memory 	Chapter 9 (pp. 285-291)
	April 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Childhood Memory</i> 	
12	April 17	Memory for Performances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memory for Prose and Verse 	Tillmann & Dowling (2007) Journal 8 Due
	April 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actors' Memories for Scripts 	Noice & Noice (1997)
	April 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Memory for Performances</i> 	
13	April 24	Amnesia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anterograde Amnesia 	Chapter 10 Journal 9 Due
	April 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Episodic Memory 	Tulving (2002)
	April 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Amnesia</i> 	
14	May 1	Memorists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of Memorists/Mnemonists 	Chapter 13 (pp. 434-435) Journal 10 Due
	May 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expertise vs. Aptitude 	Hu et al. (2009)
	May 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discussion Session: Memorists</i> 	
15	May 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly Superior Autobiographical Memory 	Parker et al. (2006)
	May 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expertise Revisited 	Ericsson et al. (2004)
	May 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclusion 	Final Paper Due
16	May 15	Final Exam – 10:15 a.m – 12:15 p.m.	Covers class material from 3/27 – 5/12 and all reading in the second half of the semester.