



PSYCHOLOGY 490-03 – Seminar: Topics in Psychology  
Memory in Natural Contexts  
Spring 2018  
2:00 – 2:50 MoTuTh  
D223 Science Building

**Instructor Contact Information:**

*Instructor:* Robert J. Nemeth, Ph.D.

*Office:* D237 Science Building

*Office hours:* 1-2 p.m. Tu and Th and 3-4 p.m We, or by appointment.

*Phone:* (715) 346-3070 (leave a voicemail message with your phone number, and I'll return your call)

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**Required Textbook**

Neisser, U., & Hyman, I. E., Jr. (2000). *Memory observed: Remembering in natural contexts*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Worth.

**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](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 lecture, I envision the class primarily centered on discussion. In order 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, in order 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 feel free to contact me through any of the various means listed above or feel free to ask questions in class (preferred, as asking questions in class may benefit other students as well). Additional short readings (e.g., journal articles) may be assigned at my discretion in order to explore a topic more in depth.

### **Desire 2 Learn (D2L)**

Lecture outlines, handouts, class announcements, and grades will be posted on *D2L*. Make sure to check D2L on a weekly basis for new material. **To find D2L, log on to your My Point portal, click on the “Academics” tab in the upper left part of the screen, then click the “Desire 2 Learn” link. Alternatively, you can point your web browser directly to <http://www.uwsp.edu/d2l/Pages/default.aspx>**

### **Attendance**

According to UWSP’s attendance policy, students are required to attend classes regularly (<http://www.uwsp.edu/regrec/Pages/Attendance-Policy.aspx>). I will not be recording attendance but I expect you to attend every class unless you have an understandable excuse (e.g., illness, unforeseen emergencies, etc.). **If you miss a class, you are responsible for the material you missed.**

### Guidelines for Courtesy and Respect in the Classroom

I ask that you please respect five requests during our class meetings:

- Please **ask questions** if you are confused by anything I present in lecture—feel free to ask questions about content (e.g., "I'm still confused about the difference between episodic and semantic memory; can you give an example of each?") or more technical aspects of the lecture (e.g., "I'm confused about the way you defined flashbulb memory. Could you reword it?"). In all likelihood, if you are confused then others in the class will be confused also.
- Please **ask me to slow down** if I am speaking too fast for you to understand the lecture topic and take good notes.
- Please **minimize disruptions** during class (e.g., conversations, reading or working on other material, using electronic devices, etc.)—doing so will show respect for your fellow classmates (and me).
- Please **show respect for your fellow students and your instructor** during classroom discussions and activities by attending, listening, and being open to diverse perspectives. Our common ground-rule for classroom discussions will be that only one person should be speaking at a time unless the class is broken down into separate group discussions.
- I will let you out on time; please **do not get ready to leave** before the class is over (you might miss something important).
- 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 a pertinent office on campus (e.g., 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 D2L.

**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.

- If you know in advance that you will miss an exam date (e.g., for University functions, family functions such as marriages, religious holidays, etc.), you should contact me as soon as possible. You will be allowed to take the exam early at an arranged time. If you miss an exam due to an unexpected absence (e.g., illness), you must contact me within 48-hours of the exam date to schedule a make-up exam. Should you fail to contact me within the 48-hour period of the exam date, you will be assigned a 0 for that exam.
- I strive to write questions that are challenging and academically rigorous but also fair. If you feel that a question is unfair or inaccurate, you may fill out a Request for Review Form that can be downloaded from D2L. You will

be asked to indicate what exam and question you wish for me to review, as well as supporting evidence for your argument that a question is unfair or inaccurate. The deadline for a request for review is two weeks from the date your exam has been returned.

**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 Thursday 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.

<b>Graded Components of Psych 490</b>	<b>Point Values</b>	<b>Percentage of Grade</b>
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%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100%</b>

Final grades will be given according to the following scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>% Total</u>
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, specifically plagiarism, go to <http://library.uwsp.edu/Guides/VRD/plagiarism.htm>.

### Course Withdrawal

- If you wish to drop the class, you must do so within published deadlines in order 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, Third Floor Delzell Hall, 346-3553, <http://www.uwsp.edu/counseling/>.
- If you are in need of 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 found at 604 Albertson Hall, and can be contacted at 346-3365, <http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx>.

**Emergency Procedures:** The UWSP Office of Risk Management has recommended the following emergency procedures (See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at [www.uwsp.edu/rmgt](http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt) for details on all emergency procedures at UW-Stevens Point.):

- In the event of a medical emergency, call 911 or use red emergency phone located in the hallway. Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victim.
- In the event of a tornado warning, we will evacuate to the hallway. See <http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/other/floor-plans.aspx> for floor plans showing severe weather shelters on campus.
- In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Meet at the HEC. Notify instructor or emergency command personnel of any missing individuals.

**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.

**Student Contacts**

- If you ever need to miss class, you should contact a few classmates to find out what you missed. Although I am happy to help you with any material you missed, you are responsible for all missed material and should first seek out fellow students to prepare for the next class period. Please take a few minutes to obtain contact information from fellow students sitting around you.

**Name**

**Phone**

**Email**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Class Schedule**

- I reserve the right to make changes to the class schedule as circumstances dictate (e.g., class is canceled due to bad weather). Any cancellations of class will be announced through email and will be posted as an announcement on *D2L*. Any subsequent changes in the schedule will be announced in class and on *D2L*.

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS/DUE DATES
1	Jan. 22	<b>Welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Objectives and Expectations</li> </ul>	
	Jan. 23	<b>Intro to Naturalistic Study of Memory</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History and Argument for Naturalistic Study of Memory</li> </ul>	Both Prefaces & Excerpt 1
	Jan. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History and Argument for Naturalistic Study of Memory</li> </ul>	Excerpts 2 & 3
2	Jan. 29	<b>Memory for Special Occasions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant Memories</li> </ul>	Excerpt 4
	Jan. 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involuntary Memories</li> </ul>	Excerpt 5
	Feb. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashbulb Memories</li> </ul>	Excerpt 6 & 7
3	Feb. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashbulb Memories: Accuracy Reconsidered</li> </ul>	Excerpts 8 & 9
	Feb. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashbulb Memories: Personal Relevance</li> </ul>	Excerpt 10
	Feb. 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Session: Flashbulb Memories</li> </ul>	
4	Feb. 12	<b>Autobiographical Memory</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diary Studies of Everyday Experiences</li> </ul>	Excerpts 11 & 12 Journal 1 Due
	Feb. 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memory Failure of Everyday Experiences</li> </ul>	Excerpts 13-15
	Feb. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Session: Everyday Memory</li> </ul>	
5	Feb. 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distortion in Memory for Past Performance</li> </ul>	Excerpts 16 & 17 Journal 2 Due
	Feb. 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distortion in Memory for Relationships</li> </ul>	Excerpts 18 & 19
	Feb. 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Session: Distortion in EDM</li> </ul>	
6	Feb. 26	<b>Eyewitness Memory</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Reliability of Eyewitness Testimony</li> </ul>	Excerpts 20 & 21 Journal 3 Due
	Feb. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eyewitness Identification</li> </ul>	Excerpt 22
	March 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Session: Eyewitness Memory</li> </ul>	
7	March 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Eyewitnesses</li> </ul>	Excerpt 23 Journal 4 Due
	March 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Studies of Eyewitness Memory</li> </ul>	Excerpts 24 & 25
	March 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Session: Child Eyewitnesses</li> </ul>	
8	March 12	<b>Memory for Trauma</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accuracy and Forgetting in Memory for Trauma</li> </ul>	Excerpts 31 & 32
	March 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make-up Day/Review</li> </ul>	
	March 15	<b>Mid-term Exam</b>	Covers class material from 1/22 – 3/13 and Excerpts 1-25, 31 & 32.

9	March 19	<b>False Memory in the Real World</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>False Memory of Childhood and Adult Experiences</li> </ul>	Excerpt 30 Journal 5 Due
	March 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Recovered Memory Debate</li> </ul>	Excerpt 33-35
	March 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Session: False Memory</li> </ul>	
<b>Spring Break – 3/26 – 3/30</b>			
10	April 2	<b>Déjà vu</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definition and Research</li> </ul>	Brown (2003) Journal 6 Due
	April 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theory and Explanations</li> </ul>	Brown (2003)
	April 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Session: Déjà vu</li> </ul>	
11	April 9	<b>Memory for Childhood</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childhood Amnesia</li> </ul>	Excerpts 26 & 27 Journal 7 Due
	April 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of Autobiographical Memory</li> </ul>	Excerpts 28 & 29
	April 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Session: Childhood Memory</li> </ul>	
12	April 16	<b>Memory for Performances</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbatim Memory of Prose and Verse</li> </ul>	Excerpts 36 & 37 Journal 8 Due
	April 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memory in Oral Traditions</li> </ul>	Excerpts 38 & 39
	April 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Session: Memory for Prose and Verse</li> </ul>	
13	April 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural Explanations of Long-term Memory in Oral Traditions</li> </ul>	Excerpts 40 & 41 Journal 9 Due
	April 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memory Strategies in Story Recall</li> </ul>	Excerpts 42 & 43
	April 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Session: Memory Strategy for Stories</li> </ul>	
14	April 30	<b>Memorists</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of Mnemonists</li> </ul>	Excerpt 44 Journal 10 Due
	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental Imagery vs. Verbal Elaboration</li> </ul>	Excerpts 45 & 46
	May 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Session: Memorists</li> </ul>	
15	May 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific Aptitudes</li> </ul>	Excerpts 47 & 48
	May 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expertise</li> </ul>	Excerpts 49 & 50
	May 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Conclusion</b></li> </ul>	
16	May 17 8 a.m. – 10 a.m.	<b>Final Exam</b>	Covers class material from 3/19 – 5/10 and Excerpts 26-30,33-50, and Brown (2003)