



EDF 6142

Cognitive & Affective Bases of Behavior

88146 003

Fall 2026

Instructor Name

Tony Tan

University Course Description

This course focuses on cognitive and affective/emotional processes and their influences on behavior, the implications of cognition and affect/emotion interaction in applied psychology. It examines such topics as attention, memory, executive functioning, motivation, emotional regulation, and positive affect. Contextual factors associated with cognition, emotion, and behavior are also examined.

Course Requisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

Approximately 13% of the questions on the psychology licensing exam, the *Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP)*, cover cognitive-affective bases of behavior. The purpose of this course is to expose students to past and current research related to the cognitive and affective bases of behavior and their integration in psychological processes. The cognitive bases of behavior will include such topics as memory, thought processes, and decision-making. The affective bases of behavior will include topics such as affect, mood, and emotion. The students will also be exposed to

various theoretical, social-cultural and ethical perspectives on how humans process and organize information and emotional experiences, and the resulting behaviors and behavioral patterns.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to

1. identify key concepts of cognition such as learning, memory, thought processes, and decision-making.
2. identify key concepts of affect including mood and emotion.
3. become familiar with current literature/research on various topics in which cognition and affect psychology interacts with each other to shape behavior.
4. apply theoretical and empirical evidence to understand the cognitive and affective processes underlying behaviors.
5. understand the connection between cognition and affect and how these two areas of human function influence each other.
6. integrate and apply research findings and implications in the study of cognition and affect to practical experiences.
7. summarize and evaluate current (and seminal) research in cognitive or affective domains for application in school psychology.
8. understand how contextual factors (i.e., culture, language, developmental level) influence cognitive and emotional processes.

Course Objectives

This course contributes to, and builds on prior, graduate coursework that provides a foundational base in discipline-specific knowledge related to affective, biological, cognitive, developmental, and social aspects of behavior. In particular, content and learning activities in each week of this course emphasize affective aspects of behavior (e.g., weeks 2, 5, 10, and 11), cognitive aspects of behavior (e.g., weeks 3, 6, 7, and 8), advanced integrative knowledge pertinent to affective and cognitive aspects of behavior (e.g., weeks 4, 12 – 15).

For students enrolled in the School Psychology Program, the knowledge base and professional competencies developed through this course address the goals of the School Psychology Program as indicated below. The course objectives relating directly to desired Professional Competencies and Program Goals are noted in the table below.

Competency	Goals	Objective	
Competencies for Practice in Health Service Psychology (APA CoA)	Program Goals for School Psychology Practice (NASP Domains)	Course Objectives	
Research	Research and Program Evaluation	7	
Individual and Cultural Diversity	Diversity in Development and Learning	8	
Assessment	Data-Based Decision-Making and Accountability	n/a	
Intervention	Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills	1, 6	
	Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills	2, 6	
Ethical and Legal Standards	Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice	n/a	
Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors			
Supervision		n/a	

Competency	Goals	Objective	
Communications and Interpersonal Skills	Consultation and Collaboration	n/a	
Consultation and Inter-professional/ Interdisciplinary Skills	School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning	1, 3, 5	
	Preventive and Responsive Services	2, 3, 5	
	Family-School Collaboration Services	n/a	

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

This is no required textbook for this course.

How to Succeed in this Course

The course will be delivered through instructor-led discussions, student-led discussions and presentations, assignments and other forms of learning activities. Theoretical traditions, their central constructs, and related research will be covered in a way that promotes students' understanding and enhances their capacity to derive practical applications and draw broader educational implications. Active participation in class activities is a basic requirement in this course. All students should be prepared to discuss the readings. Each student is expected to read all assigned chapters, articles, etc. and come to class prepared to ask questions, debate, challenge, and otherwise interpret/discuss the material. Overall, students are expected to pay attention to identifying important general principles of how the mind and affect function, the evidence for those principles, and the applicability of the theories and findings to issues of cognitive processes and behavioral manifestations.

Grading Scale

Percentage	Letter Grade
94-100	A
90 – 93	A-
87 – 89	B+
84 – 86	B
80 – 83	B-
77 – 79	C+
74 – 76	C
70 – 73	C-
67 – 69	D+
64 – 66	D
60 – 63	D-
0 – 59	F

Grade Categories and Weights

Attendance (10%).

This course has 15 meetings, thus each class covers about 7% of the content of this foundational course in school psychology. Students are expected to attend all 15 class meetings in person (unless course schedule specifies an online class), be punctual, and to complete all assignments on time, unless there is an emergency (e.g., death in the family, serious illness). If an emergency occurs, the instructor should be notified as soon as possible (prior to class) so that any necessary arrangements can be made. The ultimate goal of this course is mastery of all content and skills to develop competent graduate-level trainees in school psychology. Accordingly, in the rare event a class is missed, the student is responsible for (a) creating and submitting to the instructor a 'make-up plan' (with timeline) to complete the activities missed in class in a way that demonstrates mastery of the 7% of content covered that week, and (b) notifying the instructor of their completion of the approved plan. Students who miss two or more classes, are frequently late to class, or do not often engage in course discussion are subject to course failure. The instructor is committed to facilitating student

success in this course; please initiate and maintain frequent communication with him regarding potential barriers to this goal.

Participation (10%)

Students are expected to be active participants in class activities (presentation, discussions, etc.), with questions and comments demonstrating reflection on readings and activities. When participating in online classes, students are expected to join with video and keep webcams on for the duration of class. In each class, students are encouraged to raise issues, provide feedback, suggest topics for discussion, and make comments pertinent to the content of the course. Students are expected to respect differences, and to provide constructive feedback and support to colleagues in discussions and in the development of ideas for assignments. Note:

- The use of laptop computers and during class for any reason except note-taking and accessing classes held online is strictly prohibited. Violation of this rule will be reflected in one's participation grade, as active listening and participation cannot co-occur with emailing, internet browsing, and work on other tasks.
- In general, cell phones are not permitted to be monitored during class (please turn off and put away). Notify the instructor prior to class if an exception is needed, for instance during internship call day, ill child, or similar unavoidable situation.
- Tablet computers (e.g., iPad) placed face up and flat on the desk will be permitted to access digital versions of PowerPoint notes.
- Technological accommodations can be arranged through disability services.

Assignments:

Discussion facilitation (20%)

Each student will lead one group discussion for about 45-60 minutes in one class session. Such session leading may include very brief summary of key points from each required reading, posing of 5-6 questions for discussion, and moderating of discussion/debate. The discussion leader is encouraged to conduct in-class learning activities to demonstrate the key concepts. He/she is also encouraged to prepare by reading additional relevant papers, the written reflections provided by

the peers and to use knowledge gained from these papers to help the class consider the topic of the day.

Written Reflections (10%)

Each student will submit two written reflections (**1-2 page, double-spaced, typed, APA formatting and referencing**) to summarize your reflections, insights, suggestions, comments, etc. based on the required readings assigned in the two weeks you sign up for. Your reflection should answer the questions provided on the Reflection Sheet (see Appendix). This assignment is intended to provide you with the material necessary for participating fully in class discussions and for learning to reflect on your own learning process and applying research to practice. Answers to the questions require that you think about the literature/research and the relevance of the article to your background/experiences. NOTE: Your written reflections cannot overlap with the articles that you facilitated.

Class Presentation: Integration of Cognitive and Affective Aspects of Behavior (20%)

For this assignment, you will find a case from a novel, film, documentary, autobiography, biography, or your own clinical case (or another source which I may have omitted) that is related to a specific type of cognitive and/or emotional behavior that you are interested in. You are to conduct an analysis of the subject/topic of your source through the lens of research and theories in the cognitive and affective psychology and present your analysis at the end of the semester. In your analysis, use the examples from the source you choose to illustrate the interactions between cognitive process and emotional/affective states and the influences of the interactions on human behaviors. Also, discuss the influence of contextual factors (i.e., peers, family, school, culture) on the interactive association between cognitive and emotional/affective processes and behavioral outcomes.

Paper on Major Theories on Cognitive or Affective Aspects of Behavior (30%)

You will choose *either* the cognitive *or* affective aspects of behavior and write a 10-page paper describing and evaluating 1-2 key theories in the field. For each theory, you should include a brief historical summary of the psychologist(s) or scientist(s) who posited the theory/ies. Although the foundation of the paper will be on a particular topic of interest, the paper must reflect written understanding of

the *basic science of cognition and emotions* (i.e., this is not a clinically focused paper). For example, a student might be interested in the *topic* of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) but the paper must not simply be a summary of CBT; rather, the student should write about the *basic science of affect and cognition* as it might relate to a client's changing beliefs and emotions during the course of CBT.

Major Topics and Course Schedule

Weekly readings will be posted on Canvas. The readings will cover the following topics that correspond to the learning outcomes.

1. Concepts of cognition such as learning, memory, thought processes, and decision-making.
2. Concepts of affect including mood and emotion.
3. Current literature/research on various topics in which cognition and affect psychology interacts with each other to shape behavior.
4. Theoretical and empirical evidence related to the cognitive and affective processes underlying behaviors.
5. The connection between cognition and affect and how these two areas of human function influence each other.
6. Research findings and their implications in the study of cognition and affect to practical experiences.
7. Current (and seminal) research in cognitive or affective domains for application in school psychology.
8. Contextual factors (i.e., culture, language, developmental level) that influence cognitive and emotional processes.

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

First Day Attendance Policy:

As part of the first day attendance, students are required to (1) complete a briefly survey prior to the class meeting, and (2) be physically present for the first day of class.

Late Work Policy:

Regarding assignments turned in late without prior permission, credit for late work will be awarded on the following basis: 10% of the possible points will be deducted for assignments submitted late for **each** day after the due date (e.g., an assignment that is 5 days late would result in a deduction of 50% of the possible points for that assignment). Assignments will no longer be accepted one week after the due date.

Make-up Exams Policy:

No exam make-ups.

Extra Credit Policy:

No extra credit.

Rewrite Policy: Offer specifics about your policy on rewrites.

Rewrites are entirely optional; however, only the formal essay may be rewritten for a revised grade. Note that an alternate grading rubric will be used for the rewrite, featuring an additional column that evaluates the changes made specifically.

Exam Retention Policy: Describe how long you will keep graded work.

There is no exam for this class.

Essay Commentary Policy: Offer specifics about your policy on essays.

Commentary on essays will be delivered in written format, at the end of the essay.

Group Work Policy: Offer specifics about your policy on group work.

Everyone must take part in a group project. All members of a group will receive the same score unless members of the group clearly stated differences in contributions to the project.

Final Examinations Policy:

No final exam. However, there is an option of completing a final presentation on the last day of class.

Grades of "Incomplete"

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original date grades were due for that course. An "I" grade not cleared within the two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Email: Feel free to email me whenever you need assistance and your email will be returned within one business day.

Canvas: This course will be offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please view the following videos or consult the Canvas help guides. You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email.

The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Netiquette Guidelines

- Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
- Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
- Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
- Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
- Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

- Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
- Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
- Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your

understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website.](#)

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Services](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout Site.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent

resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)