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## Temporal Cognition Field

by [Nick Clark](#) | Published March 27, 2026 | [PDF](#)

Cognitive domain field encoding subjective relationship to time including urgency, patience, and deadline pressure that modulates forecasting horizons, promotion thresholds, empathy weighting, and confidence.

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### What It Is

The temporal cognition field is a cognitive domain field encoding the agent's subjective relationship to time. It includes dimensions for urgency, patience, and deadline pressure. These temporal perceptions modulate forecasting horizons, promotion thresholds, empathy weighting, and confidence computation through bidirectional coupling with the affective state.

An agent under deadline pressure narrows its planning horizon and raises its promotion threshold for speculative branches, focusing cognitive resources on near-term execution.

## Why It Matters

Temporal context fundamentally changes what constitutes appropriate behavior. An agent with abundant time should explore broadly and plan deeply. An agent under deadline pressure should narrow its focus and prioritize actionable plans. Without a temporal field, agents treat all time horizons identically.

The bidirectional coupling with affect ensures that temporal pressure influences emotional state and vice versa. Elevated urgency increases risk sensitivity. High patience supports deeper speculative exploration.

## How It Works Structurally

The temporal cognition field maintains urgency, patience, and deadline pressure as independently addressable dimensions with the same tuple structure as other affective dimensions. Urgency increases when external deadlines approach or when execution delays accumulate. Patience decreases under sustained blocking conditions.

Coupling functions link temporal dimensions to planning horizon length in the forecasting engine, promotion threshold sensitivity in the evaluation pipeline, and empathy weighting in the coherence trifecta. All couplings are policy-governed with configurable weights and bounds.

## What It Enables

Agents that naturally shift behavior under time pressure, narrowing their focus and becoming more decisive as deadlines approach. This produces context-appropriate behavior without requiring explicit deadline-handling logic.

Real-time systems where agents must balance exploration and exploitation based on available time, with the temporal field providing the structural mechanism for this balance.

[Affective State All 21 steps →](#)

Emotion as a computational primitive, not a simulation.

Primary Technical Disclosure

[◦ Affective State as a Deterministic Control Primitive for Semantic Agents](#)

Secondary Technical

[◦ Affective State as Seventh Canonical Field](#) ◦ [Named Control Field Modulation Architecture](#) ◦ [Affect-Modulated Promotion Thresholds](#) ◦ [Deterministic Affect Encoding and Update Mechanics](#) ◦ [Emotional Decay Curves With Hysteresis](#) ◦ [Entropy-Governed Valence Stabilization](#) ◦ [Affective Inheritance in Delegation Chains](#) ◦ [Emotional Quarantine and Volatility Management](#) ◦ [Affect-Modulated Trust Slope Validation](#) ◦ [Biological Signal-to-Affective Coupling](#) ◦ [Affective Contagion in Multi-Agent Systems](#) ◦ [Affect-Modulated Discovery Traversal](#) ◦ [Affect-Governance Separation](#) ◦ [Policy-Bounded Affective Updates](#) ◦ [Affect as Cross-Primitive Input](#) ◦ [Affect-Modulated Inference Integration](#) ◦ [Substrate-Agnostic Affect Deployment](#) ◦ [Pseudonymous Emotional Operation](#) • [Temporal Cognition Field](#)

Applications (General)

[◦ Companion AI That Maintains Emotional Consistency Across Sessions](#) ◦ [Therapeutic Agent Affect Management Under Clinical Constraints](#) ◦ [Affective State for Customer Service Agents](#) ◦ [Affective State for Elderly Care Companion Agents](#) ◦ [Affective State for Crisis Response Agents](#) ◦ [Affective State for Negotiation Agents](#) ◦ [Affective State for Educational Tutoring Agents](#) ◦ [Affective State for HR and Recruitment Agents](#)

Applications (Specific)

[◦ Replika's Emotional Memory Is Stateless](#) ◦ [Character.ai's Personality Problem Is Deeper Than Prompting](#) ◦ [Woebot's Therapeutic Affect Has No Persistent State](#) ◦ [Elomia's Empathy Resets Every Session](#) ◦ [Hume AI Measures Emotion but Cannot Govern It](#) ◦ [Affectiva Reads Faces but Not Emotional Trajectories](#) ◦ [Cogito Scores Conversations Without Emotional State](#) ◦ [Beyond Verbal Decoded Voice Without Building Emotional Memory](#) ◦ [EmotiBit Captures Physiology Without Affective Governance](#) ◦ [RealEyes Measures Attention Without Emotional Persistence](#)

[Affective State overview →](#)

AQ

deterministic

autonomy

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