

PSYD50-F09: Current Topics in Memory and Cognition

Class Meeting Time: Tuesday 9-11

Classroom: BV361

Course website: BlackBoard

Contact Information for Instructor:

Instructor: Dwayne E. Paré

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Goals of the course: This course is designed to help you develop your critical thinking and communication skills. It will also serve as an introduction to classic research, current topics of debate, and research interest in cognitive psychology and, to a lesser extent, cognitive neuroscience. The goal is to use in-depth discussion of specific topics to illustrate the kinds of theories, research strategies, data, and mistakes, that researchers use/make when conducting their research, and trying to develop a better understanding of memory & cognition.

Required Readings:

All articles will be made available on the BlackBoard website. It is important to remember that reading the articles will be necessary for all components of this course (i.e., all evaluations require that you have knowledge of the articles).

Methods of Evaluation:

Weekly Peer Feedback (through peerScholar)	35%
Article Summary Presentation & Discussion Leader	10%
Thought Paper/Critical Thinking Piece	15%
Class Participation	10%
Final Exam	30%

Weekly Peer Feedback (through peerScholar) (3% x 10 + 5 = 35%)

Every week (that you are not the presenter) you will be expected to log into peerScholar on two occasions: 1) to provide feedback on a draft of the upcoming presenter's thought paper, and 2) to rate the final version of the paper after your peer's presentation. You will do this on 10 occasions, and **I will rate** the quality of your feedback on a scale from 0 – 3 (maximum 3 x 10 = 30%). You will also receive 0.5% for rating the final version of the paper (0.5% x 10 = 5%). Your feedback should be NO longer than a page (but a paragraph or two will suffice if you get your point across efficiently).

Scale:

0= provided no feedback

1= provided non-informative or brief feedback (e.g., your idea was great – A+)

2=provided semi-informative – but obvious - feedback (e.g., you spelt 'memory' wrong)

3= provided informative and detailed feedback

Presentation and Discussion Leader (10%)

You will be required to present a summary of a selected academic article one time during the course (aprox. 15mins). Following this, you will be expected to lead the class discussion on the current topic (aprox. 15mins). This will primarily be based on your thought paper/critical thinking piece (see below).

Thought Paper/Critical Thinking Piece (15%)

Prior to the week you are selected to present an article, you will be required to write a draft of a thought paper/critical thinking piece based on your academic article to-be presented and submit it into peerScholar (due: Wed of the week prior to your presentation). Your peers will then provide feedback on your draft paper (through peerScholar), and you are then expected to consider the feedback - weeding out the good comments from the irrelevant comments - and revise your final paper accordingly (due: Tues night of your presentation). Your final grade on the thought paper will be based on 1) the final version of your paper and 2) your ability to take the relevant feedback from your peers and improve your paper.

Your paper should be about 3 pages long. The critical thinking piece provides you with an opportunity to tell the reader what you think about some issue relevant to the article. However, I do not just want you to write just your thoughts. Instead, I would like you to present a clear argument for some perspective you wish to take on the research outlined in the reading. You should back-up your arguments (whether they be supporting arguments or refuting arguments) with research from outside sources. All papers are expected to be written in APA format.

Class Participation (10%)

It is very important that you develop the ability to discuss, in conversational style, both data and theory. There are several ways to achieve these marks in this course. The most obvious type of contribution, and the one I will be looking for the most, is contribution to class discussions. Near the end of the course, I will ask you to rate your own contributions, relative to the rest of the class. I will take these self-ratings (along with my notes) into account in determining your final class participation grade.

Final Exam (30%)

The final exam will consist of short answer and essay questions. The content will be based on the material we have discussed throughout the term. The questions will focus on the material that students were asked to present in class and on the major topics we discussed in the course. The exam will have some 'factual' content, but the majority will be based on your thoughts, while also demonstrating the knowledge that you have learned throughout the semester.

General Class Structure (2 hours):

- 9:10 -Class begins.
- General Questions.
- Presenter 1 summarizes their paper
- P1 leads class discussion (based on thought paper/critical thinking piece)
- General class discussion

- Presenter 2 summarizes their paper
 - P2 leads class discussion (based on thought paper/critical thinking piece)
 - * Some classes will have a third presenter
 - Summary and open discussion.
- 10:50 -End of class

Weekly Schedule:

Weekly (when you are not presenting)	When you are the Presenter:
Sunday	Sunday
Monday	Monday
Tuesday: Class	Tuesday: Class
Wednesday	Wednesday: Draft of thought paper due
Thursday: Peer feedback opens	Thursday
Friday	Friday
Saturday	Saturday
Sunday: Peer feedback due	Sunday
Monday	Monday
Tuesday: Class	Tuesday: Presentation & final version due
Wednesday: Rating of final version due	Wednesday
Thursday	Thursday
Friday	Friday
Saturday	Saturday

Note:

1. You are required to provide peer feedback every week by Sunday at midnight. You are also expected to rate the final version of a presenter's paper the Wednesday following class. If you are late for either of these, you will not be given extra time and forfeit the marks.

2. [Presenters] Drafts of thought paper are to be submitted on the Wednesday by midnight the week prior to your presentation. Also, the final version of your paper is due the Tuesday of your presentation. Neither of the papers, draft or final version, will not be accepted late (it is unfair to the other people in the class who submit theirs on time).

Academic Writing

Writing assignments make-up a large component of this course. If you are not comfortable with your writing abilities, or would like a quick refresher on specific topics, then be sure to make use of the following two excellent resources:

UTSC Writing Centre: AC 210, <http://www.utoronto.ca/~tlsweb/TWC/index.htm>

-- offer 20 min. drop in sessions, or 50 min. 1-1 sessions.

U of T Advice on Academic Writing: <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/advise.html>

-- a fantastic source of materials on writing.

Policies on Missed Assignments:

Given you are only required to present one day during the semester, I am expecting you to be in class that day (and hopefully every class you'll be there). If you miss your presentation due to illness, or any of your peer feedback submissions, be sure to get the appropriate medical documentation (note: it will be followed up on). In the case of peer feedback, you do not have to be in class (i.e., you can do it from home online) thereby allowing you to stay caught up with the class even if you are ill.

Deferred Exams:

For final exams, UTSC sets the policies (not the course instructor). You are allowed to defer your exam if you cannot write it - but you must follow the university's procedures. Please see this link for information on how to defer a final exam:

http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~registrar/current_students/deferred_exams

Policies on Academic Integrity

Please review the UTSC Code on Academic Behaviour:

http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/courses/calendar/University_of_Toronto_Policies.html#Code_of_Behaviour_on_Academic_Matters

AccessAbility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible. The UTSC AccessAbility Services staff (located in S302) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations (416) 287-7560 or ability@utsc.utoronto.ca. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.