

Current Topics in Developmental Psychology

Class Time and Location: Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00pm, AA205

Course Website: BlackBoard

Instructor: Lisa Collimore

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Course Description:

This course is designed to develop your critical thinking and communication skills. It will also provide an overview of the current research topics in developmental psychology. The format of this course is seminar-discussion. Each week, students will read a series of papers and/or experimental reports. All classes will be lead by a discussant, a student who leads and guides the class discussion.

Course Readings:

All articles will be made available on BlackBoard. It is vital that you read **all** of the weekly articles **before** coming to class.

Course Requirements:

Weekly Peer Feedback (through peerScholar)	35%
Presentation & Discussion Leader	10%
Thought Paper	15%
Class Participation	10%
Final Exam	30%
Total:	100%

Weekly Peer Feedback (30% for the feedback + 5% for the ratings = 35%)

You will provide feedback only on weeks when you are not the presenter. To provide feedback, you will use peerScholar (an online tool that can be found on BlackBoard). Each week, you will log onto peerScholar two times. On the first time, you will provide feedback on a draft thought paper, and on the second time, you will provide a rating of the final version of the paper, and on the presentation itself. These ratings will only be seen by myself and will not count toward your final grade. You will receive a maximum of 5% for simply doing the rating.

Each week, I will mark the quality of your feedback using the following 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 a word wrong)

3= provided informative and detailed feedback

When you are **NOT** the presenter:

- **Peer feedback** is DUE every week **by Sunday at midnight**
- **Ratings** must be done on **Tuesday or Wednesday** following the class

NOTES:

1. Your weekly feedback should be NO longer than a page (but a paragraph or two will suffice if you get your point across efficiently).
2. No extra time will be granted for those late submitting feedback or providing ratings. You will forfeit the marks for that week.

Presentation and Discussion Leader (10%)

You will present a summary of **one** of the weekly readings **once** during the course (approx. 15mins).

Following your presentation, you will lead the class discussion on this topic (approx. 15mins), using ideas from your thought paper as a guide.

When you are the presenter:

- **The draft** of your thought paper is DUE on **the Wednesday PRIOR to your presentation** – EMAIL it TO ME so that I can put them into peerScholar for you.
- **The final version** of your thought paper is DUE **the Tuesday of your presentation** – EMAIL it to me.

NOTE: These 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).

Thought Paper (15%)

Prior to the week of your presentation you are to write a draft thought paper and submit it to peerScholar (found on BlackBoard). Your peers will provide feedback on your draft (also through peerScholar), and then you should consider the feedback - weeding out the good comments from the irrelevant comments - and revise your paper accordingly. Your final thought paper must be submitted into peerScholar the Tuesday of your presentation. Your paper should be about 3 pages long, and it should tell the reader what you think about some issue relevant to the article. However, I do not 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%)

Participating in class discussions is very important to the success of this course, and to your grade. As such, everyone is encouraged to talk in each and every class – otherwise we'll all just be sitting there! I will also be taking attendance regularly, which will be part of this requirement.

Final Exam (30%)

The final exam will consist of short answer and essay questions, and will be scheduled during the final exam schedule for Winter 2010. It will be based on major topics discussed throughout the term

Class Schedule

Date	Topic (tentative)
Jan. 5	Organizational meeting
Jan. 12	Overview of methods and theories
Jan. 19	Reaching and Grasping
Jan. 26	Tool-use
Feb. 2	Hand Preferences
Feb. 9	Obstacles
Feb. 16	READING WEEK – NO CLASS
Feb. 23	Object Search
Mar. 2	Intentionality/Goal-directed action
Mar. 9	Symbolic Function/Understanding
Mar. 16	Deception and Lying
Mar. 23	Face Processing
Mar. 30	Students' choice (majority)

Other Important Things

- **Academic Writing:** Since writing is a large component of this course, here are two useful writing resources:
UTSC Writing Centre: AC 210, <http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~tswweb/TWC/index.htm>
U of T Advice on Academic Writing: <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/advise.html>
- **Deferred Exams:** Exam deferrals are arranged through the Registrar, not the course instructor. Information on how to defer a final exam can be found here:
http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~registrar/current_students/deferred_exams
- **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:** For students with diverse learning styles and/or a health-related issue, please approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible. AccessAbility Services is located in SW-302, or can be reached at (416)287-7560 or ability@utsc.utoronto.ca

- **Missed Assignments:** Given that you are only required to present one day during the term, I am expecting you to be in class that day (and hopefully every other class as well!). If you DO miss your presentation due to illness, be sure to get the appropriate medical documentation; alternative arrangements will be made if necessary. As for missed weekly peer feedback requirements, remember that you don't actually have to be in class to complete this requirement. In fact, since you need to complete this online, there really isn't any excuse for NOT having it done. In other words, "I was sick and at home" doesn't count as a valid excuse for missing weekly peer feedback due dates.

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