



PSYD50H3 S LEC01: Current Topics in Memory & Cognition

Winter 2013

Fridays 11 – 1pm MW223

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Website:	Blackboard
Office hours	Fridays, 2:00pm – 4:00pm

****Please post course/content related questions to relevant blackboard discussion forum for benefit of other students. All other questions must be sent to this email address. Emails pertaining to PSYD50 sent to Dr Lee's personal account will not be answered.***

1. Course Description and Objectives

How does the brain process memories? Do different brain regions make distinct contributions to memory processing? Are there different types of memories? The present course is designed to provide you with an in-depth understanding of some of the key issues in the cognitive neuroscience of memory. Although you may have come across some of these topics in previous courses in Years 1 to 3, you will soon discover that there is considerable debate surrounding each one, with conflicting experimental data, differing interpretations of studies, and contrasting theoretical viewpoints. Throughout the course, you will be encouraged to engage in discussion and debate with your peers, and you will be given the opportunity to develop your critical thinking and presentation (written and oral) skills. In summary, by the end of the course, you will:

- A) Be knowledgeable in a number of current 'hot topics' in cognitive neuroscience memory research including the functions of the medial temporal lobe structures, what role imagination plays in memory processing, whether the parietal lobe is critical for memory processing, and how memory may or may not be able to be improved.
- B) Be able to consider experimental data critically, and reconcile divergent findings.
- C) Understand how to discuss and critique experimental studies in the context of a written article or an oral presentation.
- D) Develop your own viewpoint on the basis of evidence available in the literature.

The last three skills are particularly crucial as they are transferable to other courses and more importantly, will serve you well in the future no matter what further studies/career you pursue.



2. Tentative schedule

You will all be divided into 6 groups in Week 1. The assigned work (critique paper or oral presentations) for Weeks 3 to 8 will depend on which group you are in.

Date	Topic
January 11	Overview of syllabus Introduction to the course Laying the foundations: fundamental anatomy, techniques and theories.
January 18	Writing a critique paper A practical session based on two contradicting papers. Note on oral presentations
January 25	Recollection & Familiarity I Introducing key concepts and discussion of 2 research articles.
February 1	Recollection & Familiarity II Debate: group 1 vs. group 2. <i>Groups 3, 4, 5, 6 recollection/familiarity critique paper due.</i>
February 8	Long-term & short-term memory I Introducing key concepts and discussion of 2 research articles.
February 15	Long-term & short-term memory II Debate: group 3 vs. group 4. <i>Groups 1, 2, 5, 6 recollection/familiarity critique paper due.</i>
February 22	Reading week - no class.
March 1	Memory & perception I Introducing key concepts and discussion of 2 research articles
March 8	Memory & perception II Debate: group 5 vs. group 6. <i>Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 recollection/familiarity critique paper due.</i>
March 15	Linking the past with the future Introduction and discussion of research articles.
March 22	The parietal lobe and episodic memory Introduction and discussion of research articles.
March 29	Good Friday – campus closed.
April 5	Improving episodic memory Introduction and discussion of research articles.
April 8 (Monday class due to Good Friday)	Memory in popular culture Amnesia movie with discussion. <i>All students final written assignment due.</i>



Any slides will be posted on the course website (in the “Content” section) **by midnight at the latest** the night before the lecture. You may find it useful to print out a copy of the slides and bring it to the lecture for note taking.

Drop dates: March 24th Last day to drop S courses without academic penalty and have them removed from the transcript (on ROSI only). **April 14th** Last day to drop S and Y courses (on eService only) and have them remain on the transcript with a grade of LWD indicating withdrawal without academic penalty. After this date grades are recorded on transcripts whether course work is completed or not (with a '0' assigned for incomplete work) and they are calculated into GPAs.

3. Course reading

There is no required textbook for this course. All the readings will be based on primary articles in the literature and will be assigned on a weekly basis in class and on Blackboard.

4. Course evaluations

4.1. Summary

10% Class participation
15% Critique paper 1
15% Critique paper 2
15% Oral presentation
45% Final written assignment

4.2. Details

A) **Class participation (10%)**

This will be assessed by weekly attendance (4%) and contributions to class discussions (6%).

B) **Critique papers (2 x 15%)**

Everyone will be required to write two critique papers, each based on two contradicting articles. There will be a workshop on how to write a critique paper in week 2 but in brief, each paper should set the theoretical background, summarise the studies, provide a critical analysis of the findings, and come to a conclusion by reconciling the disparate data. Each paper should cite a minimum of 2 articles in addition to the two main articles to back up any claims you make and should be between **1000 – 1500 words**, not including title or reference list. Please use 12-point font, double spacing, 1 inch margins, and Microsoft Office or PDF file format. All references should be listed using APA-style. **The papers must be submitted by email by the beginning of the specified class to psyd50.utsc@gmail.com (see course schedule table for due dates).** The



critique papers will be marked on the basis of structure and clarity (5%), accuracy (5%) and critical analysis (5%).

C) Oral presentation (15%)

Everyone will be required to give an oral presentation as part of the ‘Debate’ sessions. Each debate will involve two groups, each taking opposite sides of a theoretical debate. Each group will be given a reading list and each member of the group will be asked to give a 10 minute PowerPoint oral presentation on an article from the reading list describing the theoretical background of the study, the methods and findings of the study, the strengths of the study, and why the study is important evidence for the theoretical viewpoint it supports. Similar to the critique papers, the presentations will be marked on the basis of structure and clarity (5%), accuracy (5%) and critical analysis (5%). After the individual presentations, the floor will be open for questions and each group must argue for their theoretical viewpoint.

D) Final written assignment (45%)

Everyone will be required to write a final assignment, which **must be submitted by email by the beginning of the final class to psyd50.utsc@gmail.com**. The topic of each student’s final assignment will be the same as that for their oral presentation (titles will be assigned in Weeks 4, 6, and 8). The final assignment is basically a longer and more in-depth version of the critique papers, covering a wide range of articles. The paper should be **3000 – 4000 words** not including title or reference list, typed in 12-point font, double spaced with 1 inch margins and in Microsoft Office or PDF file format. All references should be listed using APA-style. The final assignment will be assessed for clarity (15%), accuracy (15%) and critical analysis (15%).

5. Course Policies

5.1 Late assignments

All assignments are due **at the beginning of class** on the specified due date. Except in the case of a documented emergency (see above), **for every 24 hours that the paper is late, 10% will be docked off the final mark. For instance, for the first deadline Feb 1st, a paper handed in past 11am on Feb 2nd will only receive 90% of the mark the quality of the work deserves, a paper handed in past 9am on Feb 3rd will only receive 80% of the mark the quality of the work deserves, and so forth.**

Appropriate documentation is required in all emergency situations.

Unless you have a legitimate, documented emergency, NO EXTENSIONS WILL BE GIVEN.

5.1 Grading

Scale

NUMERICAL MARKS	LETTER GRADE	GRADE POINT VALUE
90 - 100%	A+	4.0
85 - 89%	A	4.0
80 - 84%	A-	3.7
77 - 79%	B+	3.3



73 - 76%	B	3.0
70 - 72%	B-	2.7
67 - 69%	C+	2.3
63 - 66%	C	2.0
60 - 62%	C-	1.7
57 - 59%	D+	1.3
53 - 56%	D	1.0
50 - 52%	D-	0.7
0 - 49%	F	0.0

Guidelines (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/general/grading-policy>):

A+ Outstanding performance, exceeding even the A described below.

A Exceptional performance: strong evidence of original thinking; good organization, capacity to analyse and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

B Good performance: evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.

C Intellectually adequate performance: student who is profiting from her or his university experience; understanding of the subject matter and ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.

D Minimally acceptable performance: some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.

F Inadequate performance: little evidence of even superficial understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; with limited or irrelevant use of literature.

Note: for all written work, consistently poor spelling/grammar will be penalised. Please make use of the UTSC writing centre if you feel you need additional help with writing or want to develop your writing skills further: <http://ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/>.

5.4 Contesting a grade

All requests for a re-grade must be submitted **in writing** within two weeks of the day the grade is received. Only requests that include adequate written justification of an error in the original grading will be considered. *A legitimate request will result in the entire assignment being re-graded. Your overall grade may be raised, lowered, or it may stay the same. Arbitrary requests for grade increases will not be entertained (e.g., “I need to get into grad school, so could you please give me a higher grade?”).*

5.5 Video and Auditory Recording

For reasons of privacy as well as protection of copyright, unauthorized video or audio recording in classrooms is prohibited. This is outlined in the Provost’s guidelines on *Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology*. Note, however, that these guidelines include the



provision that students may obtain consent to record lectures and, “in the case of private use by students with disabilities, the instructor’s consent must not be unreasonably withheld.”

5.6 Accessibility

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. I will work with you and AccessAbility Services to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Enquiries are confidential. 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.

5.7 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student’s individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- Looking at someone else’s answers during an exam or test.
- Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor’s notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/>).