

Current Topics in Human Brain and Behaviour

I) Course information

Course number: PSYD66H3 LEC03

Fridays, 11am-1pm

Room: BB Collaborate

Prerequisite: [PSYB07H3 or STAB22H3 or STAB23H3] and [PSYB55H3 or (PSYB65H3)] and [0.5 credit at the C-level in PSY courses]

Exclusion: PSY490H

Recommended Preparation: [(PSYB01H3) or (PSYB04H3) or PSYB70H3]

II) Instructor:

Dr. Matthias Niemeier

1265 Military Trail

phone: 416-287-7466

e-mail: m.niemeier@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: tba

Also, I will have special office hours for everyone to help with preparations for their presentation in class. I request to please approach me about this at least one week before your presentation.

III) Course coverage and goals

The temporoparietal junction (TPJ) is attributed numerous functions, including language, memory, attention, visual perception, action observation, multisensory body awareness, and social cognitions such as theory of mind. Whether these functions are underpinned by one overarching mechanism is highly debated given that there is evidence in favour of both functional overlap and functional division. The course provides a survey of the recent findings. Selected readings will cover neuroimaging, brain stimulation, and neuropsychological findings.

On a more general level PSYD66 is modeled after seminar courses in grad school as well as lab meetings in research labs. As such PSYD66 provides training in reading and understanding scientific articles, oral and written scientific communication, critical thinking, and grant writing.

By the end of this course, you will have ...

- developed an in-depth understanding of the contemporary scientific body of knowledge about the TPJ
- further strengthened your ability to consume scientific literature (especially original articles)
- become quite independent to acquire scientific knowledge
- increased your ability to understand, critique and extend original research in psychology and neuroscience
- further trained your ability to effectively communicate scientific knowledge to others

IV) Course Web Site: Quercus

Here you will find the syllabus, instructions for the papers, the most up-to-date version of the lecture schedule, and announcements.

Please check on a regular basis for announcements.

V) Evaluation

One aim of this course is to be closer to the real world of science than that is possible in a lecture. That is, there won't be exams nor a textbook. There won't even be a regular lecture. Instead, your presence in class and **active** participation in the course is expected and will be a significant part of the grade. We will have a reading list of original research papers (2 per week), and every week there will be presentations and discussions on them. Also, we will have assignments; every week a short thought paper on one of the research papers from the reading list, and at the end of the course there will be a research proposal on a topic of multisensory integration.

25% Presentation. On one day you are asked to present one of the research papers for the respective day. The quality of your presentation will be crucial for your own and for everyone else's learning experience. You can earn these 30% within 20- 25 min, which is the length of your presentation. To be successful it needs to be a free presentation. You can use notes, but reading from a manuscript just doesn't work for your audience. The exact structure of the presentations will vary from article to article. But it should have the following parts:

- (a) a brief introduction to the topic (up to 3 min)
- (b) a summary of the methods, results and conclusions of the paper. (~15 min)
- (c) a summary of the discussion of the article (up to 2 min)

A group discussion will follow your presentation (not part of your grade). To choose a topic, please refer to the Schedule and the reading list. Topics will be assigned on a first-come-first-serve basis. Please email me your first 3 choices. Please contact me to set up a 1-hr appointment with me to prepare for your presentation.

25% Active participation in the group discussions. Every week you are expected to read the respective literature (2 papers) so that you are properly prepared to engage in discussions on them. The 30% emphasize that I value participation very much. Science lives from discussions. For this seminar it means that you need to say something in class that pertains to the respective topic. No worries, you don't need to make genius comments in class (but it doesn't hurt, of course). It is perfectly fine to convey any kind of thought of your own. For example: Do you agree with the authors? Do you have concerns about confounds or gaps in the study? Or maybe, were you impressed with something about the study? Do you have ideas about how to extend the research? Anything from your thought paper (see below) that you might want to share? Even if there was something in the paper that you didn't understand that could be worth talking about. There is a good chance that others had the same problem (but you get the credit for bringing it up). – Our discussions can be about many different things, and you will get a point for every session during which you contribute to those discussions. Speaking of "every session". Part of participating implies that you are present. Every week. That's the hitch of having no exams and no textbook. For more than one missed session I will need to factor this in, unless you submit a Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form.

25% Three thought papers (8.33% each). Having read the weekly literature (2 papers) you also need to write thought papers about some of these articles. That means 2 double-spaced pages of your own thoughts. The purpose is (a) to encourage you to read

the literature carefully and to prepare for the respective session of course (e.g., you may write a paper about a great idea and bring that same idea up during class), (b) to practice scientific writing, (c) to encourage you to develop your own thoughts on the particular topic. ***Thought papers need to be submitted for the respective session during which the respective article is being discussed (email submission before the start of the class; a deduction of 10% per every 24h of late submission).*** Please note that thought papers need to be structured in a specific way, see instructions on Quercus (“**How to write a thought paper**”).

There is a specific schedule according to which you need to submit your thought papers:

- Thought paper 1: session 2, 3, 4, or 5
- Thought paper 2: session 6, 7, 8 or 9
- Thought paper 3: session 10, 11, or 12

Because there are multiple opportunities to submit thought papers, I will not accept any additional accommodation requests as detailed under X).

Provided you submitted 3 t-papers, i.e., a t-paper 1, 2, and 3, you have the option to improve your t-paper grade by submitting a fourth thought paper (that means, a second t-paper 1, a second t-paper 2, or a second t-paper 3 covering an article from a different session). In that event I will count your best 3 papers.

25% Research proposal. The proposal is due on the last day of classes. Please go to Quercus for tips and instructions on “**How to write a research proposal**”.

VI) Schedule

Week	Topic	Literature
1	Introduction	
2	TPJ characterization (overlapping or separate functions?)	Carter & Huettel TICS 2013 Igelström et al J Neurosci 2015
3	language	Binder et al Cer Cor 2009 Matchin et al Hum Brain Mapp 2019
4	memory (memory retrieval vs. attention to memory model)	Huijbers et al PLoS ONE 2011 Cabeza et al J Cog Neurosci 2011
5	attention (updating & hemispheric asymmetry)	Vossel et al J Neurosci 2015 Dugué et al Cer Cor 2018
6	visual processes - general	Pollmann et al NeuroIm 2014 Bloechle et al NeuroImage 2018
7	motor functions	Wolpert et al Phil Trans R Soc B 2003 Era et al Cer Cor 2019
8	embodied perspective taking	Wang et al Cortex 2016 Martin et al J Neurosci 2020
9	body awareness/self-other discrimination	Brass et al Phil Trans R Soc B 2009 Ionta et al Neuron 2011
10	social/theory of mind	Castelli et al NeuroIm 2000 Gao et al Sci Rep 2019
11	ASD	Murdaugh et al Neurosci Lett 2014 Lancaster et al Front Hum Neurosci 2015
12	Schizophrenia	Fuentes-Claramonte et al NeuroIm Clin 2020 Vucurovic et al J Psychi Res 2020

VII) How to download the papers

I have listed links to the 22 papers in an Excel sheet that is available on Quercus.

VIII) Additional information

Time Zone conflicts

If you are physically in a different time zone and a quiz or midterm is scheduled outside of 7:00am to midnight in your local time, you may use the following form to request special arrangements. Note that the form is only for term work. [Final exam conflicts](#) are handled by the Registrar's Office.

The form must be submitted **at least ten (10) business days before the activity**.

Form: <https://uoft.me/PSY-TimeZone>

Submit via email to: Keely Hicks, Departmental Assistant, keely.hicks@utoronto.ca

Missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Other Emergency

All students citing a documented reason for missed term work must submit their request for accommodations **within three (3) business days** of the deadline for the missed work.

Submit via email to: Keely Hicks, Departmental Assistant, keely.hicks@utoronto.ca

Students must submit **BOTH** of the following:

- (1.) A completed **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), and
- (2.) **Appropriate documentation** to verify your illness or emergency, as described below.

Appropriate documentation:

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS or TERM TESTS** due to **FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS or SELF-ISOLATION REQUIREMENTS:**

- Email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (uoft.me/PSY-MTW) to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), and
- **Declare** your absence on [ACORN](#) (Profile & Settings > Absence Declaration)

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **OTHER ILLNESS:**

- Email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (uoft.me/PSY-MTW) to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), along with the Self-Declaration of Student Illness Form (uoft.me/PSY-self-declare-form).

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to **OTHER ILLNESS:**

- Email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (uoft.me/PSY-MTW) to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), along with a scan/photo of the **original** copy of the official UTSC Verification of Illness Form (uoft.me/UTSC-Verification-Of-Illness-Form) or an **original** copy of the record of visitation to a hospital ER.
- Forms are to be completed in full, clearly indicating the start date, anticipated end date, and severity of illness. The physician's registration # and business stamp are required.

- *Note: If an end date of “ongoing” is specified, the medical note will be assumed to cover a period of **two weeks**. If no end date / an “unknown” end date is specified, the note will be assumed to cover a period of **three business days** (starting from illness start date.)*

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- Meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing accommodations required.

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 1-7 more days), email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (uoft.me/PSY-MTW) to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), and attach a **copy of your letter**. Specify how many days extension you are requesting in your email.
- If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that) you will need to meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing the accommodations required.

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS or TERM TESTS** in **OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES**:

Email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>) form to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), along with:

- For the **death of a family member/friend**, provide a copy of the death certificate.
- For U of T varsity-level or professional **athletic commitments**, an email from your coach or varsity administrator should be sent directly to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work, detailing the dates and nature of the commitment.
- For **religious accommodations**, please email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work.
- For circumstances **outside of these guidelines**, please email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **on or before the date of the test / assignment deadline** to describe your circumstances and determine appropriate documentation.

Documents covering the following situations are NOT acceptable: medical prescriptions, personal travel, weddings, personal/work commitments.

As stated above, your documents must be submitted **within three (3) business days** of the deadline for the missed work.

After submitting your documentation:

Within approximately one to five business days, you will receive a response from your instructor detailing the accommodations to be made (if any).

You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily, as accommodations may be time-critical.

You should continue to work on your assignments to the best of your ability, as extension accommodations may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency.

If an accommodation has been granted but you are unable to meet the conditions of the accommodation (ex. you need a longer extension, or you missed a make-up test), you will need to repeat the missed term work procedure and submit additional forms to request further accommodation. Note that in the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not be provided.

Completion of this form does NOT guarantee that accommodations will be made. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request for accommodation.

Missed Accommodations

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting the requirements of your accommodation, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations.

(E.g.) If you miss a make-up midterm, you would need to submit another Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form. If your original medical note / documentation included the date of the make-up midterm, then only the Request form is required. If the date of the make-up midterm fell outside of the dates indicated on your original medical note/other documentation, then a new medical note/other appropriate documentation must also be submitted.

Importance of Three Business Day window:

If you are unable to submit your documents within the three business day window, **you must email Keely** (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **within the three business day window** to explain the nature of the delay, and when you will be able to provide your documents. Exceptions to the documentation deadline will only be made under exceptional circumstances.

NOTE: Assignments due at end of term

Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, you would need to file a petition with the Registrar's Office (<https://www.uts.utoronto.ca/registrar/term-work>).

NOTE: Final Exams

This policy applies only to missed assignments and term tests. Missed final exams are handled by the Registrar's Office (<http://www.uts.utoronto.ca/registrar/missing-examination>).

Help With Writing

If you would like help with academic writing, the following resources are available to you:

- The Centre for Teaching and Learning (AC312) Writing Centre offers students one-to-one appointments and supplementary materials to help improve upon their writing skills. <http://ctl.uts.utoronto.ca/home/> <http://ctl.uts.utoronto.ca/twc/>

- The English Language Development Centre offers support and specialized writing

programs for students who do not speak English as their primary language.
<http://ctl.utoronto.ca/eld/>

- Advice on academic writing

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>

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/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf>) 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; and
- When you knew or ought to have known you were doing it.

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; and
- When you knew or ought to have known you were doing so. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If students have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, they are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from their instructors or from other institutional resources. Note: You may see advertisements for services offering grammar help, essay editing and proof-reading. Be very careful. If these services take a draft of your work and significantly change the content and/or language, you may be committing an academic offence (unauthorized assistance) under the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. It is much better and safer to take your draft to the Writing Centre as early as you can. They will give you

guidance you can trust. Students for whom English is not their first language should go to the English Language Development Centre. If you decide to use these services in spite of this caution, you must keep a draft of your work and any notes you made before you got help and be prepared to give it to your instructor on request.

AccessAbility Services

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 as soon as possible. AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm SW302, Science Wing) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations [416-287-7560](tel:416-287-7560) or email 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.

Literature Searches

Students can use the following resources when conducting literature searches to find relevant articles for their presentation and final essay:

The UTSC Library (AC235)

<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/utsc/>

PubMed

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed>

PsychINFO

<http://www.apa.org/pubs/databases/psycinfo/index.aspx>

Google Scholar

<http://scholar.google.ca/>

For Your Health

The Health and Wellness Centre (SL270, 416-287-7065) provides diagnostic, treatment and referral services for all illnesses ranging from the medical to psychological to health promotion. The professional staff of physicians, nurses and counselors provides personal advice and assistance with family issues, eating disorders, depression, stress, drug and alcohol abuse, relationship issues, a positive space for gender/sexuality issues, and more.

<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/wellness>