

# Introduction to Perception

## I) Course information

Course code: PSYB51H3

Prerequisites: PSYA01 & PSYA02 (cannot be waived; sorry, no exceptions)

## II) Blurb & Learning Outcomes

Theory and research on perception and cognition, including visual, auditory and tactile perception, representation, and communication. Topics include cognition and perception in the handicapped and normal perceiver; perceptual illusion, noise, perspective, shadow patterns and motion, possible and impossible scenes, human and computer scene analysis, ambiguity in perception, outline representation. The research is on adults and children, and different species. Demonstrations form part of the course work.

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

- developed a foundational understanding of the concepts of sensation and perception.
- attained an ability to identify concepts and use them as a scaffold of knowledge
- practiced your ability to effectively communicate your knowledge in written form
- improved your ability to successfully collaborate with peers in study groups

## III) Course staff:

### Instructor:

Dr. Matthias Niemeier

### Teaching assistants:

Long Feng (Sherry) Huang, Romesa Khan, Tahsin Reza

## IV) Textbook (required)

**Title:** Sensation and Perception, 6<sup>th</sup> edition

**Authors:** J. Wolfe et al.

**Publisher:** Oxford University Press, Series: Sinauer

## V) Web page

### Course Web Site: Quercus

Here you will find the syllabus, and announcements. Also, I will put the lecture slides on that page.

***Please check on a regular basis for announcements.***

## VI) Contact:

E-mail: [psyb51.utsc@utoronto.ca](mailto:psyb51.utsc@utoronto.ca)

Please direct emails to the dedicated course address. We will go through all emails and answer standard course questions or quick questions about content. At times we might refer you to the syllabus or to the announcements on BB. At other times we might ask to have longer questions (>5 min) or lists of questions answered during office hours.

### **Office hours**

tba

## **VII) Evaluation**

**25% Mid-term test 1.** Scheduled for **TBA**.

**25% Mid-term test 2.** Scheduled for **TBA**.

**50% Final exam.** TBA.

You are required to write the mid-terms as well as the final exam.

If you miss a mid-term for a valid reason (see XII) your other grades will be reweighted using adjusted weights. The adjusted weights would be: 33.3% for the mid-term that you did write and 66.7% for the final exam.

If you miss both mid-terms for a valid reason there will be a make-up mid-term that covers mid-terms 1 and 2.

**Final Exam Policies & Procedures.** The scheduling of final exams and the granting of petitions to defer final exams are matters that fall entirely within the jurisdiction of the Registrar's Office. If you have any concerns relating to your final exam attendance, please contact the Registrar.

## **VIII) How to do well in the course**

PSYB51 is no bird course. There are many details that you need. Therefore, you need to spread your studying across the entire term. Cramming is not a good strategy at all for PSYB51. **Make sure to listen to one lecture each week and perhaps review and listen to an additional lecture every week.** On the other hand, a lot of things in PSYB51 are very logical and it is very well possible to get an A or even A+ in the course. Here is what you should do to do well.

**Read the textbook. Attend/watch all lectures. Take notes.**

**Know what material is expected:** Material on the exams will include lecture materials and text readings. Although the topics covered will overlap, different things may be emphasized in class than in the book or other readings. Exam questions will only refer to concepts discussed in class, but you need the textbook material to better understand and enrich the lecture material. So, make sure to read all the required textbook materials and, of course, you need to go to / watch all lectures.

**Look out for concepts:** Concepts are the scaffold of knowledge. Details are important too, especially in a course like PSYB51. But you need a structure to make sense of all the details.

**Start studying now:** Avoid cramming. If you feel you have no time to study during week 1, you won't find time later. Note that postponing studying and pulling a couple all-nighters before an exam is a poor strategy.

**Read the textbook chapters before the respective lecture** so that it's easier to understand the lectures and so that your mind can form a cognitive structure of what to expect. If you take the online course don't let a week pass without watching one or more lectures.

**Learn in teams:** I highly recommend forming **study groups** and test and quiz one another with questions. Common excuses:

- "I don't know anybody in the course." But there is Facebook etc. to get in touch, right?
- "I have no time." See my earlier comment regarding time.
- "I'm smarter than the others. I won't get anything out of being a pro bono tutor." Although there are a lot of smart students at UTSC, learning in teams isn't a pro bono thing; tutors learn more than anybody else.
- "I'm not as smart as the others." Well, first off: I don't think that's true, everyone has their moment to shine. Secondly, make sure to be prepared for your meetings. Thirdly, read what I just said about tutors.

It is very helpful to meet with others and practice in such a way for exams especially because this is a good way to practice writing answers during exams.

**Prepare "cheat sheets."** Just to be clear: using cheat sheets during tests/exams is an academic offence. But creating them is a helpful practice to learn. Here's how you do it: you take your lecture notes and copy the important things onto a few pages (cheat sheets need to be small of course). Well, it's likely that you end up with something that is still too large. So now you take your over-sized cheat sheets and condense the material further, and perhaps you do that several times. In the end you will have rehearsed the course material several times but more importantly: you will have summarized the material. Summarizing requires sound conceptual understanding of the material and therefore helps learning.

**Make use of office hours:** If you have questions about the course or its content, or if there are other ways in which you feel the TAs and I can help you, please do visit us during office hours. In the past few years I have seen and heard office hour attendance drop, probably for various reasons. But I get the sense that one reason might be people don't want to bother instructors or are worried that they look bad when they ask something. Please don't think like that! We are always happy to help. I also find it very helpful to hear your questions because that tells me where I can improve my lecture. So: you're doing me a favour if you come ☺ Finally, office hours are a resource for you. Why waste it?

## IX) Schedule

Lec	Topic	Readings (chapters)	Lectures tested on exams
1	Welcome & Introduction	1	
2	Optics and the eye	2	
3	Spatial vision	3	
4	Objects	4	
	<b>Mid-term test 1</b>		<b>1-4</b>
5	Colour & Motion	5 & 8 (section on motion only)	
6	Eye movements, Space and depth	8 (section on eye movements only) & 6	
7	Attention	7	
8	More attention	(no chapter)	
	<b>Mid-term test 2</b>		<b>5-8</b>
9	Sound and the ear; Hearing	9, 10	
10	Music & Speech	11	
11	Touch, Vestibular system	13, (12)	
12	Olfaction and taste, Multisensory integration	(14) & (15) info about required pages will be posted on BB	
	<b>Final exam</b>		<b>1-12</b>

Tests and exams will be scheduled by the administration. I will post information about the dates as soon as I receive it.

Pdf.s of lecture slides will be posted on Quercus. I will not provide the ppt files for copyright reasons. But you can take notes on pdf.s, too.

### X) Disability-Related Accommodations

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 (<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/>) as soon as possible.

AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm AA142, Arts and Administration Building) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. Please contact 416-287-7560 (tel/TTY) or email [ability.utsc@utoronto.ca](mailto:ability.utsc@utoronto.ca) for more information.

The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

### XI) Religious Accommodations

The University has a commitment concerning accommodation for religious observances. I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory

activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. According to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (like a test, or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

**XI) Academic Integrity Statement**

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 in papers and assignments include 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 cheating includes using or possessing unauthorized aids, looking at someone else’s answers during an exam or test, misrepresenting your identity, or falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor’s notes.

**XII) Department of Psychology Missed Term Work Policy**

For missed term work (assignments and term tests) due to illness, emergency, or other mitigating circumstances, please follow the procedures outlined below.

Note:

- The following reasons are not considered sufficient for missed term work: travel for leisure, weddings, personal commitments, work commitments, human error.
- [Missed Final Exams](#) are handled by the Registrar’s Office and should be declared on eService.
- Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, accommodations are only possible via the Registrar’s Office [petition process](#).

**Procedure:**

Complete the form under the link below and submit your Supporting Documentation.

The link to the online form to submit missed term work accommodation requests in **PSYB51** is here:  
[https://utorontopsych.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_enfWvLMb4TpR8Qm](https://utorontopsych.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_enfWvLMb4TpR8Qm)

**Supporting Documentation Requirements and Deadlines:**

Reason for Missed Work	Documentation required for a <b>first absence</b> in the term	Documentation required for <b>subsequent absences</b> in the term	Deadline for submitting MTW form and supporting documentation
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Illness or Injury	<a href="#">ACORN</a> Absence Declaration	<a href="#">UofT Verification of Illness Form</a>	<b><u>WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS</u></b> of the missed work
Bereavement	<a href="#">ACORN</a> Absence Declaration	A death certificate or funeral announcement	<b><u>WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS</u></b> of the missed work
University-sponsored athletic or artistic obligation at the varsity/provincial/national level	<a href="#">ACORN</a> Absence Declaration	A note from a university staff member (advisor, coach, residence staff, etc.) who can substantiate the obligation, sent directly to the course email	<b><u>10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE</u></b> of the missed deadline
Disability-related reasons for students registered with AccessAbility Services	<p>For missed <b>TERM TESTS</b>,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Contact your AccessAbility consultant</b> and have them write to the course email detailing the accommodations needed.</li> </ul> <p>For missed <b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If your desired accommodation is <b>within the scope</b> of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 3 days), send your <b>Accommodation Letter</b> to the course email and specify how many days extension you are requesting.</li> <li>- If your desired accommodation is <b>outside the scope</b> of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that), <b>contact your AccessAbility consultant</b> and have them write to the course email detailing the accommodations needed.</li> </ul>		<b><u>PREFERABLY IN ADVANCE OF THE MISSED WORK, OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE</u></b>
Academic Conflict (e.g. two midterms at the same time)	Screenshot from Quercus demonstrating the conflict.		<b><u>10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE</u></b> of the missed work
Religious Conflict	None required		

## **Notes:**

- The following reasons are not considered sufficient for missed term work: social activities, recreational travel, technological issues, avoidance of assessments or deadlines, work commitments
- [Missed Final Exams](#) are handled by the Registrar's Office and should be declared on eService.
- For ACORN absence declarations, the date you declare the absence is required to fall within the seven-day declaration period (i.e.) the absence cannot be submitted proactively or retroactively.
- Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, accommodations are only possible via the Registrar's Office [petition process](#).
- If you are unable to submit your request within the specified number of business days, you must still email your instructor within that window to explain the nature of the delay. Exceptions to the deadlines are made only under exceptional circumstances.
- Multiple assignments due on the same day are not considered academic conflicts. Students are expected to manage their time effectively to meet assignment deadlines.
- Back-to-back tests/quizzes are not considered academic conflicts. Only overlapping activities are conflicts.
- Students are responsible for keeping their course timetables conflict-free. Students who register in two courses with overlapping lecture/tutorial/lab schedules will not be accommodated.

## **Next Steps:**

After submitting your documentation, you will receive a response from your instructor or TA. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request. **You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily**, as accommodations may be time-critical.

For missed assignments, **do not wait for the instructor's response to resume work on your assignment**. Extensions may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency. Complete your assignment as soon as you're able, and email it to your instructor.

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting its requirements, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations. **Please make it clear in your subject line that you are requesting a second accommodation**. Examples: If you were granted an extension for a paper but are still unable to meet the new deadline, or if you miss a make-up term test, you must submit *another* MTW form and supply documentation according to the "subsequent absences" column in the chart above. \*Note: In the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not necessarily be provided.

## **XIII) Equity, Diversity, Inclusion**

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

#### **XIV) 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>

I also encourage you to consider reaching out to the **U of T My Student Support Program** <https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca/my-student-support-program/> which offers free, confidential, and immediate mental health support for all U of T students 24/7. There also is **Good2Talk**, a free, confidential helpline with professional counselling, 24/7/365 (1-866-925-5454). In case of an emergency, you can also speak to someone from campus safety. They can be reached at (416) 978-2222 (emergency).