

Sensation and Perception
Summer 2011

Instructor:

Sean Stevens

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Class Location:

Tillett Hall RM 204

Monday through Thursday, 1220 – 215pm.

Office:

Tillett Hall Room 423

Office Hours:

Tuesday: 3 to 4 pm or by appointment.

Text:

Matlin, M.W. & Foley, H.J. (2010). *Sensation and Perception*(5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Course Description:

How do we perceive the world? How are all of our sensory experiences tied together into a coherent whole? What makes such processes possible? Can we trust our senses? These are examples of the types of questions we will be covering in this course. Our main focus will be on the visual system, as it the most studied and well understood of all the senses. We will also cover attention, audition, and touch and pain.

Grade Breakdown:

Exams – 80% (4 total).

Summaries – 15% (4 total).

Attendance – 5% (No more than 3 absences).

You are expected to attend every class. Attendance will be taken at every class through a sign in sheet. **You cannot sign in for other people who are not in class. If I find you doing this, you will receive a 0 for that day as well as one additional day. This means that if you had perfect attendance (12 out of 12) and you were caught signing in for someone else, your attendance grade will become 83% (10 out of 12)

Course Outline:

May 31 – Ch. 1 Introduction, Philosophical Background, Consciousness, and Attention (not in text)

June 1 – Psychophysics (Ch 2. Research Methods)

June 2 – Signal Detection Theory (Ch 2. Research Methods), Error Management Theory (assigned article)

June 6 – Ch 14. Perceptual Development, Exam Review

June 7 – **EXAM 1**

June 8 – Structure and Function of the Eye (Ch 3. The Visual System)

June 9 – The Visual Brain, Disorders of Visual Perception (Ch 3. The Visual System)

June 13 – Basic Visual Functions (Ch 4.)

June 14 – Shape and Pattern Perception, Gestalt Psychology, Face Perception (Ch 5. Visual Pattern Perception)

June 15 – Exam Review (if necessary finish lecture from June 14)

June 16 – **EXAM 2**

June 20 – Perceiving a Three-Dimensional World (Ch 6. Distance and Size Perception)

June 21 – Theories of Color Perception (Ch 7. Color)

June 22 – Individual Differences in Color Vision, Color Phenomena (Ch 7. Color)

June 23 – Motion (Ch 8.)*

June 27 – **EXAM 3**

June 28 – The Auditory System (Ch. 9)

June 29 – Basic Auditory Functions (Ch 10.)

June 30 – Auditory Pattern Perception (Ch 11.)

July 4 – **NO CLASS**

July 5 – Touch and Pain (Ch. 12 The Skin Senses)

July 6 – **EXAM 4**

July 7 – **NO CLASS**

* = Guest Lecture: Elio Santos and Nick Ross.

Summaries and Due Dates:

6/8 – Haselton, M.G., & Nettle, D. (2006). The paranoid optimist: an integrative evolutionary model of cognitive biases. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*.

6/20 – Anderson, A.K, Christoff, K., Panitz, D., De Rosa, E., & Gabrieli, J.D.E. (2003). Neural correlates of the automatic processing of threat facial signals. *The Journal of Neuroscience*.

6/27 – Oosterhof, N.N., & Todorov, A. (2008). The functional basis of face evaluation. *Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences*.

Articles can be found in the Resources section of the course Sakai site.

Summaries are due at the start of class each Monday. If you cannot attend you may email them before the start of class.

Summaries will be graded on a 3 point scale (0 = not turned in; 1 = turned in; 2 = well written summary).

Late summaries will have a point deducted and must be turned in within 24 hours of the due date.

Exams:

Exams will consist of 50 multiple choice questions and short answer/essay.

Each exam will be worth 75 points.

Make ups will only be given in extreme circumstances with required documentation.