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Spring 2012

Cognition Lab

TA: Peter Pantelis

Contact: by e-mail, petercp@eden.rutgers.edu

Syllabus

Class Time/Location: Tuesdays, 6:40pm-9:30pm, Psych Building Rm 105

TA Office Hours: by appointment only

Overview: The aim of this course is to provide hands-on experience and training in some of the methodologies, experimental designs, and analytical methods that are commonly applied to research in cognitive psychology. Most of the course will be devoted to running some simple in-class experiments, analyzing the data, and interpreting the results.

Core SAS writing goals to be assessed in this course:

GOAL s2 – Student is able to respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision.

GOAL t - Student is able to communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry.

GOAL u – Student is able to evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly.

GOAL v – Student is able to analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

Handouts: Online versions of handouts can be found at

<http://ruccs.rutgers.edu/~jacob/Psych306/labman.html>

Sakai will be a *very* important tool for communication within the class and the dissemination of announcements and materials, so please check it periodically. Lecture slides will contain important information for the completion of assignments, and will be posted to sakai after class. Written assignments will all be submitted to sakai: *I request that they be submitted in PDF format.*

Schedule: The labs generally follow a two-week cycle. During the first week of each unit, students will act as subjects in an experiment. The TA will give some of the theoretical background and motivation of the week's experiment, and explain the experimental design. During the second week, the class will analyze and interpret the results. The TA will discuss the relevant statistical methods, both in general and as they apply to the results at hand.

The schedule of units is as follows (subject to modification as the TA's discretion). The associated writing assignment for each unit is shown in parentheses:

Lab 1: **Categorization and typicality (Abstract)**

Lab 2: **Mental rotation (Introduction)**

Lab 3: **Numerical Estimation (Methods)**

Lab 4: **Category Learning (Results)**

Lab 5: **Decision making (Discussion)**

Lab 6: **Working memory (Full lab report)**

Grading: Each unit will include a writing assignment, usually one section of a lab report on the experiment conducted in class. The assignment will be explained in the handouts and discussed at lab. 50% of the final grade will be based on these five partial lab reports, and attendance (10% per unit) and 50% will be based on the final assignment, a full write-up of our final experiment. This final paper will be tentatively due **April 30 at noon**, the final day of classes (though this is subject to change).

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory because so much of the class depends on the hands-on experience of running in the experiments. In addition, you will work on data analysis and written assignments during class, so that if questions come up you will have the opportunity to ask for help. If you need to miss a class with a good excuse, please provide me with documentation. Otherwise, your grade may be reduced.

Current Academic Integrity Policy:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.