

**PSYCHOLOGY 410/510  
IMAGINATION- SPRING 2008**

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**Lecture Place and Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:00-5:20; 302 GER

**Course website:** <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>

You must have an email address and be registered for this course in order to log on to Blackboard. If you do not have an email address, go to the Information Technology Center (ITC) on the second floor in the Knight Library. ITC will also help you if you are having difficulty with Blackboard.

**Overview:** The imagination is a powerful tool that is available to us throughout life, part of our biological endowment as human beings. With our imaginations, we can relive the past, plan and anticipate the future, process and come to terms with the issues in our present. The study of imagination crosscuts traditional areas in psychology and extends into other fields as well (e.g., philosophy, literature). In this course we will examine how psychologists think about and study human imagination, covering topics such as pretend play in children, counterfactual reasoning, imagery, mental time travel, creativity, consciousness, dreaming, mental illness, and the impact of technology on concepts of self and identity.

Note to Psychology majors: This course can be used to count towards the required upper division credits from List S (Social science area). It cannot be used to count for List C (Science area).

**Course requirements:**

**1. Class attendance and participation** (250 points): The most enjoyable courses are those in which everyone comes to class well prepared and makes thoughtful contributions to the discussion. To enhance the quality of discussion, everyone should read the assigned material *before* the relevant class meeting. To encourage you to do so, students are required to post comments, questions and/or reactions to the reading on our Blackboard web site by 9:00 pm on the evening before each class. You will be graded on your posted comments (each post is worth 6 pts) and on your class attendance (8 pts per class). To receive the full number of points, a posted comment should be at least a paragraph long and the content should provide evidence that the student has read the assigned article.

**2. Discussion group** (125 points): You will be assigned to one of five discussion groups. Each group will meet outside of class time to discuss a book that you will be reading together, work on a group project, and plan a presentation to the class. Your attendance at group meetings and contributions to the discussion of the book, development of the project and class presentation will be part of your grade for the course.

The five discussion groups are:

**1. Neurological disorders of the imagination**

Students will find first person accounts of serious mental illness on you tube and elsewhere for discussion and participate in a tour of facilities for clients with serious mental illness in Eugene. Hirstein, W. (2005). *Brain fiction: Self deception and the riddle of confabulation*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press.

**2. Dreaming**

Students in this group will keep a dream journal and participate in a project investigating lucid dreaming.

Rock, A. (2004). *The mind at night: The new science of how and why we dream*. New York: Basic Books.

**3. Consciousness**

Students in this group will conduct an experiment in which they will monitor mind wandering and test hypotheses about its extent and influence on creativity.

Claxton, G. (1997). *Hare brain, tortoise mind: How intelligence increases when you think less*. Hopewell, N. J.: The Ecco Press.

**4. Creativity**

Students will create a character and complete a series of writing assignments about the character, monitoring their emotional involvement with the character.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. New York: Harper Collins.

**5. The psychology of virtual worlds**

Students in this group will create an avatar and develop a project involving the virtual world Second Life.

Joinson, A. (2003). *Understanding the Psychology of Internet Behaviour: Virtual worlds, real lives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

The expectation is that you will meet several times to discuss the book and work on your class presentation. At least two weeks before your scheduled presentation, the group will meet with the professor to go over the plan for the presentation. Additional meetings can be scheduled as needed/desired. After the group has presented to the class, each member of the group will provide a brief evaluation of the other group members' contributions to the group meetings and project and to the preparation and delivery of the presentation. These confidential evaluations will be submitted to the professor.

In addition to the presentation, each student will write a review of the book that was read by the group. This review will be about 3-5 pages. As part of your review, please provide a candid assessment of whether this book should be used again in this course.

Evaluation of your contributions by other group members (Attendance at meetings and participation in group discussions)	25 points
Completion of your evaluations of other group members	15 points
Book review (due on day of presentation)	35 points
Group Presentation	50 points

Note: Blackboard Discussion groups have been set up to provide a forum for communicating with the other students in your discussion group.

**3. Paper (125 points):** Students will write an 8-10 page paper in which they summarize the research findings addressing an important question about the psychology of imagination. It is recommended (but not required) that you pick a topic that is related to the topic of your group presentation. (The reading you do for your paper will be great preparation for your classroom presentation.)

This course is designed to help develop your writing skills. For this reason, there are several deadlines associated with your review paper. Failure to meet deadlines 1, 2, and 3 will result in forfeiting the points indicated below and you will not have the opportunity to receive feedback on your outline/draft. Late papers will be marked down substantially.

- 1. April 15:** Submit a proposal for your review paper. This will help us make sure that your topic is appropriate for this assignment and allow us to give you some feedback about possible sources of information. (10 points)
- 2. May 6:** Submit a first draft of your review paper to be read by another student. I will collect these papers, remove the cover pages with names, and then on May 8, I will pass out these papers (with no identifying information) to students in the class for written feedback. Thus, on May 8, everyone who turned in a paper on May 6 will be given a paper by another student to review. In the past, some students have turned in “papers” at this stage that were little more than outlines -- not finished enough to allow another student to edit and give feedback. In such cases, your paper will be returned to you and you will not be given another student’s paper to review. Note that the more complete your paper is, the more help the student will be able to give you.
- 3. May 15:** Submit your written feedback plus the edited paper (15 points). On May 20, I will give you back your own review paper, along with the peer review.
- 4. June 5 :** Turn in the final draft of your paper (100 points).

**PSY 510: Graduate students** who have registered for Psy 510 will have somewhat different requirements than undergraduates in Psy 410. Each graduate student will be assigned primary responsibility for coordinating the activities of one of the discussion groups, including the project and class presentation. The graduate student will not be required to write a book review, but instead will read and assign a grade for the book reviews written by the undergraduates in the

discussion group. In addition, the graduate student will submit a brief written description of the design and results of the group project. The graduate student will be expected to read and post comments on the assigned articles. The literature review written by the graduate students will be somewhat more extensive than the undergrad reviews – about 12 - 15 pages.

**Academic Honesty:** All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. No form of cheating or plagiarism will be tolerated. Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate and specific references. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed by quotation marks. Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. In addition, it is plagiarism to submit work in which portions were substantially produced by someone acting as a tutor or editor. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of Academic Learning Services (68 PLC, 346-3226). If cheating is discovered on the assignments, then the University will be notified and appropriate action will be taken.

**Accommodations:** If one of the following applies to you, please see the instructor as soon as possible to make adjustments. You are strongly encouraged to contact Disability Services (346-1155) if you have a non-documented condition that creates difficulty for you as a student.

Documented learning or medical disability

Non-documented need for adjustments to help you learn

On a sports team that travels this quarter

English is not your first language

With advanced planning, adjustments are relatively straightforward. Adjustments at the last minute can be problematic and sometimes are not possible.

## OUTLINE OF LECTURE TOPICS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
April 1	Introduction to the study of imagination
April 3	The development of imagination Woolley, J. D. (1997). Thinking about fantasy: Are children fundamentally different thinkers and believers from adults? <i>Child Development</i> , 68, 991-1011.
April 8	The creation of imaginary others Taylor, M., Hodges, S. D., & Kohanyi, A. (2003). The illusion of independent agency: Do adult fiction writers experience their characters as having minds of their own? <i>Imagination, cognition and personality</i> , 22, 361-380.
April 10	Imagination and emotion (interview with Tom) Harris, P. L. (2000). <i>The work of the imagination</i> , Chapter 4, 58-93. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

- April 15      Magical thinking (guest lecture by Dr. Ray Hyman)  
Deadline for paper proposal. There is no assigned reading or required post.
- April 17      Imagining the future and the past  
Suddendorf, T., & Corballis, M. C. (2007). The evolution of foresight: What is mental time travel and is it unique to humans? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*.
- April 22      Mind wandering  
Smallwood, J., & Schooler, J. W. (2006). The restless mind. *Psychological Bulletin*, 132, 946-958.
- April 24      Imagination and religion (Guest lecture by Alison Shawber)  
Biello, D. (2007). Searching for God in the brain. *Scientific American Mind*, 38-45.
- April 29      Creativity  
Damasio, A. R. (2001). Some notes on brain, imagination, and creativity. In K. H. Pfenninger & V. R. Shubik (Eds.) *The origins of creativity*, pp 59-68. New York: Oxford University Press.
- May 1         Roundtable on the creative process (invited guests)  
Simonton, D. K. (2007). Creativity: Specialized expertise or general cognitive processes? In M. J. Roberts (Ed.) *Integrating the mind*, New York:
- May 6         Film: The Sketches of Frank Gehry  
Deadline for first draft of paper. No required reading or post.
- May 8         Mental illness and imagination (autism, bipolar)  
Andreasen, N. C. (1987). Creativity and mental illness: Prevalence rates in writers and their first-degree relatives. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 144, 12388-1292.
- May 13        Imagination and dissociative disorders (Guest lecture by Deniz Tahiroglu)  
Carlson, S. M., Tahiroglu, D., & Taylor, M. (in press). Links between dissociation and role play in a non-clinical sample of preschool children. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*.
- May 15        Film: Touched by Genius: A Neurological Look at Creativity  
Deadline for peer reviews of student papers. No required reading or post.
- May 20        Neurological disorders of the imagination (student presentation)  
Reading to be assigned by students
- May 22        Creativity (student presentation)  
Reading to be assigned by students
- May 27        Dreaming (student presentation)

	Reading to be assigned by students
May 29	Consciousness (student presentation) Reading to be assigned by students
June 3	Second Life (student presentation) Reading to be assigned by students
June 5	Summary Deadline for final draft of paper. No required reading or post.