

PERCEPTION (PSY 438)

Spring 2010

University of Oregon

Instructor: *David Kuhns, MS, MA* **Classroom:** *146 Straub* **Time:** *12-1:20 MW, Final 10:15 Tuesday, June 8*

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Office Hours: Mondays 1:30-2:30, Tuesdays 11-11:50

Course website: blackboard.uoregon.edu - Blackboard will have all of the most current supplemental information for the course (course outline, grades, notes, etc.). The

Description: In this course, we will examine the perceptual abilities of the human brain, including vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell. Along the way, we will include discussions of the methods used by scientists to investigate perceptual abilities, the capabilities and limitations of perception, the current knowledge of the underlying neural bases of perception, and the various types of brain damage that may affect perception.

Philosophy: Class meetings are optional and should only be attended by people who are interested in actively participating. Active participation requires full attention. Full attention requires you to put away cell phones, laptops, irrelevant reading materials and any other possible distraction.

Each of the non-lecture parts of the course (discussions, texts, papers, presentations, movies) are designed to reinforce ideas and augment concepts presented in lectures. Questions are encouraged in all parts of the course and students are welcome to stop by my office for questions and/or discussions during my office hours or additional appointments. Questions/clarifications via emails are also encouraged at all times. It is my hope that by the end of this course you will have a new appreciation for how you experience the world on a daily basis.

Required Text: *Sensation and Perception, 8th Edition* by E.B. Goldstein is required. This is a comprehensive text for the course. The content between the 8th and previous editions is basically the same, but keep in mind that page numbers, pictures and chapter titles change from edition to edition. You will be responsible for making parallels between the 8th and your edition if you choose to go that route.

Course Format: The material in this course will be presented through a combination of assigned reading from the text, class lectures, in-class discussion, and demonstrations. Lecture material and readings will have overlap, but will not be exact replications of each other; some lecture material will not be covered in the readings and vice versa. You are expected to do the assigned reading **before** the class period in which it is due. Reading the material before the corresponding lectures will help your performance in two ways. First, discussions of the material during lecture will be more beneficial if you have at least a general understanding of the material beforehand, helping you to ultimately comprehend and retain the material. Second, questions drawn from the assigned readings will be included on the surprise quizzes, *even if they have not yet been discussed in lecture (see below)*.

GRADING

Final grades are based on consistent performance through the term. As such, the final grade will include the weighted scores for the quizzes, the term papers, study group discussion responses and the exams. In addition, some opportunities for extra-credit will also be available to all. **Letter grades will be determined as follows: A (90-105% of total possible points), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60- 69%), F (0-60%).** However, the instructor reserves the right to relax (but not stiffen) this criterion, depending on the actual distribution of grades.

Intermediate Exams and Final Exam – 700 points

Term Project – 200 points

Additional Assignments – 10 points

Total – 1000 points

Exams: (175 points each)

There will be five bi-weekly exams and one comprehensive, final exam. The exams will be multiple-choice and cover the material from the previous 3 lectures. The final exam will be in the same format but comprehensive. Only the 4 highest exam scores will count toward your final grade, but the final exam must be taken. The two lowest scores, including the final, can only be dropped if the final is taken; otherwise it will become an automatic zero and the next three lowest scores will be counted. **No make-up exams will be given under any circumstances.** If you know in advance that you cannot take any of the exams on the scheduled dates (see the course schedule below), do not take this course.

Term Project (200 points): One essential goal of this course is to facilitate long-term learning of the course material. To this end you will be required to write a 22-question comprehensive multiple-choice exam (5%) and exam key (15%).

The exam:

Of the 22 questions 14 must span the material covered during the first seven week's lectures and the remaining eight will come from book chapters that we will not cover. You will need to have one question from each lecture. In addition to the comprehensive questions you must also have 8 questions from two chapters that we will not cover; you'll need 4 from each chapter.

The key:

In addition to the exam you must complete a separate key for your exam. The key must contain the exact same questions from your exam in the same order. Each question will also include a short description for each response that explains why it is either the correct or incorrect answer.

Additional Assignments: There will be at least 2-4 surprise assignments throughout the term. The assignments may be in the form of surprise quizzes, homework, or in-class exercises. The amount of warning for each will vary depending on the assignment. These assignments will be loosely graded

Finally, *plagiarism will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with according to official University policy (see section on Academic Honesty below).*

Due Dates: Due dates for the term project are listed in the course outline. **Assignments are due by the start of lecture on the listed dates.** An assignment turned in after its deadline will be marked down 10% for each day late – including weekends and holidays.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructor as soon as possible. Also, please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities (Hillary Gerdes, hgerdes@oregon.uoregon.edu, tel. 346- 3211, TTY 346-1083) send a letter verifying your disability.

Students for whom English is a Second Language: If you are a non-native English speaker and you anticipate trouble in this course due to language difficulties, please see the instructor as soon as possible to make special arrangements. You may use a dictionary during tests without, but not without making arrangements with the instructor at the beginning of the term.

Academic Honesty: All work submitted in this course must be your own. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the instructor before you complete any relevant requirements of the course. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. (For more information, see the UO web site regarding academic honesty at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/>).

Tentative Course Schedule (updated 3/20/10)

Week 1

- Syllabus, Introduction Ch. 1
- Physiology of Perception Ch. 2, Appendices

Week 2

- Neurons and Perception Ch. 3
- *Exam 1*

Week 3

- Low-level vision, Ch. 3
- High-level vision; Perceptual Organization Ch. 4

Week 4

- Visual Attention Ch. 6
- *Exam 2*

Week 5

- Perceiving Objects Ch. 5
- Perceiving Color Ch. 7

Week 6

- Perceiving Depth and Size Ch. 8 **Quiz 3**
- *Exam 3*

Week 7

- Perceiving Motion, Ch. 9
- Perception and Action, Ch. 10 (Term Project Completed)

Week 8

- Auditory system & Perceiving sound Ch. 11
- **Midterm Exam** (Submission for feedback on Term Project Due)

Week 9

- Sound localization Ch. 12
- Speech perception; Ch. 13 (Term Project Due)

Week 10

- No Class, Memorial Day
- *Exam 5*

Final Exam, Tuesday June 8th, 10:15am Straub 146