PSY 407/507 F2013 – Sem Context Integration

Instructor: Dr. Margaret Sereno
  E-mail: msereno@uoregon.edu
  Office: 330 LISB (Lewis Integrative Sciences Building)
  Office Hours: by appointment
Time: Mon 2:00-3:50 in room 317 LISB
CRN: PSY 407 (16122) & PSY 507 (16148)

In this seminar we explore the role of contextual information in perception. Generally, contextual processing is useful for rapidly locating and identifying objects in a scene. However, it can also make it more difficult to accomplish other tasks, sometimes resulting in perceptual and motor errors. This seminar examines 1) basic context effects in perception (perceptual constancies and object/scene recognition) and language (reading), 2) individual differences or biases in contextual processing and how these differences relate to autism and drawing skill, and, 3) the brain mechanisms underlying such contextual processing. Readings will include a mix of classic work, more recent findings, and review papers.

The course is offered for variable credit (3-4 credits). All participants are expected to come prepared with questions and comments on each week's readings. Participant input is welcome regarding possible papers or topics for discussion not listed in the syllabus.The syllabus and all readings will be posted on the course website (http://blackboard.uoregon.edu).

Schedule and Topics:
Week 1 (Sept 30): Introduction and Organizational Meeting
Week 2 (Oct 7): Context Effects in Perception – Size & Shape Constancy
Week 3 (Oct 14): Context Effects in Perception – Object & Scene Perception I
Week 4 (Oct 21): Context Effects in Perception – Object & Scene Perception II
Week 5 (Oct 28): Contextual Processing – Brain Mechanisms
Week 6 (Nov 4): Context – Perceptual Biases + Autism/Autistic Traits I
Week 7 (Nov 11): No Class (Neuroscience Conference)
Week 8 (Nov 18): Context – Perceptual Biases + Autism/Autistic Traits II
Week 9 (Nov 25): Context – Perceptual Biases + Drawing Skill
Week 10 (Dec 2): Context – Broader Perspectives (Language & Behavior)