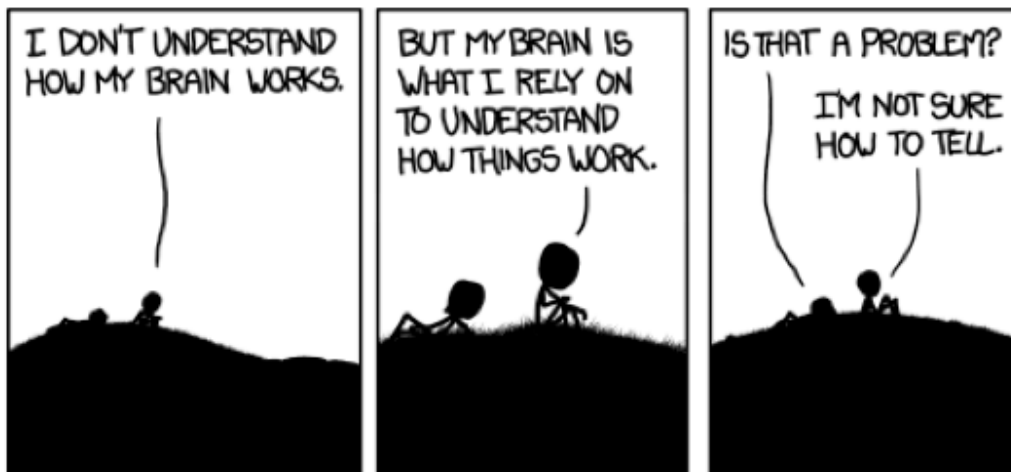


COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

PSY 475 Winter 2016

Tues., Thurs. 4:00 – 5:20 pm; Pacific Hall, Room 16



xkcd.com

Instructor: Robbie Ross, M.S. **Office:** STB 432 **Office hours:** Wed 11:00-1:00
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Course Overview:

In the field of cognitive development, scientists aim to understand how human infants, who are born with only a handful of perceivable skills and instincts, can manage to grow and develop into fully functional adults capable of all manner of complicated feats. We're born into a chaotic, noisy, bright, confusing mess of a world. How do we figure out what to pay attention to and what to ignore? What in this "blooming, buzzing confusion" is worth learning about? How do we, as babies, make sense of it all? How do we, as scholars of this topic, apply sound scientific methods to answer these questions? These are among the questions we will consider in this course. We will look at different accounts of how mental abilities develop, as well as the scientific methods psychologists use to investigate cognitive development.

Course Materials

There will be no textbook for this course. All readings and other materials will be provided electronically as PDF files on our Canvas site. The Course Schedule, available on Canvas, lists all readings and their due dates.

Canvas:

Canvas will be a critical source of course-related information throughout the term. All course materials including original research articles, reading materials, assignments, additional handouts, grades and other items will be available here. Additionally, any changes to the lecture or course schedule will be posted on this site. Check the Canvas website regularly for course related materials and announcements. You can get to the course web site by logging into <http://canvas.uoregon.edu>. Important announcements will also be sent via email, so it is best to get into the habit of checking your email daily. If you send an email to the instructor, expect to receive a reply within approximately 24 hours.

Expectations:

The majority of the work you put into this course will be in the form of reading, analyzing, and critiquing reports of original scientific research in the field of cognitive development. We will not use a textbook in this class. Instead, we will go straight to the source and spend our time directly evaluating the science of cognitive development. During the second half of the course, you will also spend time working on a project to critique a body of work on its scientific merits and then propose an alternative approach to attempt to answer the research question and test the hypothesis.

I understand that you all have lots of demands on your time in the form of other courses, athletics, clubs, jobs, social lives, and the nagging need to sleep and eat and otherwise take care of yourselves. That said, this course will require a lot of your attention and you should NOT stay in the class unless you are prepared to devote the time needed to do well. If you already have a heavy course load this term, consider taking this class some other time.

I expect you to do ALL of the assigned reading BEFORE coming to class. The vast majority of our class time will be spent discussing the readings. Each reading assignment will not be extraordinarily long, but the content will be complicated and dense. Plan to spend a considerable amount of time each week on the readings. It will be demanding, but very rewarding!

I expect you to ENGAGE with the material intellectually and to express your thoughts about it verbally in class and in a written format via online discussions on Canvas. Your contributions are key to making this class a lively intellectual forum. If you are the quiet type, this is the time to work on getting comfortable shouting out ideas in their raw form and allowing them to take shape through conversations with the whole group.

Course Grade Components:

The final grade that you earn in this course will comprise grades from 2 exams, 1 paper, and a grade assessing the quality and quantity of your intellectual contribution to and engagement with the course overall.

Canvas Discussion Posts and In-Class Participation (20%)

In order to ensure that you are prepared for class and to get the thinking juices flowing ahead of time, you will write a discussion post on our Canvas site by 5pm the night before class (so, post on Sundays by 5pm about the readings assigned for Monday and post on Tuesdays by 5pm about the readings assigned for Wednesday). These posts will respond to issues raised in the readings assigned for that week. It could present an argument about the issues, raise questions regarding the readings, sketch a new research idea on the issues, or any of a number of other possibilities. For each class session, you have the option of posting a brand new topic thread or responding and contribution to an established thread that someone else started. Be prepared to elaborate on, defend, or explain anything you post the next day in class. This is a great place to start thinking about ideas, thoughts and questions to bring up to the group the next day!

2 Exams (25% each):

We will have one midterm exam, held in Week 6, and one non-cumulative final exam, held during finals week. These exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, short-answer, and/or short essay questions and will cover material from the assigned readings **AND** class discussions/lectures. The first exam will be held in class on **Thursday, February 11** and will cover all material and readings discussed in class up until that point. The final exam will be held during our class's scheduled final exam period, **Tuesday, March 15 at 12:30 pm** and will cover all of the material and readings discussed since the first exam.

Research Proposal Writing Project (30%):

In this course, you will complete a scientific writing project that takes you through the initial steps of becoming a scientist: Identifying a topic or question, critiquing the current state of the field, and proposing a way to answer the question better or more clearly. The project is broken into two related parts. In the first part, you will identify an original empirical research article and write a critique of the research. In the second part, you will propose your own original research that will extend or clarify the findings from the article you chose. Details follow below.

Research Project Part 1 (10%): Due Thursday, February 18, 2015, 5:00 pm

- The first project will be to review and critique a peer-reviewed journal article of your choice. You will find your own original, peer-reviewed journal article related to cognitive development. A great place to begin your search is to look at the articles we read in class, find one that you found particularly interesting, and skim through that article's reference section. You may also find an article using journal article search engines (PsycInfo, PubMed, Google Scholar, Web of Knowledge etc.). You will write a detailed summary and critique of the purpose, research methods, results, and discussion presented in the article.
- More detailed descriptions of requirements for this project will be available on Canvas.
- You will submit your article for instructor approval prior to Project #1. The article you propose to use for this project will be uploaded to Canvas and is due no later than **Tuesday, February 2, 2015, 5:00 pm.**

Research Project Part 2 (20%): Due Friday, March 11, 2015, 5:00 pm

- The second project will involve choosing a specific research question (most likely the research question and topic from Part 1) and writing proposal for how you would conduct a research study in order to answer the question, or improve or clarify the findings from the previous research.
- Final Proposal Papers are expected to be 5-7 pages containing references to at least four peer-reviewed articles.
- An introduction – this will contain background information related to your question, including previous findings from at least four relevant peer-reviewed articles and your textbook, why this is a question of importance in cognitive development, and what hypotheses you are proposing to evaluate in your proposal
- A methods section – this will contain specific populations to be assessed, the specific method (behavioral and/or neuroimaging) to be used, the stimuli to be used, type of data to be collected, and the analyses of the data.

- More detailed descriptions of requirements for this project will be available on Canvas.

Extra Credit (Up to 3%):

There are two extra credit options, each of which potentially enables you to improve your overall grade by as much as 3%. You may choose one or the other, but cannot get credit for both, nor for any combination of the two. Extra credit work is due via email by **Friday, March 18, 5:00pm**.

Extra Credit Option 1 (Research Participation): You can participate in Psychology Department research through the Psychology Department Human Subjects Pool. For each credit of participation assigned to Psych 475, you can earn a 1% improvement to your final grade, for up to 3% maximum. You can get more information by contacting the human subjects coordinator, Bill Schumacher, by email at hscoord@uoregon.edu. You can sign up for research opportunities here: <https://uopsych.sona-systems.com>.

Note: The Prescreen activity does not count towards your extra credit hours, but you must complete it in order to participate in other studies.

Extra Credit Option 2 (Critique of an Empirical Article): You can locate an empirical article relevant to the study of cognitive development in a major, peer-reviewed journal, summarize it, and evaluate its contribution to our understanding of cognitive development. A terrific critique (target length is 3 double-spaced pages) will earn you the full 3% extra credit. It would be wise to seek approval of your article from me before beginning your evaluation/critique. To receive the extra credit you will need to hand in both a copy of the article and the evaluation/critique.

Late Work:

All dates and assignments are available at the beginning of the term, providing adequate time for preparation of projects and for exams. Please plan ahead and do not wait until the last minute to work on assignments. Late work is NOT accepted and any assignments turned in late will receive a grade of 0.

Additional Information:

1. Guidelines for Teaching and Learning: The Psychology Department has developed guidelines for teaching and learning in Psychology. These guidelines can be accessed at the following web address: <http://psychology.uoregon.edu/undergraduate/academics/>. Please read these guidelines carefully as they clarify our general expectations and goals for each other in this course.

2. Academic Honesty: As a member of the university community you are expected to be honest and forthright in all your academic endeavors. To falsify the results of one's research, to present the words, ideas, data, or work of another as one's own, or to cheat on an examination corrupts the essential process by which knowledge is advanced.

- a. All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly.

- b. 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 more information regarding academic honesty and the student conduct code at the University of Oregon, visit the University's Division of Student Life website at: <http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/conduct>
- c. Any assignment or exam containing academic dishonesty (i.e., plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, etc.) will receive a grade of 0 and will not have the opportunity to be redone.

3. Plagiarism: 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, such as footnotes. Expectations may vary slightly among disciplines. By placing one's name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from regular text as indented extracts.

- a. A student will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is an acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever:
 - i. one quotes another person's actual words or replicates all or part of another's product;
 - ii. one uses another person's ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one's own words;
 - iii. one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials—unless the information is common knowledge.
- b. Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of the Teaching and Learning Center. In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise (for example, written work, printing, computer program, art or design work, musical composition, and choreography) prepared totally or in part by another.
- c. Plagiarism also includes submitting work in which portions were substantially produced by someone acting as a tutor or editor.

4. Fabrication: Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive.

- a. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - i. citing information not taken from the source indicated;
 - ii. listing sources in a reference not used in the academic exercise;
 - iii. inventing data or source information for research or other academic exercises.

5. Cheating: Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic

exercise.

a. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- i. copying from another student's test paper, computer program, project, product, or performance;
- ii. collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one's work in a test situation;
- iii. using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test;
- iv. using unauthorized materials during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing;
- v. resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the knowledge and permission of the instructor;
- vi. taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.

6. Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and may need accommodations, contact me ASAP. Please let me know in advance even if you are not sure that your disability will require accommodation (for example, if you have a physical disability that may require you to miss class, but you aren't sure it will). With advance planning, adjustments can be made. Last minute changes will be problematic. Students who are experiencing learning difficulties are encouraged to consult the Accessible Education Center. Without documentation, accommodations are made at discretion of instructor.

7. Student Athletes: You must let me know during the first week of classes if you will miss class due to travel with a UO athletic team and require accommodation. Requirements for the course will not be relaxed for student athletes, however minor scheduling accommodations may be made (e.g., taking a quiz a few hours early) if planned well ahead of time.

8. Title IX: I support Title IX and have a duty to report relevant information. The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. Any UO employee who becomes aware that such behavior is occurring has a duty to report that information to their supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. The University Health Center and University Counseling and Testing Center can provide assistance and have a greater ability to work confidentially with students.