PSY 3031 – Sensation and Perception
Spring Semester, 2014

Instructor: Cheryl Olman
Office Hours (S243 Elliott): Mondays, 12-1 pm and Thursdays, 12-1 pm

Teaching Assistants:
  Liz Fast, fastx055@umn.edu, (1:25 section)
  Jordan Beim, beimx004@umn.edu, (2:30 and 3:35 sections)

All teaching assistants are available by appointment to answer questions related to course content. For attendance-related questions or grade-related questions, contact the teaching assistant who is present during your section.

Course Description: This online and discussion-based course covers basic information about human sensation and perception. The course is worth 3 credits; there are no academic course prerequisites.

Required Text: there are several good sensation and perception text books, and assigned readings can be completed in one of these two books:


or


Course Objectives: Students will learn 1) how the human body turns different physical stimuli into neural impulses (sensation), and 2) how the brain receives and interprets these impulses (perception). We will often focus on commonalities between different sensory modalities as a guide to understanding how the brain interprets data about the external world.

Logistics: Format is online lecture and in-class group work. Weekly written assignments (results of in-class exercises), quizzes, discussion fora and lectures will be posted on the course website: https://ay13.moodle.umn.edu/course/view.php?id=10923.

Each week, students will be responsible for the following:

- reading assigned sections of the book or supplemental readings posted online
- watching a set of 8-12 short lecture segments
- completing an online quiz over the assigned readings and lectures before coming to a discussion section
- attending a 50-minute discussion section in which they will complete short experiments and other demonstrations of the week’s lessons
- posting questions or answers to an online discussion forum
- entering online responses to in-class exercises

Disclaimer about visibility of internet ID: In this class, our use of technology will sometimes make students' names and U of M Internet IDs visible within the course website, but only to other students in the same class. Since we are using a secure, password-protected course website, this will not increase the risk of identity theft or spamming for anyone in the class. If you have concerns about the visibility of your Internet ID, please contact the instructor for further information.

Course Grade: In addition to weekly readings, quizzes over the readings, and in-class assignments there will be multiple-choice examinations. There are no extra credit opportunities in the class.

- Three equally weighted exams will compose 50% of the grade.
  o The first 2 exams will comprise 48 multiple-choice questions covering the previous 4 weeks’ lectures and readings.
  o The final (3rd) exam will have 36 questions over the material from the last 4 weeks of class, plus 12 questions covering topics from the entire semester (i.e., cumulative final).
  o No resources (books or notes) are to be used during exams.
  o Exams will be taken in a proctored computer lab.

- Online quizzes will compose 17% of the grade (48/288 points).
  o These will be 12 online quizzes over the reading material assigned for each week’s lectures.
  o Each quiz will have 4 questions, targeting basic concepts or term definitions that should be gleaned readily from the textbook. Students have the opportunity to re-take each quiz twice (a total of 3 attempts).
  o The quizzes will be available online from the start of the semester up until noon on Thursday of the relevant week (e.g., the Week 1 quiz must be completed before coming to class on Thursday, Jan. 24; the Week 2 quiz is due at noon on Thursday, Jan. 31, etc.).

- Weekly online written assignments will compose 17% of the grade (48/288 points).
  o During each discussion section, in-class exercises will be assigned. Exercises may involve either (self-organized) group or individual work.
  o After each lecture, students will submit multi-part entries on the Moodle site, providing answers to the questions stated in class.
  o Online entries are due at noon on Thursday of the following week (i.e., same time as the quizzes, but the Week 1 written assignment is due when the Week 2 quiz is due).
Thoughtful and complete answers will receive 4 points; incorrect, incomplete or careless answers will receive fewer points.

- **Attendance** will compose 8% of the grade (24/288 points)
  - A sign-up sheet will be available at each in-person meeting. It is the student’s responsibility to be sure s/he signs the sheet before leaving for the day.
  - Each signature counts 2 points. There are 15 course meeting dates. No extra credit will be given for perfect attendance, so students can miss up to three meeting times (e.g., due to sickness or travel) during the course of the semester without grade penalty.

- Participation in the discussion fora (forums) for the class counts for the remaining 8% of the grade (24/288 points).
  - Each discussion forum post (whether a question or an answer or suggestion of an additional resource) will be worth 4 points and will be graded for thoughtfulness and clarity.

The course is graded on an A-F basis (A: 93 – 100, A-: 90 – 92, B+: 88 – 89 ..., C-: 70 – 72; minimum passing grade is 60%; students taking the course pass/fail will receive an S (satisfactory) for grades higher than D).

**Plagiarism**: In all written assignments, including posts to discussion fora, be scrupulous about avoiding plagiarism. Definitions and examples of plagiarism can be found at [http://plagiarism.org](http://plagiarism.org). If you copy text or ideas from a source, particularly a website you are referencing, cite the source. Any assignment identified as plagiarizing a source will receive 0 points without possibility of making it up. Plagiarism on a second assignment will result in the assignment’s point value being subtracted from the course grade. Three plagiarized assignments will result in a grade of F for the course.

**Policy for make-up work**: For legitimate absences (as defined in the University policy statement, http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/makeupwork.html), late submissions will be graded for full credit if (1) arranged before the due date (or as soon as possible, in the case of severe illness or emergencies) and (2) completed within a week of the original due date.

**Contacting the instructor**: The best way to contact the instructor is to come to office hours, or to stop and talk after class. Expect a 72-hour turn-around time for responses to emails.

**Student Conduct**: Instructors are responsible for maintaining order and a positive learning environment in the classroom. Therefore, students whose behavior is disruptive or disrespectful either to the instructor or to other students will be asked to leave. Students whose behavior suggests the need for counseling or other assistance may be referred to their college office or University Counseling Services. Students whose behavior may violate the University Student Conduct Code may be referred to the Director of the University Counseling Office.
Sexual Harassment: University policy prohibits sexual harassment as defined in the University policy statement of 17 May, 1984; copies of this statement are available in 419 Morrill Hall. Complaints about sexual harassment should be reported to the University Office of Equal Opportunity, 419 Morrill Hall.

Expected Student Behavior: Be on time. • Turn off your cell phones and pagers during class. • Be polite. • Do not interrupt others. • Do not use vulgar language. • Do not read materials unrelated to the course during lectures or in-class activities.

Student Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows: Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. A student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" for the course and a report to the Office for Student Academic Integrity.