

SEMINAR IN MEMORY AND COGNITION (HH/SC PSYC 4270 3.0 M)

Term W 2014
Tuesdays, 11:30-14:30
VC 114
Faculty of Health, York University

INSTRUCTOR: R. Shayna Rosenbaum
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will survey a variety of topics in the area of human memory and its relationship with other cognitive processes, such as perception, emotion, and executive function. Current theories and data on memory will be presented, focusing on the processes and systems involved at encoding, storage, and retrieval, as well as the errors of memory and the importance of memory in our everyday lives. Evidence derived from work with clinical populations with severe memory disturbances and healthy older individuals will be reviewed. Reference will also be made to research involving the use of animal models and the growing use of brain-imaging techniques to study the neural basis of memory. Students will have the opportunity to discuss and critique current research in memory, with particular attention to the ongoing debate regarding unitary versus multiple memory systems and the neural correlates of such systems.

EVALUATION

There is no examination in this course. Students will be assessed as follows:

1. Weekly Thought Papers: 30%

Students are required to submit a **1-page, double-spaced, 12-point** (250-300 words) “thought” paper on the readings at the beginning of each class. The purpose of the thought paper is to present your view of the readings in at least one of the following ways: describe the interesting or main questions and how well you believe they were addressed by one or more of the papers; evaluate the experimental design and/or the authors’ interpretation of the findings; discuss ideas for theory or experiments that the paper(s) inspired; describe how the papers complemented or contradicted each other. Importantly, the thought paper is NOT meant to summarize the readings but rather to serve as a stimulus for class discussion.

10 are required. You may turn in 12 (only 1 per class), and the best 10 will be counted towards your final grade. Each paper will be graded on a 3-point scale (maximum grade = 30). Late thought papers will not be accepted, so be sure to meet the deadline.

2. Class Presentation: 20%

Each student will serve as a discussion leader and be responsible for presenting a seminar on one of the assigned topics. This will involve extracting the important issues of one or two of the readings, and posing discussion questions for class.

To lead the discussion, it will be necessary to elaborate on the Introduction of the paper and provide the theoretical context in which the main question or questions were asked in the paper. To do this well, you may need to read an additional article or two in order to be fully prepared to discuss the assigned paper. If you choose an empirical article, it will also be necessary to provide a concise description of the methods, the main findings, and interpretation of the findings. You should also share your take on the paper, and prepare a few questions to discuss. The questions can be points of confusion, issues for further consideration, follow-up research ideas, and so on. Sample questions are included with each topic, and you may use these as a guide for the questions that you pose for discussion. The presentation should take no more than 20-30 minutes.

3. Essay: 30%

At the end of the term, students will be required to submit a more lengthy paper on one of the topics. In addition to the requirements for the thought paper, the essay should incorporate a creative or applied component. Some examples include: 1. Design of an original research proposal that would help advance our understanding of memory systems or processes; 2. Analysis of a literary work or movie that relates to a topic covered in the course; 3. Commentary on the content, retrieval process, or metacognitive aspects of a memory interview with a friend or relative. Papers should be **no longer than 8 pages, not including references** (12-point font, double-spaced, 1" margins). Before writing the paper, each student should discuss with me the topic he or she chooses, and the general approach the student wishes to take. The paper should be in APA format (see Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association). There will be a penalty for late submissions of 3% per day.

4. Class Participation: 20%

Students are required to participate in class discussions by presenting the opinions, comments, or views they expressed in their thought papers and by offering answers to questions posed by others.

READINGS

There is no assigned text. Readings for each topic will consist of articles and/or book chapters selected by the instructor and will be available for download from the course website. Supplementary readings will be provided to help students with their class presentations and written assignments. The readings are intended to acquaint students with current issues and debate in the field of memory and serve to elaborate on topics discussed in class. Students will be expected to read the required readings for each topic *prior* to class and are also encouraged to sample supplementary readings.

PREREQUISITES:

Students should be familiar with basic principles of brain function to appreciate fully the nature of cognitive models of memory. Course pre-requisites include: AK/AS/SC/PSYC 1010 6.00 or AK/PSYC 2410 6.00, with a minimum grade of C; AK/AS/SC/PSYC 2030 3.00 or AK/PSYC 2530 3.00; one of AK/AS/SC/PSYC 2021

3.00, AK/AS/SC/PSYC 2020 6.00, AK/PSYC 2510 3.00; one of AK/PSYC 3130 3.00, AK/PSYC 3135 3.00, AK/PSYC 3260 3.00 (after Winter 2002), AS/SC/PSYC 3260 3.00, AK/AS/SC/PSYC 3265 3.00.

The Psychology Calendar lists a number of student responsibilities and requirements, two of which are presented here.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that courses are selected in accordance with current degree/certificate and program requirements. Please check to make sure that the course that you enroll in fits with your degree requirements.

All students are required to satisfy all the corequisite(s) and prerequisite(s) for courses selected for enrolment. You may be de-enrolled from a course for which you lack the required co- or prerequisite(s). Do not rely on the enrolment system to block your enrolment from such courses. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that co- and prerequisite requirements have been satisfied. Please note that such de-enrolment could occur even after the course has started, leaving you with few or no options in terms of replacing the course.