Psychology S1480D
Experimental Psychology: Perception and Attention
Columbia University
Summer Session I, 2008

Course Description: This course combines lectures and practical lab experience aimed at explaining the basics of perception, attention, and the relation between the two. Perception refers to the mental processing of the information that we gain from our senses. Attention is a broad term that includes such things as the influence of our expectations and how we allocate our limited mental resources. However, these two aspects of mental processing are inter-dependent. For example, perception can influence attention, such as when we turn our heads towards a loud noise, and attention can affect perception, such as when we search for a familiar face among a crowd of people. The lectures and reading will cover a broad range of topics, while in the lab sections students will design, run, analyze and report several core experiments in the field.

Lecture: M,W - 9:00 - 12:10, 610 Schermerhorn. *Note, there is a FRIDAY class on May 30th to make up for the missed Memorial day class.*

Lab: T,Th - 9:00 - 12:10, 200B Schermerhorn

Instructor: Dr. Brian C. Rakitin
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email:br130@columbia.edu
Office hours: After class

Text: Coran, S, Ward, L M., & Enns, J. (2003). *Sensation and Perception (6th edition*). Publisher: Jossey-Bass, an Imprint of Wiley

Evaluation for S1480: There will be two exams, each worth 32.5% of the final grade. Exams will cover material from lectures, labs, and assigned readings, from either the first or second half of the course. Exams will consist primarily of multiple choice and short answer questions (sentence or short paragraph). Exams are designed to be very difficult. Grading on exams will be based on "scaled scores." That is, the highest score will be shifted to the A range, the low score to the A-F range (depending on the spread of points between the high and low score) and the rest of the grades will be determined based on each grades proportion of the new range. This means that any number of students can get A's or any other grade. This is not a curve, and students will not compete against each other for grades.

Three lab reports will each be worth ten percent. The remaining five percent will be based on your attendance and evaluations of your contributions in the lecture and lab sessions.

There will be no extra credit or make-up assignments.

Absence & Make-up Exams:

Attendance in class is mandatory. Every unexcused absence from class will result in a deduction of 1% from your final grade. Moreover, because of the intense nature of the summer session schedule, it is very unlikely that you will do well on the exams and assignments if you do not attend class. Excuses must be documented by medical records, or your academic supervisor. The only exception is for religious holidays, and only if the instructor is notified in advance of the holiday.

An unexcused absence from any of the exams will result in a grade of F on that exam. To be excused from an exam you must personally notify one of the instructors *before* the exam and must present some evidence certifying the legitimacy of your absence (e.g., doctor's note). Makeup exams will typically, but not necessarily involve longer, integrative essay questions.

Late lab reports will be assigned a penalty of 5 points (out of 100) for every day the report is handed in past the due date, unless you present a legitimate excuse to one of the instructors before the report is due.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. Also, stop by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in Lerner Hall, Suite 802 to register for support services, if you have not done so already. Students who are eligible for extra exam time should be certain to fill out the appropriate paperwork at the Office of Disability Services. Once I have received confirmation of your status, I will be able to make arrangements for additional exam time. Note that ODS often requires 2 weeks to process an application, so don't wait until midterm week to get in touch with them.

Schedule of Classes

Date	Day	Topic	Reading
		Week 1	
May 27	T	Lecture 1: Introduction to Psychophysics	CEW 1 & 2
May 28	W	Lab 1: Magnitude Estimation 1	
May 29	R	Lecture 2: Psychophysics & Signal Detection	CEW 1 & 2
May 30	F	Lab 2: Elementary Statistics	
		Week 2	
June 2	T	Lab 3: Elementary Statistics (Cont.) & Scientific Writing	
June 3	W	Lecture 3: The Eye & Vision	CEW 3 & 4
June 4	R	Lab 4: Magnitude Estimation 2 & Analysis	

June 5	F	Lecture 4: The Eye & Vision, cont.; The Ear and Hearing	CEW 3-6
		Week 3	
June 9	M	Lecture 5: The Ear & Hearing, cont.	CEW 5 & 6
June 10	T	Lab 5: Mental Rotation 1	
		Deadline for 1480: Magnitude Estimation Lab Report Due	
June 11	W	**Exam 1, 9-10:30AM/** Lecture 6: Objects & Scenes, 10:30AM-Noon	CEW 10
June 12	R	Lab 6: Mental Rotation 2 – Data Analysis	
		Week 4	
June 16	M	Lecture 7: Objects & Scenes, Cont.	CEW 10
June 17	T	Lab 7: Experimental Design 1	
June 18	W	Lecture 8: Space & Time	CEW 9 & 11
June 19	R	Lab 8: Experimental Design 2 & Hypothesis Testing	
		Week 5	
June 23	M	Lecture 9: Attention	CEW 13
		Deadline for 1480: Mental Rotation Lab Report Due	
June 24	T	Lab 9: Visual Search 1	
June 25	W	Lecture 10: Consciousness	CEW 14
June 26	R	Lab 10: Visual Search 2: Data Analysis	
		Week 6	
June 30	M	Lecture 11: Development of Perception	CEW 15
		Deadline for 1480: Visual Search Lab Report Due	
July 1	T	Presentation assignment and discussion.	
July 2	W	**Exam 2**	
July 3	R	Presentations.	

Notes: CEW = Coren, Ward & Enns textbook. Week 1 begins on a Tuesday with a lab due to the Memorial Day holiday. The Monday class will be made up on Friday, May 30th.