

# PSYCHOLOGY 3360

## Sensation and Perception

-- SPRING 2010 --

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Classtime: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 13:00-13:50

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 14:00-15:00

Text: Goldstein: **Sensation and Perception** (7th edition)

The study of Sensation and Perception is the evaluation of human reception and computation of incoming information about ourselves and the environment. This course will cover the five senses -- sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. It will also cover the changes in these senses over the lifespan, some aspects of individual differences and sensory malfunction, the interaction between perception and cognition and common characteristics of processing by all the systems.

This course will focus on the use of Inquiry to foster learning. We will cover one chapter per week. On Monday, Dr. Mather will give a brief lecture outlining the major concepts and approaches of the chapter. On Wednesday groups will meet and each will choose a question based on the material in the chapter. These will be posted to the class e-mail and each group will choose one question (not their own) and answer it Friday. The next Monday, everyone will write for 10 minutes about a concept from the chapter chosen by Dr. Mather. It will be one of three provided by her to the class on Friday (any sooner and you could use them to shape your question).

Inquiry is an important skill that should be taught in the university and that frees a student from rote learning and the necessity to rely on the professor's opinion as the important and valid one. The University of Lethbridge's Statement of Philosophy says our "primary aims are to foster the spirit of free inquiry and the critical interpretation of ideas". This course should help you do that - but don't be discouraged if it's difficult at first, it's hard to switch focus.

Monday: For the first 10 minutes of class, students will write about a concept provided by Dr. Mather and based on material covered the previous week (on one chapter). Three possible

concepts will be e-mailed to the class on Friday. These are worth 2 marks each and there will be 10 of them (total 20).

After that, Dr. Mather will lecture for about 20 minutes, giving the class some background and discussion of the important ideas in the week's chapter. There will be no time for details - you will have to get these from the text.

Wednesday: On Wednesday you'll come in with your knowledge and get together in your groups., Each group's job for the 50 minutes is to come up with a question - an important one - based on the area of perception covered in that particular text chapter. As well, you will be required to justify why this question is an important one, check in Chapter 1 (total about one page in length). Note: consideration will be made for originality as I don't want every group to ask the same question (see Friday). The clarity, answerability and importance of the question as well as the appropriateness of the rationale will be evaluated. Each will be worth 2 for a total of 24.

After class you'll report your question and justifications, by posting on the class-email (psyc3360a@uleth.ca) by 4:00 Wednesday afternoon. That will give groups lots of time to select a question and prepare to make an answer (see Friday). Dr. Mather will copy them and retain them to grade.

Friday: Each Friday, groups will come to class and work on the question they have chosen (which they will report at the beginning of class). Material from sources outside the text and lectures will be welcome for use and rewarded but is not required. Each group's answer will be typed, APA format but no title page or abstract required initially (references in APA format) and submitted to Dr. Mather by e-mail or typed paper copy by noon Saturday. Answers will be worth 3 marks and evaluation will be based on validity of the answer, information used to back up the conclusions, and creativity and originality of the answer (total = 33).

Students will be placed in groups of 5 on January 8th. They will stay in the same group until February 12th and will be reassigned to groups February 22nd (after Reading Week). Before the group re-shuffling, students will be asked to evaluate the contribution of each group member, including themselves, on a relative basis from 80% to 120%, averaging 100% (February 12 and April 16). In most cases this will make little difference to one's grade - this is meant to find and reward the excellent leader and the poor contributor.

Absences on Monday will result in a missed assignment which can be made up if Dr. Mather is given the appropriate written justification. Absences from group work should be evaluated within the group - I will ask the class' opinion about this on the first day of class.

For week 1 (January 11-15 you WILL NOT BE GRADED. This gives you a week to practice.

## Poster Presentation

Some day towards the end of the semester (possibly March 25th), the Perception class will have a poster evening and present topics to PANIC (the Psychology and Neuroscience Club). Students will present a poster in trios (thus there will be a total of approximately 12). On February 22nd, instead of having a lecture we will discuss and students will choose a poster topic. Posters are to be quite explanatory (most Psychology and Neuroscience majors don't take Perception), attention - getting and as interactive as possible. Your audience will learn best by doing. Posters will be evaluated for Format and Content (50% each) and I will ask class members to contribute feedback about other posters, though not numerical evaluation. The poster presentation will be worth 23 marks.

Schedule:			
January	6	Organization	
	8	Organization	
	11	Threshold lecture	Chapter 1
Not graded	13	Threshold question, Group allocation	
Not graded	15	Threshold answer	
Not graded	18	Threshold concept, Vision 1 lecture	Chapter 2, 3
	20	Vision 1 question	
	22	Vision 1 answer	
	25	Vision 1 concept, Vision 2 lecture	Chapter 4
	27	Vision 2 question	
	29	Vision 2 answer	
February	1	Vision 2 concept, Vision Pattern lecture	Chapter 5
	3	Vision pattern question	
	5	Vision pattern answer	
	8	Vision pattern concept, Distance lecture	Chapter 8
	10	Distance/Size question	
	12	Distance/Size answer, Group self evaluation, Group reassignment	
	22	Distance concept, Colour lecture, Group self evaluation	Chapter 7
	24	Colour question, Poster discussion	
	26	Colour answer	
March	1	Colour concept, Motion lecture, Group	Ch. 9, 10
	3	Motion question	
	5	Motion answer	
	8	Motion concept, Auditory 1 lecture	Chapter 11
	10	Auditory 1 question	
	12	Auditory 1 answer	
	15	Auditory 1 concept, Auditory 2 lecture	Chapter 12
	17	Auditory 2 question	
	19	Auditory 2 answer	
	22	Auditory 2 concept, Language lecture	Chapter 13
	24	Language question	
	26	Language answer	
	29	Language concept, Skin senses lecture	Chapter 14
	31	Skin senses question	
April	7	Chemical senses question	Chapter 15
	9	Chemical senses answer	
	12	Development lecture, Chemical senses concept	
	14	Developmental question	Chapter 16
	16	Developmental answer and group self-evaluation	

## **Psychology 3360: Sensation and Perception**

Wednesday class assignments:

**Justification:** why is it a good question?

- 1) Answerable from the chapter but can bring in extra, not too big and not too small.
- 2) Touches on an important theoretical issue.
- 3) Explores interesting practical applications.
- 4) Shows how expectations and knowledge help shape our perception.
- 5) Describes how stimuli are rich in information and exist in a rich context.
- 6) Helps us see how we are efficient information processors, occasionally led astray.
- 7) Compares similarities amongst the senses or shows their interactions.
- 8) Explains the linkage between perceptual phenomena and brain physiology.