



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

**Department of Psychology**  
**Psychology 369 (L60) – Sensation & Perception**  
**Summer 2009**

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<b>Instructor:</b>	Trudi E. Chalmers	<b>Lecture Location:</b>	A-167
<b>Phone:</b>	403-220-2442	<b>Lecture Days/Time:</b>	Tues and Thurs: 11:00am to 1:45pm
<b>Email:</b>	sticklan@ucalgary.ca		
<b>Office:</b>	A-257D		
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tues and Thurs 9am – 11am		

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### **Course Description and Goals**

Our senses are what guide our interaction with the world. They are critical to our survival and also our enjoyment of day to day life. How is it that we are able to sense and perceive the world around us so seamlessly? What happens when disease or injury produces deficits in sensory processing? What impact does our environment have on the development of sensory systems?

By the end of this course, you will have a deeper understanding of:

1. The basics of each sensory system – from both a physiological and psychological perspective.
2. The scientific methods used to study sensation and perception
3. The developmental changes that occur within our sensory systems
4. Sensory and perceptual phenomena that challenge our current views of how our system works.

This course involves considerable in class participation. In order for you to fully enjoy and participate in class discussions it will be necessary for you to keep on top of readings prior to class. There will be no tolerance for disrespectful behaviours or comments during class discussions.

This course will provide you with the necessary background for advanced study of sensory and perceptual processes (e.g. Vision: Psyc 469, and Audition: Psyc 471). It will be imperative for you to keep on top of readings as it is only a 7 week course (once you fall behind, it will be difficult to get caught up). Also, do not expect the class to be a substitute for reading the assigned material! Due to the limited time frame, we will concentrate on the more challenging concepts during class time (yet, you will still be required to know everything from the readings for tests and exams).

### **Prerequisites**

PSYC 205 - Principles of Psychology

### **Expectations for Mutual Success**

Your learning in this course is the best measure of its success. Our effort to facilitate your learning depends on our shared ability to meet clear and reasonable expectations of one another. The general expectations that will guide us toward mutual success are listed below - first those to be met by the instructors, then those that apply to students.

### **A. Student Expectations of the Course Instructors**

*As the Instructors of Psyc 369, we will do our best to:*

1. Make the course a highly enjoyable and rewarding overall learning experience for you.
2. Share with you some of the many fascinating problems in perceptual research, some of them among the most interesting in science (in our opinion)☺
3. Ensure that the course is offered in a manner consistent with this course outline.
4. Ensure that the course proceeds in a clear and organized manner.
5. Make exams fair, and representative of the assigned lecture and reading material.
6. Provide you with the feedback you need to understand your grade on any exam as well as the course overall, and to fix any marking errors that arise.
7. Be accessible, and to respond to your concerns.
8. Recognize and fix any course problems that you bring to our attention.

### **B. Instructor Expectations of Students**

*We expect that you will:*

1. **Read this course outline.** Most questions about the course are answered by the information in this Outline. So that you do not waste time, including that of your fellow students, please check to be sure that your questions are not already answered by the Outline.
2. **Recognize that learning increases your intellectual capital and power.** You will get out of this course what you put into it. Considerable hard work will be needed for you to do well in this course, so if you are looking for an “easy course” then you should enroll elsewhere.
3. **Work smart.** Active involvement in a course and your on-time completion of the reading assignments will produce deeper, lasting, more efficient learning. That’s why we have included a specific Web unit for every lecture topic; I will expect you to come to class having completed the assigned readings!
4. **“What goes around comes around!”** Although it may not be a self-evident truth, professors are people too and we appreciate receiving the same fair-minded, considerate treatment as other humans. Among other things, this means that I expect you to: a) arrive at class on time, b) not talk during class (except for in-class discussion), and d) be an active participant during class.
5. **In a University course there is not sufficient time to lecture on all important topics.** Because the number of classes in a Term is too limited to cover a vast breadth of topics, many of the specific topics covered in the assigned Web units cannot be included in the lecture. But because a topic cannot be covered in class, it is not less important! Or to be very practical about it, an assigned reading topic is just as likely to be on the exam, whether it was included in lecture or not!
6. **Exams in this course use a “paperless” format.** Any exception to this must be secured in writing from the Instructors (for specific details, see the Examinations and Grading Section below).
7. **Academic misconduct (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarism) is unfair to other**

**students; it demeans the perpetrator, and is completely unacceptable to your instructors.** Thus, we will do our utmost to assure that any instances of such misconduct receive the maximum penalty allowable under University policy.

8. **If there are any questions, issues or problems, please come and see me.** If you have having problems with the course, please feel free to come and discuss these issues with me before/after class, or we can set up a meeting. E-mail is the best way to get in contact with me.

### **Required Text**

This class will use the PIP on-line learning resource developed by Dr. Donald Kline and his students. [www.pip.ucalgary.ca/psyc-369](http://www.pip.ucalgary.ca/psyc-369)

If feel that you would like to use a text as a “backup” (your choice), the following are excellent reference sources:

- 3.) Goldstein, E.B. (2009). *Sensation and Perception* (8<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth. \*

\* The Goldstein text has been used frequently in prior versions of the course so copies are likely to be in circulation locally. An older version of the text is fine for use.

### **Evaluation**

There will be 6 assignments during the course. Each one will be worth **1% of grade**, and you can discard one (either not hand it in, or discard your lowest mark). You will be told at the beginning of class (no sooner) that you will be required to hand in a written response (not point form) to 2 specific questions. These questions will be answered during the lecture (and you can refer to PIP for further clarification on the answers). You are allowed to work in groups outside of the class to answer the questions, but EACH student is required to write their OWN responses to the questions (If I receive two answers that are exactly the same, both students will receive a mark of 0). The answers will be due at the **start** of the following class (late responses will receive a mark of 0). After everyone has handed in their answers, I will post the correct answers to blackboard for your reference.

There will be 3 exams in this course: two exams during class: each one after the completion of 3 units, and a Final at the end of term. The Final Exam is "partly comprehensive" in that in addition to the questions covering material covered following the second in class exam it will include some questions from previous units (see Exam Format section below). **Note:** A detailed schedule of class topics, assigned Web unit(s) for each class, and Term exams is provided in the Lecture/Exam Schedule of this outline. The Final Exam will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office during the Final Exams period.

### **Exam Format**

**1.) Term Exams (50% of grade):** Each Term Exam (there will be 2 of them) will consist of 30 multiple-choice questions given in "paperless" format (see following "Exam Type" section for a description of “paperless” exams). The questions on the exam will cover material both within the PIP, as well as that covered in class (including discussions and demonstrations). This makes it

essential to attend all classes and to review the notes provided on Blackboard for any classes that are missed. I will post a word document of my lectures on blackboard prior to class.

**2.) Final Exam (45% of grade):** The 60-item Final Exam is cumulative, with a focus on material not covered in the first 3 exams. The Final Exam will also be "paperless".

The final 5% of your grade will be composed of your class homework assignments.

### Exam Type

**1.) "Paperless" Exams.** To provide students with more time to complete each exam, as well as save paper, trees, money and support staff resources, exams will use a "paperless" approach. The test will be presented on-screen 4 items at a time using an overhead projector. So that everyone has enough time to revisit more difficult questions, the exam is presented two times. Each exam will be reviewed in the class following the one in which the exam was taken. An Answer Recording Form is provided so that you can note any items that you want to revisit in the second session, and also for recording all your answers for the purpose of reviewing your answers during the exam review. The latter is important because Freedom of Information and Privacy Act makes it impractical to return the original answer sheets in large classes. So that you are completely familiar with the paperless approach to exams, the exam procedures will be explained in class, and a practice exam will be provided prior to the first Term Exam.

**Note:** Because the paperless format necessitates that all students begin the exam at the same time, it is necessary to ***be in class*** and in your seat ***not later than the scheduled class time!***

**2.) Written Exemption Waiver for Paper Exams.** For students whose performance would be demonstrably disadvantaged by the paperless exam format (e.g. those with low vision with their best visual correction or other recognized disability), a written waiver for taking a paper rather than "paperless" version of exams will be provided on a pre-approved basis ONLY. To secure such a waiver, written documentation from the University's Disability Resource Centre, or a statement from an eye-care professional (i.e., an optometrist or ophthalmologist) that indicates the student's "best-corrected far acuity" monocular or binocular must be presented to the Instructor responsible for the exam at least one week prior to the date of the exam.

### Posting & Recording of Exam Scores

Assuming that exam scores are available from the University computerized grading facility, Term Exam scores will be posted on the course Blackboard site by 2:00 PM on the first regular class day following the exam or sooner. [**Note:** Only your score, not its letter grade equivalent, is entered into the computer for each exam; that way, any score points over the minimum letter grade equivalent for each exam can be "carried forward" to help your final letter grade for the course.]

### Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As noted in the University Calendar, it is the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage as appropriate (i.e., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90%; 89.4% will be rounded down to 89%, etc.).

## Final Course Grades

Your final course grade will be assigned based on: 1) your scores on the two Term Exams (50%), 2) your score based on 5 of 6 homework assignments (5%), and 3) your score on the comprehensive Final exam (45%). If an exam is missed for medical reasons, the student must contact Dr. Chalmers prior to the exam and then, to provide an official University medical excuse for the missed exam; otherwise you will have forfeited any right to make up the missed exam.

## Tentative Lecture Schedule

By Date (Day)	On the Topic:	Complete Module/Unit(s):
July 2 (Thurs)	<i>Intro to Psyc 369: Course &amp; Exams</i> About Sensation & Perception	----- 1.1 Intro to Sensation & Perception
July 7 (Tues)	About Sensation & Perception Measuring Perception	1.2 Measuring Sensitivity 1.3 Difference Thresholds
July 9 (Thurs)	The Eye, Retina, Visual pathways	2.1 The Eye 2.2 Retina 2.3 Visual Pathways
July 14 (Tues)	Visual Pathways, Visual Brain	2.3 Visual Pathways 2.4 The Visual Brain
July 16 (Thurs)	Light and Colour	3.1 brightness, lightness, darkness & contrast 3.2 colour vision
July 21 (Tues)	<b>EXAM – units 1 – 3.</b> Form and change	4.1 spatial vision
July 23 (Thurs)	<b>NO CLASS</b>	

By Date (Day)	On the Topic:	Complete Module/Unit:
July 28 (Tues)	<i>Exam I – Review</i> Form and Change	----- 4.2 Perceiving movement 4.3 depth and distance
July 30 (Thurs)	Form and Change	4.3 depth and distance 4.4 Perceiving objects and faces
Aug. 4 (Tues)	Hearing	6.1 pitch perception 6.2 loudness
Aug 6 (Thurs)	Chemical Sense	7.1 Touch 7.2 Temperature and pain
Aug 11 (Tues)	<b>EXAM – units 4, 6 &amp; 7</b> Olfaction Development	8.1 olfaction 9.1 development of vision

By Date (Day)	On the Topic:	Complete Module/Unit:
Aug 13 (Thurs)	<i>Exam II Review</i> Development and aging	----- 9.1 development of vision 9.3 aging of the senses
Aug 18 (Tues)	Attention	Selected readings
Aug 20 (Thurs)	Sensory Deprivation	Selected readings

## Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

### **Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct**

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

### **Academic Accommodation**

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

### **Absence From A Test/Exam**

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

### **Course Credits for Research Participation**

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation. The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to

participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **Aug 13th, 2009**.

### **Student Organizations**

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 220-5567.

**Student Union VP Academic:** Phone: 220-3911 [suypaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suypaca@ucalgary.ca)  
**Student Union Faculty Rep.:** Phone: 220-3913 [socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca)

### **Important Dates**

The last day to drop this course and **still receive a fee refund** is **July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009**. The last day to withdraw from this course is August **Aug 14th, 2009**.