SOCIAL PERCEPTION
SOP 6409
FALL 2015
TUESDAYS, 3-6PM
USTLER 105

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

We typically think of perception as among the most fundamental forms of lower-level cognition and social cognition as among the most advanced forms of higher-level cognition. In this seminar we will explore how these two aspects of the mind connect. We will explore how social influences do and do not influence what we see, and how perception itself is specialized for social information. Readings will be drawn from several different areas of psychology — including cognitive psychology, vision science, social psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and infant cognition. Specific topics include the perception of animacy, agency, and intentionality, biological motion, face perception, gaze processing, attention, race perception, social color vision, social olfaction, and social and cultural influences on perception.

STRUCTURE, PREPARATION, AND PARTICIPATION

The success of this course rests with the students and your preparation. We will focus both on critical discussion of the theories and empirical research covered in the readings, as well as generating new directions and creative connections between topics. Each week, one or two students will organize and facilitate the discussion of that week's topics and readings. Everyone should come to each class prepared to actively contribute to the group discussion. The overarching goal for this course is for you to develop your thinking and research ideas, and it is through the process of discussion and debate that one's research acumen becomes defined and sharpened. Science tolerates and critically evaluates all points of view when they are advanced with sensitivity for those who may not share them. Please keep in mind that your fellow students may not share your religious affiliations, political beliefs, cultural backgrounds, economic, ethnic, or sexual orientations.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>A = 90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating class discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>B = 80-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thought papers</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>C = 70-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research workshops</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>D = 60-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>F = 59 and below</td>
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FACILITATING CLASS DISCUSSION

Each week, one or two student will organize and facilitate discussion. As facilitators, you decide how to best accomplish your goal for the week. It is not your responsibility to explain the readings to others; instead, your role is to provide a sensible and interesting framework for discussing the topic. You could circulate an email before class to pose questions of your colleagues. You could collate the questions from the thought papers and use them to guide the class meeting (see below). You might highlight common themes that run throughout the readings. You are encouraged to come up with a class activity to go along with the discussion. For example, you might set up a debate. You could provide a demonstration. You could show a video. You may use handouts, but do not have to. The goal of facilitation is to provide structure and direction for fellow students in order to have a productive discussion; there is no right or wrong way to do so. You may touch base with me the week before you facilitate discussion to discuss your plans and any questions that you might have. The best facilitators start early in thinking about how to structure the discussion and have backup plans or multiple ideas for fostering active discussions.

THOUGHT PAPERS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Each week you will submit a brief paper in which you describe your thinking about that week’s readings. This assignment is open-ended; the idea is that you consider aspects of the strengths, limitations, implications, and interconnections in the week’s readings. Based on your thinking, you should also submit a question or two that you think would be particularly interesting to discuss in class. You must submit the paper via email to Kate (ratliff@ufl.edu) and the discussion questions to the appropriate Canvas Discussion Forum by 5 pm the day before class. Each assignment should be less than one page (1-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font) and should follow APA format for style and citations. A reference page is not necessary. Your papers will be graded primarily on how well you provide a thoughtful, well-argued analysis of the work, but writing style always counts. Late papers will not be accepted. You do not need to submit a thought paper or discussion questions on the week for which you are discussion leader. Each week’s grade will be based 20% on the paper and 80% on the discussion questions. These grades will be averaged and together will comprise 20% of your final grade.

RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

To help encourage the development of new research ideas and to gain practice in presenting and critiquing research, there are three days (October 20th/27th and December 1st/8th) devoted to in-class research workshops. Before coming to class on those days, you will identify an interesting research question, describe it and its importance, briefly outline an appropriate methodology to address it, and present the anticipated results. Your proposal should be no more than one page (single-spaced, one-inch margins). You may include a graph of anticipated results or a figure of your proposed model on a second page.

In class, students will present their ideas for 5-10 minutes followed by 5-10 minutes of discussion. Other students will provide feedback and suggestions. Grading will be based on your own product (5% per workshop) and the quality of your feedback to other students (5% per workshop).
RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Each student will submit a paper proposing one or two empirical studies that would test an important and novel research question related to social perception. Although students will not be required to carry out the research they propose, you are encouraged to pick a topic that connects to your own interests. Writing the proposal should be helpful to those who wish to develop new lines of research and also to those who want to explore ideas relevant to theses, secondary projects, and dissertations. Please do not propose research that you are already working on. This paper must take the form of a research proposal; it cannot be a literature review. Papers should be approximately 8-12 pages in length (double-spaced) and written in APA style. Your paper should include a reference section.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Discussion Leader</th>
<th>Thought Paper #</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Organizational meeting</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>Can social factors change how we see?</td>
<td>John, Gaby</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Can culture change how we see?</td>
<td>Nikolette, Joy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>Looking at and attending to others</td>
<td>Charis, Joshua</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>No class – Kate Away</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>Social color vision</td>
<td>Elle, Deborah</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>Animacy and intentionality</td>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>No class – Kate Away</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>Research Workshop #1, Part 1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October 27</td>
<td>Research Workshop #1, Part 2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>Perceiving social information in faces</td>
<td>Earnest</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Perceptual stereotyping</td>
<td>Jack, Earlesha</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>Social vision in action</td>
<td>Lynsey</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>November 24</td>
<td>No class – Thanksgiving</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>Research Workshop #2 Part 1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>Research Workshop #2 Part 2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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COURSE READING LIST

Please note: The reading list is subject to change. Please see the course website for the most up-to-date information.

SEPTEMBER 1: CAN SOCIAL FACTORS CHANGE HOW WE SEE?


SEPTEMBER 8: CAN CULTURE CHANGE HOW WE SEE?


SEPTEMBER 15: LOOKING AT AND ATTENDING TO OTHERS


SEPTEMBER 22: NO CLASS – KATE AWAY
SEPTEMBER 29: SOCIAL COLOR VISION


Note: Each student should also find one additional empirical article demonstrating the influence of a specific color on some psychological outcome.

OCTOBER 6: ANIMACY AND INTENTIONALITY


OCTOBER 13: NO CLASS – KATE AWAY

OCTOBER 20: RESEARCH WORKSHOP #1, PART 1

OCTOBER 27: RESEARCH WORKSHOP #1, PART 2

NOVEMBER 3: PERCEIVING SOCIAL INFORMATION IN FACES

NOVEMBER 10: PERCEPTUAL STEREOTYPING


NOVEMBER 17: SOCIAL VISION IN ACTION


NOVEMBER 24: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING

DECEMBER 1: RESEARCH WORKSHOP #2, PART 1

DECEMBER 8: RESEARCH WORKSHOP #2, PART 2

Note: Thanks to Brian Scholl for reading list inspiration.