

PSYCHOLOGY 4C03
Language Disorders in Childhood

Term 2 (2007-08)
Monday 2:30 - 5:30
Rooms: 204

Instructor: Dr. Betty Ann Levy
Room 103
905-525-9140, Ext. 23019
e-mail: Levy@mcmaster.ca

TA: Heather Poole
905-525-9140, Ext. 24784
poolehl@mcmaster.ca

This seminar will meet weekly to explore 8 childhood disorders, all with interesting language irregularities.

Each of the first 5 weeks will be devoted to discussing a particular aspect of all disorders

January 14: Clinical description of syndrome

21: Neurological correlates of syndrome

28: General cognitive & affective problems

February 4: Specific language (oral & visual) deficits

11: Treatment research

For each of these weeks students will work in pairs, with the groupings and syndromes rearranged part way through the topics. That is, a given group will work on Syndrome X for the first few weeks and then the groups be reformed and the syndromes redistributed. This ensures that each student will work with different partners and everyone will explore more than one syndrome. Over the 5 weeks, each student MUST give at least 2 10-minute presentations (one in each group he/she is assigned to). The 10-min time period will be strictly adhered to and there will be 5 minutes for discussion (15 min. total). Some students may have a chance to do a 3rd presentation. Each will be worth 10 points (best 2 grades recorded). Presentations will be evaluated for content, critical evaluation of material, as well as fluency and clarity of the presentation itself. Each student has only 10 min. to clearly and concisely inform the group regarding the topic. (Students will be cut-off after 10 min to allow 5 mins for discussion, so timing is critical.) The speaker must also provide a reference list of no fewer than 3 readings, with a few sentences highlighting the major points of the reading, for all members of the seminar. All students will fill out a feedback sheet on each presentation. These feedback sheets will be read by Dr. Levy and then passed on to the student the following week, with a presentation grade (determined entirely by Dr. Levy, not the class suggestions). The feedback sheets are a way for all students to help their classmates to develop clear presentation skills.

'Nasty' feedback will not be allowed; this exercise is to help evaluators to develop skill in passing on **constructive** criticism ('it was great' can be useless feedback!). This same feedback procedure will be used in the 2nd. part of the course.

After the study break, and beginning February 25th, the format will change so that for each of the next 6 weeks there will be two 1-hour presentations, followed by a 50-min. discussion of similarities and contrasts between the two syndromes presented. These 1-hour presentations will summarize the important aspects of each syndrome. They should give details of the clinical, neurological and behavioural characteristics, as well as discuss problems in understanding the causes and potential treatments for the disorder. A pair of students will work on each syndrome and they should have completed a thorough research review for these presentations. Each member of the pair is expected to present part of the seminar, so they should plan the presentation together. Each INDIVIDUAL will receive a grade (out of 20 points), but working together to give the best group presentation is critical, because the individual components will be evaluated in terms of how well they fit with the rest of the presentation.

Each week two syndromes have been chosen that can be contrasted. All people presenting within a week should consider both syndromes so that they can initiate and contribute to the discussion of contrasts and similarities between the two disorders. Leadership in these discussions will be considered in assigning a 'class participation' grade for each student. This grade will also reflect participation in the discussion each week. The Class Participation grade will be assigned by Dr. Levy; the total value of this will be 10 points.

Topics:

February 25: Autism/ Landau-Kleffner

March 3: Down/Williams

10: Selective Mutism/ Aphasia

17: Dyslexia/Specific Language Impairment

March 24/April 7th no class meetings. On March 24th Dr. Levy will be available to discuss INDIVIDUAL PAPERS that are due APRIL 7th. (no extensions can be granted). Each student will prepare his/her own research paper. It should be a thorough review of one or more syndromes or a topic that has been approved by Dr. Levy. Each student must include a discussion of problems that require further research and a research proposal that would address one of these problems. Detail of manipulations and controls is required. There should be no collaboration with other students on this final paper, and each student must design his/her own experiment (paper is worth 50 points).

Summary of grades: 10- min. presentations and 5 min.discussions (2 worth 10 points each):

	20 points
Part of 1-hour presentation plus discussion:	20 points
Class participation	10 points
Individual paper and proposed experiment:	50 points
Total	100 points

The instructor reserves the right to alter this marking scheme if circumstances warrant such, but only after class input.

Final grades will be reported on the university's 12-point scale using the standard conversions.

The instructor cannot be responsible for returning long distance calls from students. Any student wishing to reach the instructor can do so via e-mail.

Attention is drawn to the *Statement on Academic Ethics* and the *Senate Resolutions on Academic Dishonesty* as found in the Senate Policy Statements distributed at registration and available in the Senate office. Violations of these policies will be treated according to the published policies.