

Psychology 3EE3 Perception Laboratory

Winter 2009

Instructors:

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Instructional Resources:

Course webpage

psych.mcmaster.ca/3ee3/

Learnlink conference:

www.learnlink.mcmaster.ca

Course Objectives and Content:

1. Writing and graphing skills.
2. Presentation skills (oral and written).
3. Programming skills.
4. Ability to discuss and design empirical research.

Given the wide range of topics covered under the rubric of perception, we will be forced to be selective. As such, the basic content material of the course plays a secondary role to the development of confidence with presentation, graphing, and programming skills. For the present semester, we will focus on mental chronometry. That is, what is the speed of mental processing and how do we go about measuring this? Given that both behaviour and neural processing occur in real time, mental speed represents a critical aspect of perception. The course will focus on methods of measurement and historical findings.

Required Readings:

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition.

Various handouts supplied by the instructor.

Empirical articles retrieved from the University Library System.

Class Times:

Lecture: Tuesday 11:30-2:30

Tutorial: Thursday 12:30 - 13:30

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Grade Breakdown:

Type of assessment	Number in Term	Percent
Final Exam (Registrar Scheduled)	1	15%
Group Project	1	35%
Lab Assignments	3	30%
Editing Student's projects	3	10%
Participation	ongoing	10%

Final Exam:

The final exam will cover all of the course material including all readings, demos and experiments. While this represents a great deal of material, the exam will focus on broad understanding of major themes and issues. Additionally, graph drawing skills and writing skills will be tested. More details will follow during the term.

Group Projects:

Each group of 3 or 4 students will come up with a research question, develop a method for answering the question, implement this method using the programming skills taught (30%), apply for ethical approval for the protocol (5%), collect data on fellow students, analyze the data and present the final findings to the class both orally (15%) and in written form (50%). Every member in the group will be assigned the same grade on the group portion plus or minus 10% based on self-report from the group members. The ethics protocol is due on February 5. The final written paper is due March 31 and the final oral presentation will be given in the last class on April 7.

Lab Assignments:

We will collect data for 3 projects throughout the term using ourselves as participants. The collected data will be analyzed and distributed to the class. Each class member is responsible for completing a lab report including a title page, abstract, introduction, method, results and discussion (stats will be provided, but you will need to generate a graph of the data). These labs will be due on Jan 29, Feb 12, and March 12.

Editing other Students' Papers:

Each lab project will be edited for clarity, content and grammar by another student. This feedback should improve the final product for all class members. You will be evaluated on the quality of your feedback for each project.

Participation:

It is expected that you will come to class prepared to talk about the topic at hand and make contributions to the discussion. I'm not concerned with quantity of contribution, but rather the quality.

Grading Policy:

The instructors reserve the right to adjust final marks up **or down**, on an individual basis, in the light of special circumstances and/or the individual's total performance in the course. Details of the course requirements may be subject to change. If requirements are altered, a revised course outline will be posted on the webpage and the details will be announced in class. The instructor is not able to reschedule the final exam. If there is a problem with the final exam schedule, students must contact the registrar's office. Attention is drawn to the senate [academic integrity policy](#) as found in the Senate Policy Statements distributed at registration and available in the Senate Office. Any student who infringes one of these resolutions will be treated according to the published policy.

Missed Work Policy:

All excuses for missed exams must be submitted through the office of the Associate Dean of your faculty/programme within one week of the original due date of the missed work. After that time, students must appeal to have an exemption. It is also your responsibility to speak with your professor as soon as possible. Senate regulations for petitions for special consideration have always required that: "40. The student shall make a prompt and timely request for special consideration." **NO REQUESTS FOR EXEMPTION WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER ONE MONTH.** Please see the notes on [missed work webpage](#) for further details.

Communication policy:

e-mail communications must originate from your designated McMaster e-mail account (either mcmaster.ca account or LearnLink account). Should we need to communicate

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with you about individual matters, the e-mail will be sent to your mcmaster.ca account. You should monitor this account regularly. E-mail sent from third-party providers (yahoo, hotmail, cogeco, sympatico, etc.) will not be received. We have this policy for three reasons: 1. reduce the amount of incoming spam to our accounts; 2. ensure that we know with whom we are communicating; 3. teach the professional use of e-mail. Please note that instructors and TAs cannot return long distance telephone calls.

In this course we will be using either LearnLink or WebCT (this will be announced in class). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Students should also be aware that they will be providing feedback and evaluations of other students. In doing this, your identity will necessarily be communicated to the other student. Be honest in your assessment of their material and provide constructive comments. Do not inflate the grades as the instructors will consider this inappropriate and it will give the submitting student a false sense of accomplishment. We will talk, during lectures, on how to edit and evaluate a piece of written work and you will be given clear guidelines on how to conduct your assessment. Any concerns or questions regarding this process should be address to the instructors of the course as soon as possible.