

Syllabus

Course Information:

Perception, 830:467:01

Class: T/Th 11:10 AM-12:30 PM ATG 124

Professor/TA Information:

Dr. Sarah R. Allred, srallred@scarletmail.rutgers.edu (Psych / ATG 309; WRI / 411 Cooper Ave)

Office Hours: 10-11 Th AM (ATG 309; and by appointment).

Course Overview:

Why do things look, sound, feel the way they do? What do we know about the true nature of the world by virtue of our sensory experience? How can we measure what we perceive? What can illusions tell us about reality? How do our brains represent our perceptual experience? In Perception, we will answer these and other questions.

Learning Objectives:

The learning objectives of this course are consistent with the goals of the department, the broad goals of general education at the university, and the specific goals of the physical and life sciences subsection of general education. Course activities are designed to assess these learning objectives. Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of perceptual systems and the ways scientists study them.
2. Explain the processes and rules the human brain uses to turn ambiguous sensory information into meaningful percepts of the world that are usually correct.
3. Provide examples of how real-world activities can be influenced by perceptual errors that sometimes result from the brain's guessing rules.
4. Apply knowledge of perceptual functioning to novel situations.
5. Evaluate results from research on perceptual systems, and explain the limits of what perceptual research can explain about how humans perceive the world
6. Communicate your knowledge of perceptual systems clearly and effectively.

Course Logistics Overview:

This class is a digitally-enhanced class, with many in-class activities and assignments completed digitally. **For this course, you should bring to class a smartphone, tablet or laptop computer capable of connecting to the internet.** If this presents a problem please see me during the first

week of class to make alternate arrangements.

Everything you need for this course will be listed on the Sakai site. Each week has one Lessons page, and this page gives an overview of topics for the week and links to all tests, quizzes, and assignments.

A typical week will unfold as follows: Each week will usually have a new topic. We will begin Tuesday class with a discussion of the homework assignment from the previous week. Following that, new material will be introduced in the form of brief lectures interspersed with demonstrations or in-class problem sets that you will turn in during class (in-class assignments; see below). The reading (or media) assignment for the week's topic will be due before Thursday's class; you will complete a short online reading quiz to demonstrate your completion of the reading before Thursday. During Thursday's class, we will learn again through brief lecture interspersed with demonstrations or in-class problem sets. On Thursday, you will receive a homework assignment (due on Sakai the following Monday). These homework assignments are usually short reflection pieces.

On the first day of class, you will be divided into teams. Most classwork will involve the opportunity to work with your teams, but **you will be graded on the work that you turn in.**

Course Materials:

Required

1. **Textbook.** Sensation and Perception, by Wolfe et al. This is available at the bookstore and elsewhere. There are eBook versions available at a variety of online resellers. Print or digital is acceptable. A textbook is **required**, and you will complete an **online quiz** for most chapters. That being said, the bookstore has requested the 5th edition. If you get a previous edition, please let me know, and I will do my best to convert page numbers to that edition (the basic information will be in every edition). If, for some reason, you have access to another mainstream Sensation and Perception textbook, please see me to check if that will work as a resource.

2. **Class information.** Information about assignments and due dates will always be posted on that week's Lessons page in Sakai. In some cases, slides will also be posted after class. Please note that class discussion and problem-solving will take up most class time, so often there will be few slides. Coming to class is strongly advised.

Advisable

3. **Smartphone, tablet (such as an iPad) or laptop computer.** Almost every class will have work to be turned in electronically, and it will be easiest for you to do this by turning it in during class on your device. Please see me as soon as possible if you cannot regularly bring an internet capable device to class so I can work with you to make arrangements.

Grading Overview:

Grading is based on the premise that frequent, low-stakes assessment aids learning much better than infrequent, high-stakes assessment. I expect you to come to class having read the material, and I expect you to be prepared to apply that material in class. In return for this up-front effort on your part, the plurality of your grade will come from daily assignments (rather than exams), on which you should have ample opportunity to achieve full credit. There are 1000 points possible in this class. Overall, grades will be divided into 4 parts:

(1) **Reading and Review Quizzes:** On most Thursdays, a **reading** quiz is due before class. This quiz will cover the previous Tuesday's class material and the reading due before Thursday's class. Quizzes are multiple choice, on Sakai, and are due **before** class. The goal of these quizzes is two-fold: (1) to consolidate your knowledge from the previous class; (2) prepare you to apply the material in class. The quizzes are open book, open note, open friend, and open internet. Most quizzes allow multiple submissions. These quizzes are worth 15 points each, and you can drop your lowest quiz.

Before each exam there will be a **review quiz** that will be taken in class to help you prepare for the exam. These are worth 30 points. These are open book, open note, open teacher, open classmate.

There are no makeup quizzes after the fact; they are all posted on Sakai in advance. You can drop your lowest. If you know about a conflict and talk to me one week in advance of the due date to make alternate arrangements.

240 points (11 quizzes x 15 points each, drop 1 = 150 points; 3 review quizzes x 30 points = 90 points).

(2) **In-class Assignments:** Nearly every class period will have some assignment that you are expected to complete during class. The assignments will be posted on Sakai, and they will be due electronically before the next class period. (Although they are not due until the next class period, you should be able to finish and submit these during class time). Unless otherwise noted, you are encouraged to work on these assignments with your team, although each student will be graded for the work they submit. Unless otherwise noted, you will receive full credit for turning in the completed assignment.

There are no makeup in-class assignments. You can drop your two lowest.

210 points (23 assignments x 10 points each, drop 2 lowest).

(3) **Homework Assignments:** On most Thursdays, you will receive an assignment that is due on Sakai by noon the following Monday. These short assignments take several forms, but their broad purposes are to (1) encourage reflection about the implications of things we have learned in class; and (2) provide extra practice for difficult concepts. You may work with your team, or alone. Unless otherwise noted, you will receive full credit for turning in the completed assignment. Each assignment is worth 15 points. Be prepared to discuss your answers: we will usually begin class on Tuesday with a discussion about the previous Thursday's homework assignment, and I will call on

students to discuss their answers.

In addition to the regular homework assignments, each team must turn in an Illusion/Phenomenon assignment and present this assignment to the class at some point during the semester. More details are found on the Lessons page with the assignments, but briefly, your team will pick an illusion or perceptual phenomenon, write up an explanation of why the illusion/phenomenon occurs to turn in, and pick a day to present your illusion/phenomenon to the class. This is worth 50 points. (If you do not wish to work with your team on this, talk to me about doing an individual presentation).

There are no makeup homework assignments after the fact; they are all posted on Sakai in advance. You can drop your lowest. If you know about a conflict and talk to me one week in advance of the due date to make alternate arrangements.

200 points (11 homeworks x 15 points each, drop 1 lowest = 150 points; 1 Illusion paper = 50 points);

(4) **Exams.** There will be 2 exams and one final exam. Dates are noted on the calendar. Each exam will be open-book, open-note, and will be taken online through Sakai. It will be open for (at least) a 2 day period, with a time limit of the normal class period. Because of the flexibility in the exams, there will be no makeup exams provided. If you are concerned about your connectivity, take the exam in the library. If you have a technology glitch, contact me IMMEDIATELY with a screen shot of the issue. (RU-IT can document that you have logged into Sakai, even if you are kicked out; the system records every answer as you take the exam.) If you have an issue that prevents you from taking the exam online, you must contact me at least one week before the exam date to make alternate arrangements to take a paper version of the exam.

The final exam will occur in the classroom during the registrar's regularly scheduled final exam period. You will have the option of completing the final exam on paper or electronically, and the final exam will also be open book, open note. You are expected to complete these exams alone, and each exam will involve application of skills and knowledge you learned in class. Exams consist of multiple choice and short-answer questions. (As a reminder, there will be review quizzes the class period before the exams that will provide insight into the kinds of multiple choice questions that will be asked).

350 points (Exam 1 = 100 points; Exam 2 = 100 points; Final Exam = 150 points)

Academic Integrity

You are expected to follow Rutgers' academic integrity policy, linked to here:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/> If you have any questions about this policy, please let me know.

Student Resources

The Rutgers-Camden Learning Center provides a variety of resources for students in their classes. If you require accommodations for class or exams, make sure you provide me with the appropriate forms (<https://learn.camden.rutgers.edu/disability-services-general-information>) and make arrangements in a timely fashion before exams. The Dean of Students office can also provide useful resources if you are facing obstacles to class attendance. <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/>