

PSYCHOLOGY 409
COGNITIVE NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

Section 001 Winter 2016-17, Term 2
Tu-Th 11:00-12:20

INSTRUCTOR

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ABOUT THIS COURSE

This course is not a traditional survey of topics and issues in cognitive neuropsychology as one might find in a textbook. Rather, it develops and explores the implications of a simple but neglected fact about our human brains: They evolved to support our physical mobility through space over time. The end result is what I call an *embodied* cognitive neuropsychology, or an understanding of how what makes us physically unique within the primate lineage—our adaptations for endurance running in hot, dry climates—explains what makes us neurocognitively unique. We will explore this in a highly interdisciplinary manner, include reading material from fields such as gerontology, public health, human evolutionary biology, exercise physiology, urban planning, anthropology, and cognitive neuroarcheology. The class itself will not involve lectures per se. Instead, towards taking advantage of the smaller class size, each class meeting will focus on a directed discussion of topics and issues arising from the assigned paper for that day.

WARNING: BUYER BEWARE

The quality of this course directly depends on active student participation, both in terms of sharing your own thoughts, opinions, and observations with others during class discussion, and listening to what others have to share in this same regard. Towards promoting this learning-positive agenda, the course has two important policies in place. First, one third of the term mark will come from attending class (see below). As such, **this is not a good course for the attendance-challenged.** Second, a growing body of research is showing that not only do computers and phones disrupt students ability to learn through distractions posed to both users and those around them, but they also inhibit active listening. As such, **laptops, tablets, phones, and other forms of attention-distracting technology are not to be used in class.** For insight into the science on this issue, please see the folder "Why no laptops in class" under "Course Content" on the course Connect site.

READINGS

All readings assigned for each lecture, as well as the lecture slides, can be viewed/downloaded from the course CONNECT website. If you are unfamiliar with CONNECT, you can log on from the official UBC website (<http://elearning.ubc.ca/connect/get-started-with-connect/>) using your CWL account. If you are enrolled in the course, then once you log in, there will be a link to the 409 site. On the home page of the course CONNECT website, you will see a menu on the left hand side of the screen. To access the readings for the course, click on the "Course Content" link. Once there, you will see a folder labeled "Readings: Part 1." In the folder you will find pdf copies of the readings assigned for Part 1 of the course, 1 paper for each of the five class discussions listed in Part 1 (see below). Ultimately, the course will be broken down into four parts; before we start each part, a new folder will be added to the "Readings" link with the assigned readings for that course part, with each part having five assigned papers, one per each class discussion in that part.

QUIZES

There will be four short (~20 minute) quizzes over the course of the term, one at the end of each course part as per marked in the schedule below. The quizzes themselves will be conducted in a "two-stage" manner. If you are not familiar with this testing approach, immediately after completing each quiz on your own, you will get together into small groups and re-take the quiz as a team. For your quiz mark, your team score will count for 10% and your individual score will count for 90%; however, if your individual score is higher than your team score, your individual score will count for 100%, so the teamwork component can only help you. Research shows that this innovative approach to testing improves student engagement and learning; for references on this research, please see <http://ow.ly/ztdv6>. The format of the quizzes will be very short answer. You may be tested on any material covered in readings or class discussions (including material that only appeared in class or only appeared in the readings). **Each quiz will be worth 10 possible points.**

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION

To incentivize class attendance and active engagement with the learning environment, at the end of each class discussion I will hand out a short question regarding that day's class that needs to be answered and turned back in. The questions themselves will not have right or wrong answers, but rather, they will be aimed at getting constructive feedback/input. Please note that unfortunately, there can be no accommodations for students who miss class or leave early. **Each question will be worth 2 possible points.**

TERM PAPER

In lieu of a final exam, a two-page term paper will be due on the day of our assigned final exam, at the time it is scheduled to start. This must be handed in as a hard copy; electronic versions sent by email or other means will not be accepted. The paper needs to be printed in 12-point Times New Roman font, single-spaced with margins of 1" on each side; a third page can be included for listing

any references used. The actual topic of the paper will be given during the last week of scheduled class meetings, but it will focus on integrating material from the class with observations of your own everyday experiences. To be clear, APA format is *not* required. **This will be worth 40 possible points.**

OVERALL COURSE MARKS

Course marks will be based on an equal weighting of attendance/participation points (2 points x 20 class discussions), quizzes (10 points x 4 quizzes), and the term paper (40 points), or a total of 120 possible points.

However, please note: In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology courses are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions for final course marks. Final course marks may be scaled up or down as necessary by the professor or department in order to comply with these norms. For official UBC policy on grade scaling, please see: <http://students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,42,96,0>

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

After Class: On most days I am available for brief questions immediately following each meeting.

Office Visits: Because many students' schedules inevitably conflict with a set weekly office hour, all office meetings for this course will be by appointment only. Scheduling must be done in advance via email.

Email: To avoid having your emails automatically deleted as spam, the subject header must read "Psych 409." The answers to questions regarding lecture/reading content may often be useful for the entire class to hear. As a consequence, questions may be answered in class rather than via email. Please also note that while I try to be responsive to student emails, there are limits that must be put in place. Unfortunately, I can not respond to students who generate excessive/frequent emails or who generate long lists of questions, as in the name of fairness it would be impossible for me to provide this level of service to all students. **Finally, in order to promote good problem solving skills, I will deduct 1 point from a student's final course mark for each email question that can be answered by consulting this syllabus, the Department of Psychology web page, and/or the UBC web page.**

OUTSIDE RESOURCES

If you run into trouble and need information on effective studying, preparing for exams, how to take notes, or manage your academic time, free workshops and advice are available from the Student Resources Center, which can be reached through the School and College Liaison Office at 822-4319.

COURSE SCHEDULE

1/7 -- Course Introduction

PART 1: *The Cognitive Neuropsychology of Mobility*

1/10 -- Discussion 1: Luria (1973)
1/12 -- Discussion 2: Shumway-Cook (2000)
1/17 -- Discussion 3: Yogev-Seligmann (2008)
1/19 -- Discussion 4: Patla (1999)
1/24 -- Discussion 5: Webber (2010)
1/26 -- **Quiz 1**

PART 2: *Mobility and Evolution of the Human Brain*

1/31 -- Discussion 6: (paper: TBA)
2/2 -- Discussion 7: (paper: TBA)
2/7 -- Discussion 8: (paper: TBA)
2/9 -- Discussion 9: (paper: TBA)
2/14 -- Discussion 10: (paper: TBA)
2/16 -- **Quiz 2**

PART 3: *Embodied Geography*

2/28 -- Discussion 11: (paper: TBA)
3/2 -- Discussion 12: (paper: TBA)
3/7 -- Discussion 13: (paper: TBA)
3/9 -- Discussion 14: (paper: TBA)
3/14 -- Discussion 15: (paper: TBA)
3/16 -- **Quiz 3**

PART 4: *Outstanding Issues*

3/21 -- Discussion 16: (paper: TBA)
3/23 -- Discussion 17: (paper: TBA)
3/28 -- Discussion 18: (paper: TBA)
3/30 -- Discussion 19: (paper: TBA)
4/4 -- Discussion 20: (paper: TBA)
4/6 -- **Quiz 4**