

**Psychology 394  
Winter 2011**

**Instructor:** Derek Besner  
**E-mail:** dbesner@uwaterloo.ca  
**Office:** PAS 4034  
TA: Nathaniel Barr  
E-mail: nbarr@uwaterloo.ca  
Office: PAS 4044

**Office Hours:** If you want to set up a meeting or ask questions outside of class, then I welcome you e-mailing me or coming to my office (I'm happy to see students in my office at most times, or, failing that, to set up a time to meet). You can always email me with questions (including most nights and weekends). I try and answer all questions over email within several hours. Office hours for N. Barr will be by appointment (email to set up).

**Time and place: Tuesday/Thursday, 10:30-12:30 PAS 3026 (Alice Bast Conference Room)**

What is this course about? The intent is twofold. First, there are some nuts and bolts that you should learn about doing experiments, from a case study approach to multiple subjects, from human experimentation to computational modeling. This includes a mercifully short introduction to such topics as signal detection theory, speed/accuracy issues, ceiling and floor constraints, underlying psychological scales, factorial experiments from the viewpoint of additive factors analyses, range effects, asymmetrical transfer effects, etc. **Do not be alarmed** at the fact that all of these terms are probably completely new to you. If you knew them all you wouldn't have to take this course. Yes, you took 291; but no, these issues were not, in the main, covered there. Secondly, the intent is to expose students to a fair number of issues that have concerned some cognitive psychologists in recent years. These issues can be considered enduring in several senses. One is that they have attracted a lot of attention at one point or another (or it seems likely that they will do so in future). Another reason they are hot is because the results are often not immediately "intuitive" and in some cases they tend to make people who are products of Western civilization uncomfortable because they challenge our ideas about memory, consciousness and control. **The main idea here is to have you be challenged and have some intellectual "fun".**

**Marking scheme**

Formal marking, in today's climate, tends to undermine learning for the sake of learning (intellectual curiosity). Students tend to be very anxious about their marks and how they will affect their future choices (e.g., graduate school). In an attempt to balance the formal need for marking with the goal of stimulating "interest" in the papers themselves, I've adopted the following scheme.

**Presentations (15%)**

Each student will present at least one and likely more papers. This presentation should be clear, comprehensive and yet concise (but please, let's not get bogged down in the details of things like the F ratios). It is a good idea (but not required) for the presenter to meet with me well in **advance of their presentation to discuss the paper.**

## **Participation (10%)**

I'm well aware that some students are shy and find speaking in class to be onerous. That said, part of a university education involves the formal presentation of self (and this matters in all walks of life). Like everything else, skill develops with practice.

## **Quizzes (60%)**

These will be **short**, multiple choice or short answer quizzes every week (not counting our first week). They will be held at the beginning of class and take up no more than 10 minutes. There are sound, evidence based reasons for testing you every week. (Trust me, I'm a doctor). There are no make ups for missed quizzes. Your mark will be based on the best **8** quizzes.

## **Commentaries (15%)**

There are 4 of these. You will summarize or provide a commentary on any **one** of the week's topics. The **maximum** length is **one** double spaced page, and the paper must be typed. The font size must be 12 point. Spelling and grammar count (just as they do in the real world- like it or not, people make judgments about you based on your writing, along with your attention to detail and care in presentation).

**Reading material** References for these papers will be provided in due course.

## **Academic Integrity**

### **How to Avoid Plagiarism and Other Written Offences: A Guide for Students and Instructors**

(<http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html>).

The Faculty of Arts requires that the following message be included on all syllabi distributed in the Faculty of Arts:

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm). When in doubt please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)] to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm).

- **Note for Students with Disabilities:** The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

## **Avoiding Academic Offences:**

[http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)