SYLLABUS: INTRODUCTION TO COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE

IB's Office: HNB 316, Ext. 0-6094, bieder@usc.edu
Contact hours: By appointment. Email me. You will find me quite responsive.

Time: Class meets: Mon, Wed 2:00-3:50 PM. Room: HNB 100 (Auditorium)
We will have a 10-min break at 3 PM.

Required Text + Journal Articles. Articles (w/out *) are for background edification and will not be explicitly tested.
Journal articles can be downloaded (in Adobe Acrobat) from the course Blackboard site. Some readings might be added during the semester.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on three midterms (20% each) and a cumulative final examination (40%). All the exams will be multiple choice and will tend to assess conceptual understanding rather than rote memorization. Approximately 60-70% of the exam will be composed of questions from class lectures. We will try to have an early evening review session prior to each exam.

If you miss an exam: There is no definite penalty but a probabilistic one: If you have taken all three midterms and you are near a grade cutoff (e.g., by 3 or 4 points in your average grade), you will get the higher grade. If you miss a midterm, you will get the lower grade. (You have to take the final.) Unless you are running a high A, there is a fair chance that missing an exam will cost you a grade, e.g., from an A- to a B+. We cannot evaluate the adequacy of excuses for

Extra credit (Class Participation): (up to 3%) will be awarded for class comments or questions that serve to illuminate the discussion or informed criticism (but not mere attendance). Good answers on those rare occasions when someone is called upon randomly also qualify but poor class decorum, e.g., Irrelevant or distracting behavior (e.g., social networking; texting; viewing non-class related material; talking, etc.) will result in negative participation credit.

Topics: Roughly corresponding to weeks. There will be some reordering/rescheduling of topics and possibilities of additions/subtractions of readings.

   *GIM Chapters 1 Brief History. (Skim.)
   *GIM Chapter 2 Structure and Function of the Nervous System. (You will not be tested on the specifics of the molecular biology, e.g., of the cell membrane, ion channels, and neurotransmitters on pp. 28-36 but do understand the general principles).

   *GIM Chapter 3. Methods of Cognitive Neuroscience. Rather than discuss methods as a separate topic we will consider them as they arise in particular experiments at topics over the course of the semester.
   *GIM Chapter 5. Sensation and Perception.


3. August 30th: Guest Lecture: Jason Zevin. Psycholinguistics

3. Sept 4: Labor Day. No Class


5. Sept 18 & 20. Higher Level Vision II: Gabor Filtering; Faces, Subordinate-Level Recognition; Scenes; Prosopagnosia vs. Phonagnosia

6. Sept 25 First Midterm (20%).

   *GIM. Chapter 7. Attention
   *GIM. Chapter 8. Action

   *GIM Chapter 9. Memory.

   *GIM. Chapter 10. Emotion.

10. Oct. 23: 2nd Midterm (20%).

   *GIM. Chapter 11. Language.

   *GIM. Chapter 12. Cognitive Control.


14. Nov. 15: Third Midterm (20%)


Nov. 22. No Class. Thanksgiving.

15. Nov. 27 & 29 (Last Class): Individual Differences (continued). Evolutionary Psychology: Bonding, Love, Sex, Mother-Infant Competition, Murder, Optimal
Mating Strategies for Accomplished Women.

**Friday, December 8th, 2-4 PM, CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM (40%)**

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. Their phone number is (213) 740-0776.