

ORIGINS OF THE MIND
PSYC 339
Fall 2017

COURSE INFORMATION

Time: Tuesday & Thursday 2:00-3:20pm
Location: MHP 101
Instructor: Justin N. Wood, PhD
Office Hours: Tuesday 3:30-4:30pm
Office: SGM 518
Email: justin.wood@usc.edu

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Oliver Fisher ofisher@usc.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00am-11:00am
Office: VPD 205

Thomas Borer tborer@usc.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 4:00pm-5:00pm
Office: GFS 342

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will explore the origins of the mind. We will focus on a range of questions about how the the mind develops and evolves in humans and nonhuman animals. For example, what aspects of human knowledge are present at the beginning of life, and what aspects emerge from our experiences with the world? What knowledge is shared among all mature human beings in all cultures, and what varies among people with different cultures, experiences, and backgrounds? What are the similarities and differences between the human mind and the minds of other animals?

To address these questions, we will explore 10 domains of knowledge:

1. Space Perception
2. Navigation
3. Object Cognition
4. Mathematics
5. Social Cognition
6. Language
7. Culture
8. Science
9. Religion
10. Morality

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The goal of this course is to explore the development and evolution of the mind. During the course, we will examine how a range of cognitive abilities emerge in the brain, while also exploring how different domains of knowledge (e.g., science, religion, and morality) evolve within cultures. By the end of this course, you should be able to think critically about a range of scientific fields, including developmental psychology, animal cognition, vision science, cultural anthropology, linguistics, and neuroscience.

Prerequisite(s): N/A

Co-Requisite (s): N/A

Concurrent Enrollment: N/A

Recommended Preparation (not mandatory): PSYC 100

GRADING BREAKDOWN

1. **Exams (70% of grade):** There will be three exams. The exams will consist of multiple choice questions. Each question will have 1-5 correct answers. You will receive +1 point for each correct answer and -1 point for each incorrect answer. This type of exam rewards partial knowledge while discouraging guessing. None of the exams will be cumulative. All exams will be worth the same amount.
2. **Laboratory Reports (30% of grade):** In addition to the lectures, there will be bi-weekly section meetings. These section meetings will consist of hands-on laboratory activities that involve collecting data, analyzing the results, and discussing how the results bear on competing hypotheses.

After each of the 7 section meetings, students are required to submit a report (2-3 double-spaced pages, in 12 point Times New Roman font). The report should discuss (1) the research question being addressed by the experiment, (2) the experimental design, (3) the hypotheses, (4) the results, and (5) the conclusions that can be drawn from the results. Your report should have separate sub-headings for each of these topics. The reports are due one week after the section meeting. Students should NOT work in groups on these reports.

Each report will be worth 20 points. For each calendar day that your report is late, 5 points will be deducted. Attendance in the lab section is mandatory. You will NOT be allowed to submit a report if you did not attend the section. If you need to miss your assigned section for some reason, please contact your TA to arrange to attend one of the other sections in the week. It is your responsibility to ensure that you can attend one of the section meetings, so please plan ahead if you foresee needing to miss your scheduled discussion section.

All essays must be submitted via Blackboard (under the 'Assignments' section). Blackboard will automatically check your essay for plagiarism.

3. Extra credit will be offered for participating in psychology experiments. You can earn a 1% increase on your final grade (max 3%) for every two hours of experimental credit you earn.

Please note that ALL of your experimental credits must come from laboratory experiments (i.e., not from online experiments).

*****Please note that cheating of any kind will result in an F in the course.*****

LECTURE NOTES

I will post my lecture slides on Blackboard before class to make note taking easier. You will find the slides under the 'Content' section in the 'Lecture Notes' folder. Please note that these slides are not a good substitute for coming to class. My slides often contain very little text and will be difficult to understand unless you attend the lectures. Also, I will post PDFs of the lecture notes, so you will not be able to view the videos unless you attend class.

Please note that it is NOT permissible to record audio or video from the lectures. Recording can inhibit free discussion and infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor.

REQUIRED READINGS

There is no textbook for the course. All of the readings are available on Blackboard under the 'Content' section. The readings consist of journal articles and short review papers. I strongly recommend reading the articles before lecture. The articles provide brief overviews of the topic and will make the lectures easier to follow. In addition, ~10% of the exam questions will come from the readings.

SECURITY OF COURSE CONTENT

All material presented in class or discussion, sent via email, or posted on Blackboard is "all rights reserved" by the course instructor. In addition, some of it is copyrighted and distributed by a publishing corporation for in-class use only. You may not store, post, or distribute any course materials—on paper or electronically—for use by any student not presently enrolled in this course. Out of fairness to all current and future students, please do your part to protect our course content.

STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30–5:00 Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual

work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS/COURSE CONTINUITY IN A CRISIS

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings (on Blackboard)</u>
8/22	Tuesday	Introduction	
8/24	Thursday	Space Perception 1	Article 1
8/29	Tuesday	Space Perception 2	Articles 2, 3
8/31	Thursday	Space Perception 3	
9/5	Tuesday	Navigation 1	Article 4
9/7	Thursday	Navigation 2	Articles 5, 6
9/12	Tuesday	Navigation 3	Article 7
9/14	Thursday	Object Representation 1	Article 8
9/19	Tuesday	Object Representation 2	Article 9
9/21	Thursday	Object Representation 3	Article 10
9/26	Tuesday	EXAM #1	
9/28	Thursday	Number 1	Article 11
10/3	Tuesday	Number 2	Article 12
10/5	Thursday	Agents 1	Article 13
10/10	Tuesday	Agents 2	Article 14
10/12	Thursday	NO CLASS	
10/17	Tuesday	Social Groups	Articles 15-16
10/19	Thursday	Language	Article 17
10/24	Tuesday	Culture	Article 18
10/26	Thursday	Teaching	Article 19
10/31	Tuesday	EXAM #2	
11/2	Thursday	Scientific Revolutions	Articles 20-21
11/7	Tuesday	Conceptual Change	Articles 22-23
11/9	Thursday	Religion	Article 24
11/14	Tuesday	Morality 1	Article 25
11/16	Thursday	Morality 2	Article 26
11/21	Tuesday	NO CLASS	
11/23	Thursday	NO CLASS	
11/28	Tuesday	Artificial Intelligence	Article 27
11/30	Thursday	Conclusions	

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, Dec 7, from 2-4 p.m.

SECTION SCHEDULE

<u>Date*</u>	<u>Topic</u>
8/28 – 9/1	Geometry
9/11 – 9/15	Snapshot Representations
9/25 – 9/29	Units of Object Representation
10/9 – 10/13	Number Estimation
10/23 – 10/27	Speech Perception
11/6 – 11/10	Prisoner's Dilemma
11/27 – 12/1	Morality

***If your section meets on a holiday, then the section will take place the following week.**