



Psychology 339L (52542)
Origins of the Mind
Spring 2023

Lecture Location: Montgomery Ross Fisher Building (MRF) 340
Days and Time: Tuesday & Thursday; 9:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.

Online portion at <https://blackboard.usc.edu> and <https://tophat.com>

Instructor Information

Dr. Clayton L. Stephenson
Assistant Professor (Teaching) Psychology
clstephe@usc.edu

Office Location: SGM 525A
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at Hahn Central Plaza Fountain;
or by appointment

Lab and TA Information

Lab Day	Lab Time	Lab Location	TA Name	TA Email
Wednesday	8:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.	KAP 166	Neshat Darvishi	neshatda@usc.edu
Wednesday	12:00 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.	GFS 213	Neshat Darvishi	neshatda@usc.edu
Thursday	4:00 p.m. – 5:50 p.m.	GFS 213	Xinyan Liang	xinyanli@usc.edu
Friday	12:00 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.	GFS 109	Xinyan Liang	xinyanli@usc.edu

Syllabus

Course Description

Exploration of ancient philosophical questions concerning the origins of human knowledge through empirical studies of infants, animals, and adults from diverse cultures.

My Course Summary

We, homo sapiens, have been around for approximately 300,000 years out the 4.5 billion years that the Earth has existed. In that short amount of time, we have changed the planet drastically more than any other animal (that we know of). But, how did humans do this? Is there something special about humans vs. other animals? In this class we will look at some of philosophy, science, and psychology's biggest questions about the human condition. Is there a natural order to the emergence of our mind? Is there something about our vision and mental representations of space that allow us to be so mobile? Humans do, after all, live across the globe in *every single type of climate possible*. No other animal has done that. While the focus will be on the cognitive mechanisms of the mind, we will also make comparisons to other animals, make cross-cultural comparison, and investigate how our early develop as infants can help answer such complex questions.

Prerequisites

None

Teaching Objectives

- 1) Provide the background philosophy, theories, and empirical findings related to the mind.
- 2) Guide students through the density of research on the origins of the mind.
- 3) Improve students' critical thinking skills in a range of complex topics in psychological science.

Student Learning Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to . . .

- 1) recall and define the terms related to vision, cognition, language, problem solving, social cognition, and intelligence.
- 2) explain how modern theories and empirical research answer (or don't) philosophical questions about the origins of the mind.
- 3) demonstrate your ability to think scientifically about empirical research.
- 4) synthesize information from multiple areas in psychology, anthropology, and neuroscience to explain the origins of the mind.

Required Materials

There are no required textbooks for this class. The required readings will be various articles posted on Blackboard.

An access code to Top Hat is required! You will not be able to complete the exams or participation unless you have Top Hat. You may purchase it at <https://tophat.com/> or at the bookstore.

Assessment	Focused Learning Objective(s)	Due Date	Percent of Final Grade: Points
Exams	1, 2	2/09, 2/28, 4/04	30% (individual grade): 100 points each
Final Exam	1, 2	May 9 th from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	15% (individual grade): 100 points
Labs	2, 3	Every Other Week (See Tentative Schedule of Topics)	25% (individual/group grade): 10 points each
Presentation on Special Topic	3, 4	Last Three Scheduled Lab Sessions	15% (individual grade): 100 points
Participation	1, 2, 3, 4	Each Lecture Session	15% (individual grade): 10 points each

Exams

There are three semester exams that will test your understanding of the concepts in the course and will focus on both the details and "the big picture." Exams are based on a combination of lecture material, assigned readings, video-presentations, and participation items. Exams are *not* cumulative. The exams will consist of 50 – 75 multiple-choice questions. All exams *must* be taken in-person. **The three exams are scheduled for 2/09, 2/28, and 4/04 during our regular class time. Your lowest exam score will be dropped; thus, you may not make up any missed exams.**

Final Exam

The final exam is the exact same format as the regular semester exams and will test material covered *after* the third exam. The final exam *must* be taken in person **The final exam is required and must be taken on the schedule final exam day per university policy. You may not take it early or later.**

Labs

In addition to the lectures, there will be bi-weekly section meetings (see Tentative Schedule of Topics for exact weeks labs will take place). Labs are designed to help you 1) learn how to effectively read scientific articles in psychology and 2) prepare for your presentation on your special topic. Labs are due one week after the scheduled labs with the exception of the last three (Labs 6, 7, and 8), which are due the day of the lab. Each report will be worth 10 points. **Your lowest lab assignment will be dropped from your overall grade calculation; thus, you will not be allowed to make up any labs.**

Presentation on Special Topic

You will give a 10-minute presentation on the topic of your choice related to the origins of the mind. You may expand on a topic that we covered in class, or you may write on a topic we did not cover, or that I may have mentioned in passing. Whatever topic you choose, it must be related to the origins of the mind, and you must clearly frame your presentation so that it is clear how the topic relates to the class. Presentation *must* be given in person. **Your presentation will take place on one of the last three scheduled lab days.**

Participation in Lecture

Participation will be assessed through in-class exercises, activities, and discussion items through Top Hat. Participation points are 10 points for each topic session we cover (e.g., object representation is covered over two days, but worth 10 points total. Participation is completed on Top Hat in class. If you have internet issues during class, you have until the end of the day (i.e., 11:59 p.m.) to complete the participation. If participation items are completed after the due date, then the late policy will be applied to the grade (see #2 under Course Notes on page 8 in the syllabus). Participation items will not be released until the topic is completed in lecture. **Your lowest TWO participation points will be dropped from the calculation of your overall grade.**

EXTRA CREDIT: Participate in Research Studies

You may participate in research studies conducted in the psychology department to earn extra credit. All points will be applied to your Final Exam. However, you *cannot* earn more than 100 points on your Final Exam, and any leftover extra credit points *will not* be applied to any other assignments. You can view and sign up for studies through the SONA system at <https://usc.sona-systems.com/>. You may complete up to 6 points of credit on SONA. Please note that your participation in research is voluntary and you have the right to NOT participate in research studies. If you do not want to participate in studies, then you may complete the alternative, which is writing three two-page papers on three separate topics, which are also posted on Blackboard. **All credits and/or papers are due by 11:59 p.m. on April 28th. No exceptions!**

Grading Scheme

Please Note: I do NOT curve the grade. Whatever grade you have on Blackboard is your grade in real-time that you earned to that date. I do round up (e.g., 93.45 = 93.5%) for your final grade. Finally, it is NOT appropriate for you to ask to make up an assignment at the end of the semester that was due past what is outlined in the late policy or to ask for extra credit beyond what is described above, so please do NOT ask for either.

A = 100 - 93.5%; A- = 93.4 - 89.5%; B+ = 89.4 - 86.5%; B = 86.4 - 83.5%; B- = 83.4 - 79.5%; C+ = 79.4 - 76.5%; C = 76.4 - 73.5%; C- = 73.4 - 69.5%; D+ = 69.4 - 66.5%; D = 66.4 - 63.5%; D- = 63.4 - 59.5%; Below 59.5% = F

Instructor Student Communication and Blackboard

Blackboard (Bb) will be used to post announcements, send e-mails, and post all grades and course materials, so it is the student's responsibility to frequently visit the course on Blackboard (website: <http://blackboard.usc.edu>). Bb transactions will follow the below guidelines.

- 1) Grades: All grades and points will be posted on Bb two to three weeks after the completion of the exam, assignment, or activity. Grades will not be announced in class, via e-mail, or during office hours. ***ALL grades are in real-time. That is, all assignment weights and lowest scores dropped are done automatically in Blackboard.***
- 2) Course Materials: The syllabus, lab assignments, and supplemental reading material can be viewed and printed from Bb.
- 3) Announcements: Class announcements will be posted on Bb, as well as broadcasted in class.
- 4) Email: Any email communications from the instructor or TA will be sent via Bb or through the USC's email service. USC requires that all e-mail communication between the instructor and students be sent via an official USC e-mail address. *Any student communication delivered from a non-USC e-mail address will be automatically discarded.*

Tentative Schedule of Topics and Assignments

	Topic	Labs	Major Assignments
WEEK 1			
Tuesday 01/10/2023	➤ Overview of course	➤ Syllabus ➤ No Lab Meeting	➤
Thursday 01/12/2023	➤ Introduction	➤	➤

WEEK 2

Tuesday 01/17/2023	➤ Vision: Light & Eye	➤ No Lab Meeting	➤
Thursday 01/19/2023	➤ Vision: Light & Eye	➤	➤

WEEK 3

Tuesday 01/24/2023	➤ Vision: Space Representation	➤ Lab #1 Meeting	➤
Thursday 01/26/2023	➤ Vision: Space Representation	➤	➤

WEEK 4

Tuesday 01/31/2023	➤ Vision: Color Perception	➤ Lab #1 Due ➤ No Lab Meeting	➤
Thursday 02/02/2023	➤ Vision: Color Perception	➤	➤

WEEK 5

Tuesday 02/07/2023	➤ Navigation	➤ Lab #2 Meeting	➤
Thursday 02/09/2023	➤ Exam 1	➤	➤ Exam 1

WEEK 6

Tuesday 02/14/2023	➤ Navigation	➤ Lab #2 Due ➤ No Lab Meeting	➤
Thursday 02/16/2023	➤ Navigation	➤	➤

WEEK 7

Tuesday 02/21/2023	➤ Object Representation	➤ Lab #3 Meeting	➤
Thursday 02/23/2023	➤ Object Representation	➤	➤

WEEK 8

Tuesday 02/28/2023	➤ Midterm Exam	➤ Lab #3 Due ➤ No Lab Meeting	➤ Midterm Exam
Thursday 03/02/2023	➤ Number Representation	➤	➤

WEEK 9

Tuesday 03/07/2023	➤ Number Representation	➤ Lab #4 Meeting	➤
Thursday 03/09/2023	➤ Face Processing	➤	➤

WEEK 10

Tuesday 03/14/2023	➤ Spring Break!	➤ None	➤
Thursday 03/16/2023	➤ Spring Break!	➤ None	➤

WEEK 11

Tuesday 03/21/2023	➤ Face Processing	➤ Lab #4 Due ➤ No Lab Meeting	➤
Thursday 03/23/2023	➤ Social Groups	➤	➤

WEEK 12

Tuesday 03/28/2023	➤ Social Groups ➤ Humor	➤ Lab #5 Meeting	➤
Thursday 03/30/2023	➤ Humor	➤	➤

WEEK 13

Tuesday 04/04/2023	➤ Exam 3	➤ Lab #5 Due ➤ No Lab Meeting	➤ Exam 3
Thursday 04/06/2023	➤ Culture	➤	➤

WEEK 14

Tuesday 04/11/2023	➤ Culture	➤ Lab #6 Meeting ➤ Lab #6 Due	➤
Thursday 04/13/2023	➤ No Class!	➤	➤

WEEK 15

Tuesday 04/18/2023	➤ Morality & Religion	➤ Lab #7 Meeting ➤ Lab #7 Due	➤
Thursday 04/20/2023	➤ Intelligence	➤	➤

WEEK 16

Tuesday 04/25/2023	➤ Intelligence	➤ Lab #8 Meeting ➤ Lab #8 Due	➤
Thursday 04/27/2023	➤ Conclusions	➤	➤

WEEK 17

Tuesday 05/09/2023	Final Exam: 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.		
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Course Notes

- 1) Make-Up Policy:
 - a. You may **not** make up any regular exams; that is why the lowest exam score is dropped.
 - b. The Final Exam cannot be taken early or late. Please schedule any plans around the date of the Final Exam. *No exceptions because this is university policy.*
 - c. If you have internet issues during class, you have until the end of the day (i.e., 11:59 p.m.) to complete the participation. If participation items are completed after the due date, then the late policy will be applied to the grade (see next course note). Participation items will not be released until the topic is completed in lecture.
- 2) Late Assignments: If your lab assignments or participation is turned in late will receive a 5% reduction each day for the first two days turned in late. For the following five days (i.e., after the first two days) the late assignment will result in a 10% reduction for each day it is late. After seven days, an assignment cannot be turned in and will result in a grade of zero. *USC athletes should meet with me as soon as possible regarding their scheduled athletic events that may conflict with course requirements.*
- 3) Email: I typically respond to emails within 24 hours or less. However, I rarely respond to emails between 5:00 p.m. on Fridays to 7:00 a.m. on Mondays (i.e., the weekend). I will do my best to email over the weekend if it is urgent, but please note that I cannot guarantee it.
- 4) Feedback:
 - a. Your TA and I will make every attempt to return assignments in a reasonable time by returning them no later than three weeks after the due date.
 - b. We will *not* review exams during class time. You will have an opportunity to review the exam on Top Hat for two weeks after class. You are encouraged to find the correct answers on your own for questions you got incorrect. If needed, after reviewing an exam on your own, you may request to review an exam with your TA or me during office hours or by making an appointment.
- 5) Zoom: There will be *no* Zoom option for this class. The class will *not* be streamed or recorded. Any request for me to do so will be denied.
- 6) Appeal Process: If you find that your answer in an assignment or exam was incorrect, but you think it is correct, you can appeal the decision in writing. The written appeal must have supporting documentation (e.g., reference to a class reading). The appeal cannot be based on your opinion or personal experience, but rather based on the course materials. Appeals must be delivered to the instructor no later than one week after the grade is posted. Appeals will not be accepted via email and no late appeals will be accepted.
- 7) Course Participation: Your best bet at remembering and understanding the material is to complete the required readings BEFORE class. Also, keep in mind that you may need to do *multiple* readings of the articles to gain a full comprehension.
- 8) University Escort Service: If you feel that you would like to be escorted to your vehicle, bus, or campus residence after 5:00 p.m., do not hesitate to call (213) 740-4911.

Special Notes

- 1) *All assignments in this course are expected to be word-processed and graphs/tables should be computer-generated.*
- 2) All students are expected to have access to the student computer network. It is your responsibility to ensure that your access is up to date during the semester.
- 3) Tutors are available through the Learning Resource Center (LRC). If you should find that you are not doing as well in this course as you would like, please see your lab instructor or me immediately. *We will help you: It is our job!* You can also arrange short-term or long-term tutoring through the LRC. The Writing Center is also available to tutor students who are having difficulty with writing. For assistance, visit their website at <http://college.usc.edu/writingcenter/> or call (213) 740-3691.

Statement on Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, comprises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see [the student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Statement on Plagiarism

Plagiarism, lazy writing, and cheating are violations of the Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards and may be dealt with by both the instructor and the university. Plagiarism is defined as, "the act of presenting the ideas and writings of another as one's own." Lazy writing is defined as, "using quotes or paragraphs with the proper citation, but are used in a manner that a paper is stitched together and clearly has little or no original writing." Cheating is defined as, "the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use

of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means.” In instances of academic dishonesty, the instructor will take appropriate action as outlined in the Academic Integrity Review Process (SJACS 14.10). For more information on avoiding plagiarism or lazy writing, see Chapter 1, Section 1.10 in the APA Publication Manual or visit http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/ug_plag.htm.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

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.

Statement of Course Content as a Copyright

It is important to know that all material presented in class, labs, 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.

Syllabus as a Contract

The purpose of this syllabus is to provide a contract between the instructor and the student. By enrolling in this class, you agree that you have read, understand, and will adhere to the syllabus guidelines and complete the assignments given in the class. I reserve the right to change the schedule of topics and readings and I will give notice to you of such changes well in advance of those changes.