Psychology 2050, Perception
Professor James Cutting Fall, 2012

Uris Auditorium
TR, 1:25-2:40

SYLLABUS

Text: E. B. Goldstein, Sensation and Perception
(8th ed.) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage
Course Website: through Blackboard
Extra credit: http://susan.psych.cornell.edu/

Office Hours: (all in Uris Hall) & email
J. Cutting, 270, M 9:45-11:15, jec7
Kate Brunick, 245, W 12-2 klb256
Jessica Gaby, 245, T 2:45-4:45 jmb525
Otilia Menyhart, B86, R 2:45-4:45 om38

Goals: To understand how our sensory systems sculpt our experience of the world around us.
To understand how our senses differ and are similar.
To understand methodologies and statistical techniques used to assure us of how our senses work.
To place the workings of the human body and its senses within an evolutionary context, and to understand how these develop both across species and within our own life spans.
To begin to come to grips with the duality of having both a mind and a brain.

Week Day Date Lecture number and topic Reading assignment [Lectures will be recorded and placed on the course website as .mp3 files. Slides in .pdf and .ppt format will appear there as well]

0 R 23 Aug: 1. NO CLASS

1 T 28 Aug: 2. Doctrine of the specific qualities of nerves.
Chapter 1: 3-20. Introduction to perception.
R 30 Aug: 3. Two metaphors for cognitive neuroscience.
Chapter 2: 23-41. Introduction to the physiology of perception

2 T 4 Sep: 4. Two psychophysical phenomena.
no reading assignment
R 6 Sep: 5. Signal detection.
Appendix: 401-406. Signal detection theory.

Chapter 15: 355-366. The chemical senses. [1/2 chapter]
R 13 Sep: 7. Three kinds of adaptation.
Chapter 15: 366-377. The chemical senses. [1/2 chapter]

4 T 18 Sep: 8. Skin, pain, and phantom limbs.
[Rosh Hashana, 17-18 Sep]
Chapter 14: 329-352. The cutaneous senses.
R 20 Sep: 9. Haptics, posture, and movements
Chapter 11: 259-289. Sound, the auditory system, and pitch perception.
5  T  25 Sep:  10. Sounds, the ear, and deafness.  
  [Yom Kippur, 26 Sep]  
6  T  2 Oct:  12. Light and the eye.  
  Chapter 3: 43-61. Introduction to vision. [fragment of chapter]  
R  4 Oct:  13. FIRST PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION, during class time.  
  Question answering session to be arranged for 3 Oct. No make ups.  
7  T  9 Oct:  Fall Break  
  no reading assignment.  
  [1st prelims handed back]  
  Chapter 3: 61-71. Introduction to vision. [fragment of chapter]  
  Chapter 4: 73-97. The visual cortex and beyond.  
  no reading assignment  
  Chapter 5: 99-130. Perceiving objects and scenes.  
10 T 30 Oct:  19. Gestalt psychology and the perception of form  
R  1 Nov:  20. Color, history, and physiology  
  Chapter 9: 201-227. Perceiving color.  
R  9 Nov:  22. Depth and layout  
  Chapter 10: 229-257. Perceiving depth and size.  
  Chapter 16: 386-387: Percept. Devel.: Perceiving depth [fragment of chapter]  
12 T 13 Nov:  23. Motion and film.  
  Chapter 8: 177-198. Perceiving motion.  
R 15 Nov:  24. SECOND PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION. material since 1st prelim.  
  Question answering session to be arranged for 14 Nov. No make ups.  
  Chapter 6: 133-152. Visual attention.  
R 22 Nov:  Thanksgiving recess
14 T  27 Nov:  26. Illusions.  [2nd prelims handed back with provisional final grades]
                no reading assignment.
R  29 Nov:  27. The common sensibles and sensory substitution.
              Chapter 16: 394-395: Percept. Devel.: Intermodal perception &
              396-398. Unity of perception [fragments of chapter]

R 13 Dec:  FINAL EXAM. 7:00 – 9:30 PM. Comprehensive. Location to be arranged.
              Question answering session to be arranged. No early exams.

It is expected that all students will follow the Cornell Code of Academic Integrity:
http://www.cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html

**Contract:** Your grade will be determined by the mean of your two highest grades. Thus, if you are
happy with your two prelim grades, you need not take the final. But, there are no makeups for the
prelims or for the final. Members of athletic teams and others away on Cornell University business
during the prelims may take the exam while they are away under the supervision of a trainer,
coach, or faculty sponsor. Please notify me well in advance so that arrangements can be made.

**Students with Disabilities:** Please give me your Student Disability Services (SDS) accommodation
letter early in the semester so that I have adequate time to arrange your approved academic
modifications. Meeting with me in my office hours will help ensure confidentiality. If you need an
immediate accommodation for equal access, please speak with me after class or send an email
message to me and/or SDS at sds_cu@cornell.edu. If the need arises for additional
accommodations during the semester, please contact SDS.

**Extra credit:** Given that the bulk of the presentation of material in this course is experimental, I
have found it useful for students to participate in experiments. To this end, you may earn up to
three points of extra credit towards your grade should you choose to participate in sponsored
experiments through the website SUSAN. These points would be added to your second lowest
grade, after the lowest has been dropped.