

Senior Colloquium in Cognitive Science

CGSC 491

Spring 2017

Instructor: Mark Sheskin
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Time/Location: Wednesdays, 9:25-11:15; Location AKW 100
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2-3PM; SSS 205 H (inside “Panda Lab”)
Course Website: on Canvas

Overview

This course is designed for majors in Cognitive Science as they complete their senior projects. The purposes include (a) helping students write the thesis by providing piecemeal due dates, (b) learning about and engaging in the peer review process, and (c) learning about other students’ research through presentations and peer review.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Each student will give a presentation once during the semester, consisting of approximately 30 minutes of content plus 15 minutes for discussion afterwards. Students who present earlier in the semester will be expected to have more preliminary progress towards their projects compared to those who present later in the semester. The nature of the feedback will also likely change during the semester, but the expectation is that valuable discussion and feedback can be gained at any time throughout the semester.

Each student will also engage in a peer review process with several other students: each student will peer review a thesis draft from three other students. Each student will also receive at least three peer reviews (the number may be more than 3, since I plan to peer review some and to recruit additional peer reviewers from outside the course). In response to the anonymous peer reviews, each student will revise their thesis and produce a cover letter detailing the changes.

Your grade in this course will be determined largely by the final thesis you produce, which is evaluated by two professors (your thesis advisor and a second professor I select, typically based on discussion with your thesis advisor). However, this final grade can be modified (either up or down) based on attendance and performance in the course. Typically, the variability from course performance will modify grades by no more than one or two steps (e.g., a grade of B from the readers of your senior thesis would typically result in a grade of B in the course, and would almost always lead to a grade between C+ and A-).

Due Dates

Yale provides zero flexibility for being late with your final thesis. It **MUST** be in on time. Your draft must be on time so that your peer reviewers have the full time they expect, and your peer reviews must be on time so the author has the full time expected to implement changes.

Laptops

Historically, this class has had a laptop ban. Last year, I allowed laptops and then asked the Seniors for feedback at the end of the semester. A majority of responses (on an anonymous survey) indicated that laptops should NOT be allowed in the future. So laptops are banned during student presentations (though you can use them when I am leading discussion the first two days). I will elicit your feedback about this rule at the end of the semester (so you can help decide the fate of next year's Seniors!).

Statement on Academic Integrity

Please do not violate academic integrity during this course. Most notably, do not plagiarize. As defined in the Yale College Undergraduate Regulations (1), "Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, words, or ideas as if they were one's own." There are many reasons to avoid plagiarism. Two of them highlighted in materials from the Yale College Writing Center (2) are that plagiarism is a "detriment to your intellectual and moral development" and that "Yale punishes academic dishonesty severely." The Yale Writing Center has many resources you can consult to learn how to use sources properly and avoid plagiarism (3). Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or wish to discuss any of this information in more detail.

(1) http://yalecollege.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/UREgs_14-15.pdf

(2) <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-faculty/addressing-plagiarism/sample-plagiarism-warnings>

(3) <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources>

Calendar

- The below due dates represent the "standard" timeline for draft and peer reviews.
- An alternate timeline is available: draft due 27 March, peer reviews due 7 April.
- All 10 meetings from 1 February to 19 April will have student presentations.

18 January	Introduction, fill out thesis and presentation survey
25 January	Discuss sample peer reviews and previous essays
1 February	One page summary to advisor and msheskin+cgsc491@gmail.com
8 February	
15 February	
22 February	
1 March	Thesis draft due to advisor and msheskin+cgsc491@gmail.com
8 March	
BREAK	
29 March	Peer reviews due to msheskin+cgsc491@gmail.com
5 April	
12 April	Cover letter due to msheskin+cgsc491@gmail.com
19 April	
*21 April	Final essay due (to advisor, dropbox, and msheskin+cgsc491@gmail.com)
26 April	Celebration