

PSYC 321 Psycholinguistics

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The following are probably not necessary but just in case:

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Office Hours: I would usually say that I have an open-door policy but since we are not around campus regularly this term, I will say that I have an open inbox policy. If you contact me by e-mail, I will get back to you and we can arrange a time to chat with Zoom or phone. The TAs will have the same policy for office hours.

We will do a few things to increase contact with you. In Week 2, I will meet with each of you in a short (10-15 minute) Zoom meeting. There will be a sign-up page in the OnQ site for the course. You can choose not to take part in this but it is nice for me to get to know you and know who I am teaching to.

In addition, TAs will organize small groups of 5 or so people to meet with the periodically to ask questions. Sometimes a group makes it easier to talk about things that are unclear and you can learn from the questions of others.

Learning goals:

My aim is that you gain an overview of the field of the psychology of language and also learn some experimental skills. You will learn to replicate the methods of a series of classic psycholinguistic experiments. In addition, you will learn how to construct new psycholinguistic experiments on your own.

Course Evaluation:

Laboratories		40%
Quizzes	(2 X 15)	30%
Final Paper	(due December 9, 2020)	30%
	Paper topics due November 11, 2020	

Laboratories

For this part of the course you will learn how to perform a number of psycholinguistic studies. The aim is to give you some "hands-on" experience in the experimental study of language. The laboratories include creating a voicing continuum for a speech perception experiment, creating a stimulus set for a lexical processing study, learning to eye track subjects for a sentence processing study, exploring conversation methodologies, and 'programming' a psycholinguistic study. There are eight of these laboratories and each will be marked (worth five marks each). Part of your mark will be what I call 'mastery marks'. If you complete and understand the laboratory, then you earn those marks. The rest of the marks for a particular laboratory are based on your responses to a series of short questions that must be answered and submitted by the deadline.

Software

Two free software packages should be downloaded to your computers. We will use them in some of the labs and classes. They also provide you with tools to carry out psycholinguistic activities in the future.

Praat – this is a computer program that allows you to record, analyze, synthesize and edit speech. It is available for many platforms and operating systems and can be downloaded from here: <http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/>

OpenSesame – this is an experiment creation program that can be used to present stimuli and time and record responses. It is available from here: <https://osdoc.cogsci.nl>

Final Paper

The paper will be evaluated according to the following criteria (30 marks):

Research - comprehensiveness, accuracy, use of current and relevant research

Organization - clear identified units of thought, elaboration (adequate explanation)

Writing - correct English grammar and spelling, clarity and coherence

Your topic can be anything in psycholinguistics that you find interesting, but the topic has to be approved by me (**note the ‘soft’ deadline for topics: November 11, 2020**).

Maximum 10 pages (double spaced) plus references.

12 point, Times New Roman, minimum half-inch margins.

Quizzes

There will be two short quizzes during the term. Each will be composed of 3 essay questions that ask you to apply information from the course to answer problems. Each test is designed to require about 3 hours maximum. However, you will have a 24-hour period to work on your answers. The length of the answers will be strictly limited to one page each (half-inch margins, Times New Roman, 12 point). Answers must be submitted through Turnitin on our PSYC321 onQ page. I will take some class time to give examples of the kinds of questions that you can expect.

Tentative Lecture Schedule

DATE	TOPIC
Week of Sept. 8	Introduction; Animal communication
Week of Sept. 14	What is language?; Introduction to Praat and OpenSesame
Week of Sept. 21	Conversation; Lab 1: Eliciting Conversations (Due Oct. 2)
Week of Sept. 28	Speech; Lab 2: Acoustic Continuum (Due Oct. 9)
Week of Oct. 5	Beyond acoustics in speech; Lab 3: Categorical Perception (Due Oct.16)
Week of Oct. 12	Words; Lab 4: Lexical Frequency (Due Oct 23)
Oct. 14-15	Quiz 1: Question released at 12 PM Oct 14 Answers due Oct. 15 12 PM
Week of Oct. 19	Sentences; Lab 5: Lexical Decision (Due Nov. 2*)
Week of Oct. 26	Fall Term Break
Week of Nov. 2	Meaning; Lab 6: Semantic Priming (Due Nov. 13)
Week of Nov.9	Discourse; Lab 7: Discourse (Due Nov. 20)
Week of Nov. 16	Special topics
Nov. 18	Quiz 2: Question released at 12 PM Nov. 18 Answers due Nov. 19 12 PM
Week of Nov. 23	Natural communication; Lab 8: Conversation Data (Due Dec. 4)
Week of Nov. 30	Special Topics
Dec. 7	End of term