

Junior Colloquium in Cognitive Science

CGSC 395

Spring 2017

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Time/Location: Tuesdays, 9:25-11:15; Location WTS A74
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2-3PM; SSS 205 H (inside “Panda Lab”)
Course Website: on Canvas

Overview

This course is designed for juniors in Cognitive Science. The purposes include (a) learning about a cross-section of cognitive science research directly from professors engaged in the research, (b) having the opportunity to engage in a “lab meeting” setting with the professors and your peers, and (c) solidifying plans for your senior thesis.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

(1) A weekly assignment is due forty-eight hours prior to each meeting of the course. This will contain two parts. “Part A: Initial Thoughts” has no word minimum (often a few sentences will suffice, though you might rarely write much more). This first part should raise a small number of questions or comments about the reading(s) for the upcoming meeting. “Part B: Update” should be at least 200 words. This second part is a reflection on your initial thoughts from the previous week. Referencing the guest lecture and the discussion afterwards with the speaker and your peers, how has your understanding of your questions and comments changed? Note that writing a successful Part B requires having substantive questions/comments from Part A that you can update based on the lecture and discussion. On the course website, you can find an example for each part of the weekly assignment, as well as instructions for how to submit the assignments, and what to do if you miss class (i.e., because you will not be able to complete Part B in the typical manner). These reading responses will account for 40% of the final grade.

(2) Class attendance and participation will account for 40% of the final grade. Please keep in mind that most weeks consist of a guest lecture, and so (with apologies for the morning time slot) it really is important that everyone be on time. This is for two reasons: (1) the professors are volunteering their time to come and talk to us, and (2) each week will be on a radically different topic, and often the first few minutes will include important framing information. Also note that it is really not possible to make up absences (though the reading response instructions indicate what you should do if you miss class).

(3) At the end of the semester, you will submit a short research proposal (2-3 pages) about a topic you would like to study and a professor you might contact about it. Alternatively, if you have already started a project that might turn into your senior thesis, your short paper will provide a description of the project and your current progress with it. This paper will account for 20% of the final grade.

Laptops

Historically, this class has had a laptop ban. Last year, I allowed laptops and then asked the Juniors 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. Explaining their votes, several students indicated that the benefits (of being able to type notes and quickly look up information related to the lecture) were lower than the costs (of decreased engagement with the lecture, due to distraction by both one's own screen and others' screens). All of this is to say: laptops are banned whenever we have a guest speaker (though you can use them when we, e.g., discuss previous senior theses on January 24th), and 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 Juniors!).

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

January 17	Class introduction
January 24	Discuss previous senior thesis and peer review process
January 31	Julian Jara-Ettinger (Psychology)
February 7	BJ Casey (Psychology)
February 14	Discussion of short research proposals and statistics
February 21	Three Seniors Present
February 28	Scaz (Computer Science)
March 7	Joshua Knobe (CogSci)
March 14	SPRING BREAK
March 21	SPRING BREAK
March 28	Ravi Dhar & Liz Friedman (SOM)
April 4	Ifat Levy (Medicine)
April 11	Jason Stanley (Philosophy)
April 18	TBD (could be some of you presenting for feedback from each other)
April 25	Bob Frank (Linguistics)