

Fall, 2017 Psychology Depth Courses

Psychology 501: Child Psychopathology (IC)

Professor James Li

Pre-requisites: Psych 201 or 201 or 281; **AND** must have completed Psych 509 **OR** 511 **OR** 512

Nearly 7.5 percent of children in the U.S. are taking psychotropic medications for “emotional or behavioral difficulties,” which represents a five-fold increase since the late-1980s. Are we overmedicating? Or are there perhaps broader issues with the way emotional and behavioral problems are assessed and diagnosed in children? In this course, we will explore these and several other critical issues in childhood mental health. Students will be provided an extensive overview of the major psychological disorders of childhood, including Intellectual Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, and Depressive and Anxiety Disorders. Lectures will incorporate interactive elements to cover topics of phenomenology, prevalence, assessment, and treatments for these disorders. There will also be an emphasis on unraveling the origins of these disorders by drawing upon contemporary theories and empirical research across the fields of clinical and developmental psychology, neuroscience, and genetics. In weekly discussion sections, students will be provided an even greater opportunity to engage in the course material through hands-on exposure to clinical interventions and critical discussion of highly relevant research articles in the child psychopathology literature.

Psychology 520: How We Read: Science of Reading and Educational Implications (SIC)

Professor Mark Seidenberg

Pre-requisites: Intro Psych 201, 202, or 281 **AND** one of the following courses: Psych 406 **OR** Psych 413 **OR** Psych 414 **OR** Psych 560. Students who have completed Psych 402 or 482 are not eligible to enroll for this course.

Reading is one of the highest achievements of human intelligence, a capacity we share with no other species. This course provides an in-depth introduction to the science of reading, which focuses on the nature of the reading process, how children acquire this skill, the brain bases of reading, and the causes of reading impairments (dyslexia). The class examines how reading works in English but also other languages and writing systems. We also consider the implications of this research for education practices, including the design of reading curricula, what teachers are taught about reading, how reading is taught in schools, and the identification and response to children at risk for reading failure.

Psychology 521: Human Thought: Concepts, Language, and Culture (SIC)

Professor Gary Lupyan

Pre-Reqs: Psych 201, 202, 281, or equiv; and must have completed either Psych 402 **OR** 413 **OR** 414 **OR** 560

This class will take students on a tour of how humans conceptualize the world, focusing on the role of language in thought. We will begin by discussing the evolution of language and proceed to discuss how abilities that humans share with non-human animals (e.g. perception, categorization, memory) are influenced by the learning and use of language. We will discuss the relationship between language, culture, and cognition in domains as varied as mathematics, visual perception, spatial navigation, and theory of mind. In the process, we will tackle questions such as: In what ways does language change what humans can think about? What is the role of language in making us human? Can speaking a particular language allow the speakers to better adapt to their environment? Can we create new languages to improve human thought? We will also address such issues as metaphors in political discourse and propaganda, and the role of information technologies in the spread of ideas. This class will draw heavily on empirical research in cognitive/developmental psychology and neuroscience.

Psych 526, The Criminal Mind: Forensic and Psychobiological Perspectives, (SIC)

Professor Patricia Coffey

Pre-requisites: Psych 201 or 201 or 281; **AND** must have completed Psych 507 **OR** 509 **OR** 511 **OR** 512 **OR** 530

Criminal behavior is an extremely common and costly problem for society. The problem reflects diverse origins ranging from constitutional factors, such as psychopathy, to social factors, such as the consequences of living in impoverished neighborhoods. The problem also presents diverse challenges, including the assessment of culpability and the treatment/prevention of criminal behavior. Using a mix of lectures and experiential exercises, this course will cover a range of theoretical, empirical, and applied material and provide a foundation for conceptualizing key issues related to the criminal mind and behavior.