

## Fall, 2018 Psychology Depth & Capstone Courses

### DEPTH COURSES

#### **Psychology 508: Human Emotions: From Biology to Culture (SIC)** **Professor Paula Niedenthal**

In this class we will learn about and actively discuss the science of human emotions. Our levels of analysis will span the biological (e.g., neuroanatomical and neuroendocrine processes) through the social, developmental and cognitive, to the cultural (e.g., cultural similarities and differences in everything from recognizing facial expressions to the regulation of emotional feelings and behaviors). Despite the fact that the focus is on human emotion, we will also explore the evolutionary roots of some of the emotion phenomena in non-human primates. The general learning goals of the class are to appreciate the main questions and debates that are present in the psychological literature on emotion, and to understand the nuts and bolts of how research on emotion is conducted. In discussion sections, specific research examples will be explored and critiqued.

#### **Psychology 510: Child Psychopathology (IC)** **Professor James Li**

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 521: Human Thought: Concepts, Language, and Culture (SIC)** **Professor Gary Lupyán**

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**

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.

## CAPSTONES COURSES

<p>Psychology 601 – lec. 1 <b>Neurobiology of Social Bonds</b></p> <p>Social bonding is a complex behavior that requires social recognition, coordination of multiple individuals, and strong neurobiological underpinnings. The stable social relationships that emerge with bonding often maximize efficient use of cooperation, division of labor, and social cohesion. To understand how these social relationships are formed and maintained, we will also look at the genes, hormones, and environmental experience that influence bonding behavior.</p> <p>Specifically, this class will cover the 3 main types of social groups (solitary, gregarious, and social) and the different types of social bonds (partner/pair/mate, maternal, paternal, kin, and unrelated/friendship). It will discuss why these social groups and social bonds exist given the species' evolutionary history and also cover the neural mechanisms of bond formation and maintenance as it relates to each type of bond. This course will also apply these concepts as they relate to human bonding and sexual orientation, drugs of abuse, and dysregulation of bonds in social disorders such as psychopathy and schizophrenia.</p>	<p>TBA</p>
<p>Psychology 601 – lec. 2 <b>Fundamentals of Clinical Psychology</b></p> <p>This class is an exploration of research and clinical issues related to psychotherapy. The course is focused on thinking about how best to study clinical questions related to therapy outcomes, including issues such as the therapeutic alliance and how to gauge whether therapy interventions are effective. The course content will introduce students to selected aspects of psychotherapy, such as the APA ethics code as it applies to psychotherapy, concepts such as resistance and transference, and forms of therapy including play therapy, group therapy, and couples therapy. Discussion of psychotherapy concepts will revolve around the question of how they are studied and the quality of the existing research literature; early in the class students will read several perspectives on research methodology within clinical psychology and will be expected to apply those perspectives, as well as their own critical thinking skills, to questions regarding psychotherapy processes. The class requires daily readings and informal written homework as well as two exams, short writing assignments, a term paper, and a class presentation.</p>	<p>Professor Rhonda Reinholtz</p>
<p>Psychology 601 – lec. 3 <b>Deficit or Difference? Interpreting Diverse Developmental Paths</b></p> <p>There is a remarkable amount of variability between individuals and between cultures. We often interpret these differences as deficits, but what's different is not necessarily worse. For instance, female brains weigh less than male brains. In the past, this was interpreted as a deficit, reinforcing the belief that women were intellectually inferior to men. Although we no longer believe this is true, our research today continues to interpret many differences as deficits. In this course, we will re-examine classic research in psychology and reconsider whether the identified deficits should instead be considered differences.</p> <p>We will start by briefly examining the history of the deficit framework in psychology, including research on IQ differences and the eugenics movement. We will then read theoretical papers and commentaries challenging the deficit framework. For the majority of the class, we will read recent empirical articles that challenge deficit interpretations of many classic findings in psychological research. This research comes from a broad range of topics that cut across all fields of psychology, including cognitive control, language acquisition, gene by environment interactions, emotion perception, and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Finally, the course will examine how mainstream culture and privilege intersect with the framing of deficits in research on bilingualism, classroom performance, mathematics, and ASD. For instance, monolingual children perform worse than bilingual children on tests of cognitive control, yet this has been exclusively framed as a bilingual advantage, rather than as a monolingual deficit. With a growing emphasis on translational research and bridging the socioeconomic gap, it is critically important that we more carefully examine which differences qualify as deficits to target for intervention.</p>	<p>TBA</p>

<p>Psychology 601 – lec. 4  <b>Psychology of Health and Aging</b></p> <p>In the United States and globally, older adults are living longer and thus make up an increasingly large percentage of the population. Despite the demographic shift toward longer lives, many adults hold a pessimistic outlook on aging that is based on stereotypes and outdated research. For example, many Americans believe that dementia or other forms of cognitive decline is a typical facet of aging, when in reality it occurs in only a limited subset of older adults. This seminar will focus on emerging research that offers a more accurate and nuanced perspective on health and aging across the lifespan. Topics discussed will encompass biological, psychological, and social domains. One novel angle will be recent findings on the influence of early life experience on biological changes with aging. Additionally, the course will cover novel insights on the relative stability versus change over time in emotional, cognitive, and personality factors. Individual differences in stress and coping responses to major social changes, such as parental caregiving and spousal loss will be considered as well as the mental and physical health toll of social isolation in older adulthood. Emerging interventions will be examined. At a broader societal level, this course will examine major historical changes in the last decade (e.g., Great Recession) that have heightened concerns for racial and socioeconomic disparities in the onset of chronic diseases and mental distress in middle age.</p>	<p>TBA</p>
<p>Psychology 601- Lec. 5  <b>Gestures in Cognition and Communication</b></p> <p>Why do people gesture when they speak? What role do gestures play in speaking, thinking and communication? This course will provide an introduction to theory and methods for studying gestures, which are hand and body movements that people produce when speaking or thinking. Topics to be covered include: the role of gesture in language production and comprehension, the relationship between gesture and speech, the use of gesture in regulating interaction, the effects of gesture on learning and memory, cultural and individual differences in gesture, the role of gesture in instructional communication, and gesture behavior in special populations (including blind and bilingual individuals). The course will be discussion format, with readings drawn primarily from journals. Over the course of the semester, students will design and carry out a small-scale, original project on a relevant topic of interest, either independently or as part of a team.</p>	<p>Professor Martha Alibali</p>
<p>Psychology 601- lec 6  <b>Industrial Organizational Psychology</b></p> <p>This survey course of Industrial – Organizational Psychology will introduce students to the application of psychological principles in the workplace. Students will see how the psychological concepts they have studied thus far are transformed into important topics that determine the success of individuals, teams and organizations within a work context. Topics covered will include: employee selection methods (e.g., interviewing and testing), statistical test validation and decision techniques, legal issues in the workplace, performance evaluations, employee motivation, leadership, team effectiveness, conflict management, employee satisfaction, stress management, and creating a great-place-to-work organizational culture.</p>	<p>Professor Andrea Konz</p>
<p>Psychology 601- lec 7  <b>Epigenetics and the Brain</b></p> <p>Nature versus nurture can now be referred to as understanding gene X environmental interactions. That is, the emerging area of epigenetic is the study of how the environment can reprogram the genome. In some cases, this reprogramming can be passed onto future generations. Epigenetics is the study of changes to gene activity without changing the underlying code. This course will focus on how our behavior and overall health can be shaped by markings on our DNA. For the first part, we will cover a general background on how epigenetic changes occur and how they shape behavior. During the second part, we will examine various topics in greater depth by discussing the primary research articles that shaped those topics. Finally, you will orally defend a research proposal on a topic of your choice, as well as hand in a final written research proposal on the same topic.</p>	<p>Professor Anthony Auger</p>

Psychology 601- lec 8

TBA

**The Development of Social Categorization and Intergroup Biases**

This course explores children's representations and evaluations of different social categories (e.g., race, gender, age, disability) in their environment, as well as the malleability of children's social biases. To this end, we will consider relevant empirical evidence on infants' and children's social development addressing a wide range of questions such as: What social categories are infants sensitive to, and how does their sensitivity to social categories change over the course of development? What learning mechanisms support the acquisition of social categories? Why do children like and respect members of some groups more than others? Do intergroup biases reflect ingroup favoritism or outgroup derogation? Is it possible to prevent the development of intergroup biases? Once developed, are there effective strategies to reduce children's intergroup biases?

Psychology 601- lec 9

TBA

TBA

Psychology 602

Professor Hill Goldsmith

**Intermediate Statistics for Psychology**

Principles of psychological measurement and test theory, including reliability, validity, and test construction. Introduction to correlation, multiple regression, and other data analytic principles.