PSYC 111-401 - PERCEPTION

Fall 2012
Lecture: MWF 9-10a, STIT B21
Recitations: before midterms, precise dates tba.

No prerequisites required, other than an open mind.

SYNOPSIS:
How do we construct a conception of physical reality based on sensory experience? The purposes of this course is to provide an overview of the facts and concepts of perception. The course will cover the different human senses and their physical, physiological, and perceptual characteristics, and the psychophysical methods used to measure those. Also, it will introduce some of the computational theories of perception, aimed at providing a deeper understanding of the characteristics of perception.

INSTRUCTOR:
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Office hour: W 3.30-4.30p

TEACHING ASSISTANT:
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Office hour: R 5.15-6.45p
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COURSE-WEBSITE:
Complete and up-to-date course information will be posted on the CPC laboratory website: http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~astocker/lab/teaching.php
In addition, we use PIAZZA, an online service catered to getting you help fast and efficiently from classmates, the TA, and myself. Rather than emailing questions to the teaching staff, I encourage you to post your questions on Piazza. Visit our classpage at: https://piazza.com/upenn/fall2012/psyc111.

‘Homunculus’, Descartes 1664
TENTATIVE LIST OF TOPICS:
History, Theories of perception, Physics of the sensory world, Physiology of the different sensory organs, Neural sensory processing, Vision, Audition, Chemical Senses, Proprioception, Psychophysical methods, Artificial Perception/Robots, Bayesian models of perception, The Rabbit illusion, and much more ...

COURSE TEXTBOOK (highly recommended but not required):
Wolfe et. al., "Sensation & Perception", 2nd or 3rd edition, Sinauer Associates (First edition is not recommended.) Also available as electronic edition (ask Penn bookstore). Note, the book has a companion website (www.sinauer.com/wolfe2e) that provides good learning summaries, extra examples and interactive demos.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS:
Homework assignments are essential for a proper understanding of the material. There will be homework assignments given out regularly each week. You must turn in your solutions latest the same day in the following week at the end of the lecture (hardcopies). The assignments are graded and contribute to your final grade (see below). Late turn-ins will be penalized. Hand-written assignments will not be accepted (graphs can be hand-drawn).

EXAMS:
There will be 3 midterm exams (september 28, november 2, and november 30 - regular class hour) and a cumulative final exam (december 19, 9-11a).

You may bring a half-letter sized card with hand-written notes to all exams (writing on both sides allowed). No other help allowed.

There will be NO makeup exams. Unattended exams will automatically be scored as F. In the highly improbably case that a student has two or more qualified reasons of absence, only the best (worth 25%), respectively none of the midterm scores count toward the final grade. Qualified reasons of absences are a) a medical problem that does not permit taking the exam (note from dean's office or doctor required), b) a family emergency that takes you out of town (note from parents required), or c) an out of town trip connected with a UPenn sponsored activity (e.g. team sports, note from coach/activity sponsor required.)

FINAL GRADE:
Your final grade will be computed as a weighted average of the average-score of the best two (out of the three) midterms (40%), the score of the final exam (40%), and the homework assignments (20%). Homework assignments scores only contribute if they improve the final score!