THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING
PSYC XXXX
A three-week immersion course examining how people learn in both formal and informal settings

Instructor
Kate O’Doherty, Ph.D.
kodoherty@uchicago.edu

Teaching Assistant
Marjorie Schaeffer, M.S.
mschaeffer@uchicago.edu

Course Location: TBD

Course Goals
• Gain a general understanding of theories (primarily drawn from cognitive and socio-cultural perspectives) and broad topic knowledge in the domain of the psychology of learning
• Understand the contested nature of scientific “facts”; learn the difference between evidence and claims
• Learn how to formulate problem-focused research questions that speak to broad issues
• Learn psychology research methods & gain hands-on experience with them
• Develop critical reading skills with respect to research in the field
• Design and execute a research project on some aspect of learning with human subjects

General Course Structure
**Mornings (Typically 9:30-12:00):**
• Lecture/discussion in class, with in-class demonstrations and videos

**Afternoons (Typically 1:00-4:00 or 4:30):**
• Additional lecture/discussion
• Observations of both formal (e.g., classrooms) and informal (e.g., museums) learning environments
• Data collection/group meetings for projects

Grading *(class is worth 100 points)*
• 30 pts Class participation (detailed below)
• 15 pts Writing and homework assignments *(always* due the next day)
• 10 pts quizzes (3 short, unannounced multiple-choice and short answer quizzes)
• 15 pts Weekly paper sections (independently written parts of the paper)
• 15 pts Final research project (written as a group, detailed below)
• 15 pts Group research project presentation (detailed below)
**Course Readings**
A vital component of the course is to do ALL the assigned readings in preparation for the lecture and discussions.

**Books:**

**Academic Article Readings:** (available as PDFs via Chalk):
Once you have logged in, click on this course Click on **Course Material** and then click on the **Readings** folder. You will see a list of downloadable copies of all the readings listed by author name and year.

**Class Participation (30 pts)**
During class, all students are required to participate by answering questions, participating in class discussion, and working in small groups.

**Homework Assignments (15 pts)**
After some readings, you will choose from a set of questions to answer. You should answer these in paragraph form, using evidence from the readings. In order to submit these assignments, you should post them on the discussion board with your last name and the date in the subject line.

**Content Quizzes (10 pts)**
Three times during the course there will be a short quiz over all the reading and lecture up until that point. These questions will be short answer and multiple choice.

**Research Project, Paper, and Presentation (45 pts total)**
In small groups (4 students per group), you will design and perform a small study on learning with human subjects (some possible topics will be handed out on day 1 of class). This research project is an opportunity to conduct a psychology experiment with human subjects from start to finish. Succeeding on this project will require forethought, planning and the full effort of all group members. Your groups will be meeting with the instructor and TA to discuss this project on the **second** day of class. In order to be prepared for this meeting, you should meet with your group after the first day to discuss ideas.

Groups will pick a paper topic from the list provided in class (or an approved alternative topic) and develop their project in consultation with the instructor. Data collection for these research projects is scheduled during class times.
Final papers should be 10-15 double-spaced pages in length with standard margins and fonts. Papers will be due in parts as noted on the syllabus. The complete final paper will be due on Friday of Week 3 (the final day of class) and should include the sections written previously as well as group-written Results and Discussion sections. The writing for the partial sections (Methods and Literature Review & References) should be done independently. Papers should be written in APA style. These papers will require outside research and reading. We will have a “field trip” to the library where we will be going over how to conduct research in the library.

Additionally, each group will make a 20-30 minute Presentation of their findings to the class on Friday of Week 3. Every member of the group should be an active participant in this presentation, both in its planning and execution.

**Some Final Words: Plagiarism, Cheating, & Ethics**

It’s an unfortunate fact that on occasion, students either intentionally or unintentionally claim the work of others as their own. We will provide you with detailed information on what constitutes plagiarism on the first day of class, as well as the APA citation style we will be using in this course. All students are responsible for reading these materials and asking whatever clarification questions are necessary to ensure that they are correctly citing the ideas they borrow from other sources.

Additionally, unless otherwise explicitly indicated on the assignment, students should assume that they should work on assignments independently without the assistance of their peers.

Finally, students are expected to behave in a professional manner with research participants at all times. Failure to do so can lead to expulsion from the course and being asked to leave the Immersion program.

**Disability Statement**

If you have any kind of disability, please talk to the instructor or TA immediately. We are more than happy to provide any kind of accommodation that will help you succeed in this class.

If you require any accommodations for this course, as soon as possible please provide us with a copy of your Accommodation Determination Letter (provided to you by the Student Disability Services office) so that you may discuss with us how your accommodations may be implemented in this course.

The University of Chicago is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation to participate in class, complete course requirements, or benefit from the University’s programs or services, you are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. To receive reasonable accommodation, you must be appropriately registered with Student Disability Services.

Please contact the office at 773-834-4469/TTY 773-795-1186 or email: disabilities@uchicago.edu or visit the website at disabilities.uchicago.edu.
WEEK 1 (cognitive perspectives)

Monday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Introduction to course content, expectations, assignments
- Research Ethics and Professionalism

Afternoon (1:00-4:00)
- Broad Overview of the Psychology of Learning
- Discussion of Final Projects

Readings for Tuesday:

- *Make it Stick*, Ch. 1
- *The Learning Brain*, Ch. 10
- *Why don’t students like school?*, Ch. 1

Homework: Choose your research project topic.

Tuesday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- How Psychologists Communicate: APA style; research papers (how to read and write one)
- Attention + Memory
- Learning in the brain

Afternoon (300-4:30 small group meetings)
- Practice: memory & learning tests on each other
- Small group meetings with Instructor & TA to discuss projects

Readings for Wednesday

- *Why Don’t students like school?*, Ch. 3 & 5
- *Make it Stick*, Ch. 2 & 3

Homework: Write 3-4 paragraphs (about 500-700 words) about some aspect(s) of the readings/today’s lecture that you found especially interesting or unusual. Include a question/idea that you think is important for future research. Post your reflection on the Chalk discussion board with your last name and today’s date in the subject line.

Wednesday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Practice makes perfect?
- Learning for Transfer
Afternoon (1:15pm – 4:00pm)

- Introduction to Regenstein Library & Academic Research Methods (1:15pm)- meet at library entrance: Regenstein Library, 1100 57th Street
  - Special Guest Lecturer: Paul Belloni, Psychology Bibliographer
  - Tour of Regenstein Library
- After the tour you will work in small groups on finding articles for your group project

Readings for Thursday

- Why Don’t students like school?, Ch. 4 & 7
- Make it Stick, Ch. 5 & 6

Homework: Continue to read & summarize articles that could be used in your final paper literature review.

Thursday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Higher Order Thinking; analogical reasoning
- Guest Lecture on analogical reasoning: TBD

Afternoon (1:00-4:00)
- The myth of learning styles

Readings for Friday

- Why Don’t students like school?, Ch. 6

Homework: Write 3-4 paragraphs (about 500-700 words) about some aspect(s) of the readings/today’s lecture that you found especially interesting or unusual. Include a question/idea that you think is important for future research. Post your reflection on the Chalk discussion board with your last name and today’s date in the subject line.

Friday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Executive function & Metacognition
- Insight Experiments
Afternoon (1:00-4:00)
Small group meetings regarding final articles to be included in literature reviews

Readings for Monday

- *Mindset*, Chs. 1, 2, 7 & 8

Homework: DUE MONDAY -- INTRODUCTION & LITERATURE REVIEW OF FINAL PAPER

WEEK 2 (sociocultural perspectives)

** INTRODUCTION & LITERATURE REVIEW SECTION OF FINAL PAPER DUE **

Monday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
Preparation for observation: Ethics & Professionalism
Observation: classroom setting

Afternoon (1:00-4:30)
Mindset/Grit

Readings for Tuesday


Homework: None.

Tuesday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
Stereotype Threat/Math Anxiety

Afternoon (1:00-4:00)
Project Materials/Stimuli/Consent Proposal
Small group meetings with Instructor to discuss projects: methods
Readings for Wednesday


Homework: Write 3-4 paragraphs (about 500-700 words) about some aspect(s) of the readings/today’s lecture that you found especially interesting or unusual. Include a question/idea that you think is important for future research. Post your reflection on the Chalk discussion board with your last name and today’s date in the subject line.

Wednesday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Play, exercise, nutrition, nature

Afternoon (1:00-4:00)
- Observation: outdoor informal learning environments

Readings for Thursday


Homework:
- Methods section write up (should be in APA format – look at sample paper on Chalk!!)
due tonight (Wed 7/20) @ 7pm.

Thursday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Social-emotional learning
- Research on “belonging” to support learning
Afternoon (1:00-4:00)
Data collection for projects

Readings for Friday

Homework: Write 3-4 paragraphs (about 500-700 words) about some aspect(s) of the readings/today's lecture that you found especially interesting or unusual. Include a question/idea that you think is important for future research. Post your reflection on the Chalk discussion board with your last name and today's date in the subject line.

Friday

Observation: *Museum of Science & Industry*

Readings for Monday:

Homework: None.

WEEK 3 (Putting research into practice)

Monday

Morning (9:30 – 12:00)
Supporting STEM learning

Afternoon (1:00 – 4:00)
Data collection for projects.
Readings for Tuesday


Homework: Write 3-4 paragraphs (about 500-700 words) about some aspect(s) of the readings/today’s lecture that you found especially interesting or unusual. Include a question/idea that you think is important for future research. Post your reflection on the Chalk discussion board with your last name and today’s date in the subject line.

Tuesday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Individual differences I: language gap, stress
- Center on the Developing Child videos

Afternoon (1:00-4:00)
- In-class group work on Results/Discussion Sections

***RESULTS DUE BY MIDNIGHT TONIGHT***

Readings for Wednesday


Homework: Results section (one for each group) due at 11:59pm tonight.

Wednesday

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Individual differences II: dyslexia, profoundly gifted children
- Movie: “The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia”

Afternoon (1:00 – 4:00)
- Work on Abstract and presentations

Readings for Thursday

**Homework:** Write 3-4 paragraphs (about 500-700 words) about some aspect(s) of the readings/today’s lecture that you found especially interesting or unusual. Include a question/idea that you think is important for future research. Post your reflection on the Chalk discussion board with your last name and today’s date in the subject line.

**Thursday**

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Designing learning environments

Afternoon off to work on papers and presentations! We will be available to consult.

Homework:
- Final paper including: cover page, updated introduction, methods, results and discussion, and reference page - upload to Chalk by Friday at 9:30am
- Final presentation (power point or prezi) – choose one group member to email it to Professor O’Doherty by Friday at 9:30am

**Friday**

**FINAL PAPER INCLUDING DISCUSSION SECTION: UPLOADED TO CHALK BY 9:30AM**
**FINAL PRESENTATION: EMAIL TO PROFESSOR O’DOHERTY BY 9:30AM**

Morning (9:30-12:00)
- Group Presentations (invite your friends!)

Afternoon (1 – 3)
- Wrap-up, Discussion, Questions, Issues, Evaluations