Psychology 598B – Graduate Seminar on Human Learning & Memory

Instructor: Shana Carpenter, Ph.D.
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Class meeting time: W 3:10 - 6 pm
Class location: Kildee 0107
Instructor Office Hours: T 2-3 pm, Th 2-4 pm

Course overview and goals: 598B is a graduate-level course on research in human memory. This course will expose you to classic and contemporary research in several different areas of memory, and will emphasize empirical, methodological, theoretical, and applied aspects of this research. The goals of the course are to introduce you to the major topics and themes explored in research on human memory, to familiarize you with the methodological approaches, and to provide opportunities for you to sharpen your skills at critically evaluating research, designing original studies, writing, and presenting your ideas.

Course requirements:

1. **Discussion Leader.** At each class meeting we will discuss a set of readings that address a particular topic in the study of human memory. One student will be responsible for leading the group’s discussion of these readings. As the discussion leader, you may want to do the following:
   a. Review the key points and main arguments that support them.
   b. Give special attention to points that you think are difficult, need clarification, or that you find particularly interesting or informative.
   c. Think of different ways to present the information, rather than simply presenting the material point-by-point as in the article.
   d. Because your classmates will have carefully read the articles too, they will benefit most if you are able to suggest novel ways to analyze or synthesize the information or arguments made in the readings.
   e. As part of your preparation, you may want to look up key studies mentioned in the article and provide additional detail when needed.

   Based on the size of the class, each student will lead the discussion once. Although students can use Powerpoint when leading the discussion, doing so is not required or expected. If you do elect to use Powerpoint, please bring your presentation to class on a thumb drive.

2. **Class Participation and Attendance.** All students are expected to have carefully read all of the assigned readings, and to participate thoughtfully in each discussion. Although all students are expected to be fully engaged in the discussion each and every class meeting, the quality of a student’s comments will be weighed more heavily than the quantity. This quality will be based on the depth, novelty, and relevance of your contributions, as well as your general engagement in the discussion overall. Attendance is mandatory as you must be present to participate. Missing a class will result in zero participation points for that class meeting.
3. **Article Reaction Papers.** To facilitate discussion, each student (except the Discussion Leader) will prepare a reaction paper to each of the assigned readings. The reaction paper should be brief—approximately 300-500 words—and succinctly summarize the main points of the article and its significance. It is imperative that you use your own words (do not simply reword the abstract). In addition, the paper should include your response to the article. You can do this in a number of ways: a) pose some questions that come to mind, b) suggest follow-up studies, c) identify potential confounds or alternative explanations for the findings in an empirical article, d) identify areas of confusion or conflict in the literature, or e) relate the article to your own areas of research. Be sure that each paper includes the complete APA-style reference for the article. Each paper will be evaluated according to the quality and originality of the thoughts presented. Each paper must be typed and handed in at the end of each class meeting. Because these papers are designed to stimulate discussion, they will not be accepted late, nor from students who were absent from class.

4. **Research Proposal.** A primary purpose of this course is to help you identify new ways of thinking about your own areas of interest. Thus, you will have the opportunity to integrate the materials of this course into your own research. You will need to think about a topic related to human memory that interests you, and prepare a research proposal that consists of at least one experiment designed to test a particular hypothesis. Be sure that your design is experimental in nature, in that you are manipulating some variable. Reference at least 5 relevant studies in the introduction, and include a relatively detailed method section describing the participants, procedure, measurements, and anything else necessary for the study. This paper should represent new thinking on the part of the student and should not overlap significantly with papers written for other classes or theses. The paper is not a report of other people’s research. Rather, it is a paper describing a phenomenon you want to examine, describing why this phenomenon is theoretically interesting, and then describing compelling ways that your idea can be tested. Your paper should be 10-12 pages long and conform to APA guidelines. Grading will be based on the originality of the idea, quality of writing, and proper use of APA style. The paper will be due April 29.

5. **Presentation.** Each student will present his or her research proposal to the class with a 10-15 minute conference-style presentation. Presentations will begin on April 29 and finish during finals week.

**Evaluation:** A total of 230 points is possible in the course:

- Article reviews and reactions: 65 points (up to 5 points each x 13 weeks)
- Class participation/attendance: 65 points (up to 5 points each x 13 weeks)
- Discussion Leaders: 20 points
- Research proposal: 60 points
- Presentation: 20 points
**Academic Integrity:** Please respect the work of others by giving them the credit they deserve. Plagiarism or cheating of any sort will not be tolerated and will be dealt with on an individual student basis. For more information about ISU’s policy on academic integrity, see: [http://www.lib.iastate.edu/commons/resources/facultyguides/plagiarism/dishonest.html](http://www.lib.iastate.edu/commons/resources/facultyguides/plagiarism/dishonest.html)

**Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability and think that you may need accommodations in this course, please let me know as soon as possible. Contact the Disability Resources Office and arrange to have a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) sent to me that specifies your disability and what accommodations you will need.

**Tentative Course Schedule:** Please note that this reading list is *somewhat* tentative. All of the finalized readings will be posted on Blackboard no later than two weeks prior to the relevant class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic and Assigned Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Course Overview</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>History, Methods, &amp; Perspectives on Memory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Confidence &amp; Memory</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4  **Metacognition I**


5  **Metacognition II**


6  **Memory Illusions**


7 Forgetting


8 Implicit Memory


9 Exceptional Memory


10 SPRING BREAK
11 **Methods for Improving Memory**


12 **Educational Applications of Memory Research**


13 **Myths About Memory**


14 **Eyewitness Memory**


Zaragoza, M. S., Belli, R. F., & Payment, K. E. (2007). Misinformation effects and the suggestibility of eyewitness memory. In M. Garry & H. Harlene (Eds.), *Do justice and let the sky fall: Elizabeth Loftus and her contributions to science, law, and academic freedom* (pp. 35-63). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.


15 **Recovered Memories**


16 **Wrap-up and Presentations**

Finals  **Presentations**