

PSYC SPECIAL TOPICS COURSES 2021-2022 – COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

[PSYC 398 Fall 2021 \(Dr Tusche\) – Laboratory in Decision Making](#)

This course examines experimental approaches to study social and strategic decision-making. It is a multi-disciplinary class for undergraduate students in psychology and economics. This course is for you if you are interested in learning more about powerful tools from neighboring research disciplines. A prime objective will be to examine the use of standardized experimental economic games to study social behavior and test psychological and economic theories. Topics will include lab-based approaches to study human altruism, the impact of social identity, social norms (e.g., reciprocity, fairness), and 'punishment' to reinforce norms. The course adopts a mixture of lectures and hands-on laboratory sessions and focuses on experiential learning on these topics (lab sessions involve R, no prior knowledge is required). Students will also work in cross-disciplinary teams to design their own experiment on a topic covered in class, write instructions, and develop an analysis plan. Assessments include five problem sets, a team presentation, peer feedback, and a final research paper.

[PSYC 420 Fall 2021 \(Dr Wammes\) - Research in Memory](#)

In this course you will gain an in-depth understanding of the literature studying memory from multiple methods, approaches and theoretical perspectives. You will learn about research exploring the mechanisms that allow us to learn and store memories, as well as how we retrieve them and update them as a result of new information. Along the way, you will gain a hands-on perspective about how experiments in this area are conceptualized, how one can build functional experiments using online tools, and how data are ultimately collected.

[PSYC 330 Winter 2022 \(Dr Bowie\) – Laboratory in Clinical Psyc](#)

The content will focus on clinical interviewing, psychological assessment, and basic therapy skills. The course will include a focus on theoretical underpinnings and research evidence for a scientifically informed practice of clinical psychology and demonstration of tools. Students will be able to determine the validity of clinical psychology tools and techniques and demonstrate capacity for foundational clinical psychology skills.

[PSYC 420 Winter 2022 \(Dr Smallwood\) - Research into spontaneous thought](#)

In this course you will gain an understanding of recent work on ongoing thought patterns as they occur in the laboratory and in daily life. The class will cover recent perspectives from psychology, as well as views from cognitive neuroscience on how the brain generates different ongoing thought patterns. You will gain an understanding of the methods that are used in these studies, as well as insight into how scientists conceptualize these important aspects of how we think and feel.

[PSYC 420 Winter 2022 \(Dr O'Connor\) - Face Perception](#)

In this course we will discuss the cognitive neuroscience of face perception. Topics will include the structural and functional mechanisms of face processing and recognition, cognitive processes such as

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attention allocation and memory, and dysregulation and dysfunction of face perception. Practical applications and social implications will be discussed.

PSYC 480 Winter 2022 (Dr Kilik) – Applied Clinical Psychology

This course is designed to orient students to the field and profession of clinical psychology. This course offers a survey of major topics in clinical psychology, including a brief history of clinical psychology; common theoretical approaches in assessment and intervention; ethical, professional and theoretical issues; and emerging trends. Students also will be briefly introduced to subspecialties within clinical psychology, such as clinical Neuropsychology. Professional activities of clinical psychologists (e.g., consultation) will also be discussed.

PSYC 485 Winter 2022 (Dr Tusche) – Decision -Making Motivations

This course examines fundamental theories and research findings on rational choice, drawing on research conducted by psychologists, economists, and biologists. We will compare basic principles of rationality with actual choice behavior and illustrate how the way that we think about decision problems systematically deviates from rationality. We will also discuss factors that underlie systematic biases in human decision-making and “irrational” behavior (including emotions and social aspects), “nudges” that utilize characteristics of the human choice architecture, and applications of JDM theories and results in various fields. Studying the principles of rational decision-making and systematic discrepancies with actual behavior is not only fascinating, but it is also actually practically useful, as it can help us to improve the quality of choices in our daily lives. Assessments include weekly reaction papers on the required reading, student presentations, and a final essay.