**PSY 4900: Psychology of Language**
**Spring 2010**
**Tuesday/Thursday 10:30 – 11:45**
**SS 343**

**Professor:** Dr. Aaron Ashley
**Office:** SS 360
**Office Hours:** MWF: 9:30 – 11:00 and by appointment
**Email:** AaronAshley@weber.edu **Phone:** (801) 626-8743

Please note: This email address is the best way to contact me. You should, however, only your Weber State email account to contact me, because the Weber State mail system is likely to quarantine your email, and I will probably not open email from or respond to non-Weber State email accounts.

I typically respond to email in the morning. This tactic keeps me from responding to email all day. I will certainly respond to your emails during office hours, but outside of those times it will most likely be the following morning.

**Text:** Carroll, D. W. (2007). *Psychology of Language, 5th*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth. In addition to the Carroll text, there will be a number of supplementary articles covered. These articles will be posted on WebCT.

**Course Description:** This course will provide a comprehensive overview of adult psycholinguistics, and will focus on both the cognitive and social aspect of spoken and written language.

**Class Format**: During about half of the classes, I'll lecture on the material from the Carroll text. Other class meetings will consist primarily of discussion of the assigned readings and how it relates to the text and other topics we're discussing. Each class will begin with a 20 – 30 minute presentation of the materials by the discussion leader. These presentations should include questions raised in the readings. The presentation will be followed by class discussion of the materials. If all students are not participating in the discussion, or if it appears that students are not completing the assigned readings, I'll begin giving quizzes on the assigned materials.

**Evaluation:**The final course grade will be based on performance on exams (400 points), class presentations (200 points), a term paper (400 points), and class participation (100 points). There are 1100 total points possible for the course, and your final grade will be based on the percentage of total points obtained relative to the total points available. The following percentage-letter grade equivalents shall apply.

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A** | **90 - 100%** | **C+** | **77 - 79%** | **D+** | **67 - 69%** |
| **B+** | **87 - 89%** | **C** | **73 - 76%** | **D** | **63 - 66%** |
| **B** | **83 - 86%** | **C-** | **70 - 72%** | **D-** | **60 - 62%** |
| **B-** | **80 - 82%** | **E** | **< 60%** | | |

Exams: There will be two exams (a midterm and a final) during the semester. Exams will be solely essay questions.

> Testing Center: All exams will be taken in the Social Science Testing Center, located in the basement of the Social Science Building (SS 036). In order to take an exam, you must show up at the center on the correct day(s), during testing center hours, and with a picture ID. You will not be allowed to take the exam without a picture ID, or if you come after the hours specified. You will also need a #2 pencil and 10¢ to purchase a scantron form.
>
> Make-up Exams: As you will have a window of time (3 days) in which to complete each exam **make-up exams will be subject to a penalty of 10 points per day (including weekends and holidays). There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this policy!**

Class Presentations: In addition to participating in class discussions, you will be required to give several class presentations during the semester. These presentations will cover material from the supplementary readings.

Papers: During the course of the semester, you will be required to write a term paper reviewing some aspect of psycholinguistics. A topic proposal with working reference section will be due **Thursday February 11** (50 pts). The proposal should be two to three pages describing your paper topic based on your readings up to that point. You will need to include references for at least five sources that you have read on the topic. Obviously, you will be expected to be more comprehensive in your readings once you've had your topic approved. You will also be required to review and have your paper be reviewed by two classmates before the final draft is due. When you hand in your paper you should also hand in the reviews, both those you have written and those for your paper. You will be given a grade on your paper as well as on the review letters that you write (50 pts each). Therefore, the paper process will be as follows. You will give a **completed draft** of your paper to two classmates and me on **Thursday March 11** (150 pts). Those individuals in turn will give you their papers to review. You will have two weeks to review the papers and write a letter with suggestions and comments. Reviewed papers and letters will be returned on **Thursday March 25** (100 pts). Once you have received the review letters you will have approximately three weeks to make changes to your paper before handing it in to be graded. Final drafts will be due on **Thursday April 15** (100 pts).

Papers will be approximately 10 typed pages of actual text in APA format; this number does not include the title or reference pages. **Note that a letter grade will be deducted for each 24-hour period any part of the paper is late.** Review letters should be addressed to the person receiving the letter, either the person whose paper it is or to the instructor. Reviews should focus on content, style, and organization. An example of the format of the review letter will be given out in class.

Class Participation (100 pts): As a student in this class, it is your responsibility to be an active participant. By active participant, I mean that it is your responsibility to be in class (**on-time**), prepared (i.e., you have read the assigned materials), ready to participate in class discussion (and to do so), and behave in a manner representative of an academic environment (see Course Policies and Expectations below).

## Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance: The student is responsible for all lecture materials and announcements made in class whether you are present or not. I do not take attendance on a daily basis; however, I believe that class attendance plays an integral part in learning the material. Although there is overlap between the material in the text and that presented in class, class discussions help reinforce the learning of the material. Additionally, participation in class discussion will constitute a large proportion of the class participation grade. Also, some exam items will tap only material presented in either class or in the text. Therefore, it is to your advantage to attend every class and to obtain class notes when circumstances do not permit. If you must miss class, it is suggested that you read the assigned materials and obtain the class notes from a classmate.

If you must miss class, **do not** contact me with questions about what was covered in class. At this point, you are to obtain the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of four of your class mates. These are the people that you should contact in case of a class absence. Only after contacting these individuals, obtaining class notes, and preparing the assigned materials are you to contact me. I'm happy to help you learn the material, but only after you have taken the time to prepare and review what you have missed.

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone:_____

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone:_____

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone:_____

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone:_____

**Classroom Courtesy:**

**Cell phones/ laptops/ other electronic devices:** Please leave **all** electronic devices turned off during class. I do not want to see any cell phones or laptops out during the class period. You can text message and email your friends during the other twenty-two hours and forty-five minutes of the day, but not during this class. This behavior is not only rude, but is also extremely disruptive. A first warning is forgetfulness. A second warning (and subsequent warnings) will result in five points off your final total points for each occurrence.

**Discriminatory Harassment:** Weber State University is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of discrimination based upon race, color, ethnic background, national origin, religion, creed, age, lack of American citizenship, disability, status of veteran of the Vietnam era, sexual orientation or preference or gender, including sexual/gender harassment. Such an environment is a necessary part of a healthy learning and working atmosphere because such discrimination undermines the sense of human dignity and sense of belonging of all people in the environment. Thus, students in this class should practice professional deportment, and avoid treating others in a manner that is demeaning or derisive in any respect.

While diverse viewpoints and opinions are welcome in this class, in expressing them, we will practice mutual deference so important in the world of work. Thus, while I encourage you to share your opinions, when appropriate, you will be expected to do so in a manner that is respectful towards others, even when you disagree with them.

If you have questions regarding the university's policy against discrimination and harassment you may contact the university's AA/EO office (626-6239) or visit its website: http://departments.weber.edu/aaeeo/ .

**Academic dishonesty policy:** Weber State University imposes specific disciplinary actions in response to incidents of academic misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, etc.). These actions may include admonition, failing grade, failure of course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal. The specified policies can be found in the WSU Student Code at http://documents.weber.edu/ppm/6-22.htm . Cheating will not be tolerated in this or any class at WSU. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing on any assignment will result is a grade of E. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism, if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism ask. Ignorance of the law is no excuse.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**
Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

Weber State University policies regarding Services for Students with Disabilities are available on the http://weber.edu/ssd website.

**A note on grades:** is expected that you will spend a substantial amount of time outside of class going through the material and contemplating the concepts discussed. If you expect to pass this course, you should be willing to spend an hour per day outside of class going through the material. If you would like to make an A in this course, then you should be willing to put in two hours per day outside of class. I would highly suggest forming a study group with other students with whom you can discuss material. Again, this course will require you to put in a substantial number of hours outside of the class room; simply coming to class and reading the book will not ensure a passing grade.

## TENATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Jan. 5 | Introduction | Syllabus |
| Jan. 7 | Intro to Psycholinguistics | Carroll 1-16, |
| Jan. 12 | | Miller 1-19, LF 269-271 |
| Jan. 14 | Cognitive Processes | Carroll 45-66 |
| Jan. 19 | What is Language? | Carroll 17-44 |
| Jan. 21 | | Clark 3-25, LF 8-13 |
| Jan. 26 | Biology of Language | Carroll 353-392 |
| Jan. 28 | | Beeman & Chiarell, Hauser et al. |
| Feb. 2 | Language Perception | Carroll 68-101 |
| Feb. 4 | | LF 41-60 |
| Feb. 9 | Lexicon | Carroll 102-129 |
| Feb. 11 | Sentence Comprehension | Carroll 130-156 |
| Feb. 16 | | Carpenter et al. & Ferreira et al. |
| Feb. 18 | Discourse Comprehension | Carroll 157-190 |
| Feb. 23 | | Graesser, Millis, & Zwaan |
| Feb. 25 | **NO CLASS** | **EXAM 1** |
| Mar. 2 | Language Production | Carroll 192-223 |
| Mar. 4 | | Dell & Reich |
| Mar. 9 | Conversational Interaction | Carroll 224-249 |
| Mar. 11 | | Holtgraves 89-149 |
| **Mar. 16** | **NO CLASS** | **Spring Break** |
| **Mar. 18** | **NO CLASS** | **Spring Break** |
| Mar. 23 | | Clark 92-121 |
| Mar. 25 | Early Language Acquisition | Carroll 250-282 |
| Mar. 30 | | LF 290-313, Pinker 262-296 |
| Apr. 1 | Later Language Acquisition | Carroll 283-323 |
| Apr. 6 | Processes of Language Acquisition | Carroll 324-351 |
| Apr. 8 | | LF 283-289 & Saffran |
| Apr. 13 | Language & Thought | Carroll 394-420 |
| Apr. 15 | | Pinker 55-82 & Hardin & Banaji |
| **Apr. 22** | | **EXAM 2** |

* Class attendance is required during class presentations. Tardiness or absence during class presentations will result in a zero for class participation grade.

## Course Reading List


Beeman, M. J., & Chiarell, C. (1998). Complementary right- and left-hemisphere language comprehension. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 7*, 2-8.

Carpenter, P. A., Miyake, A., & Just, M. A. (1995). Language comprehension: Sentence and discourse processing. *Annual Review of Psychology, 46*, 91-121.

Carroll, D. W. (2007). *Psychology of Language* (5th edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Clark, H. H. (1996). *Using Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dell, G. S., & Reich, P. A. (1981). Stages in sentence production: An analysis of speech error data. *Journal of Verbal Learning & Verbal Behavior, 20*, 611-629.

Ferreira, F., Bailey, K., & Ferraro, V. (2002). Good-enough representations in language comprehension. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 11-15.

Graesser, A. C., Millis, K., & Zwaan, R. A. (1997). Discourse comprehension. *Annual Review of Psychology, 48,* 163-190.

Hardin, C., & Banaji, M. R. (1993). The influence of language on thought. *Social Cognition, 11*, 277-309.

Hauser, M., Chomsky, N., & Fitch, T. (2002). The faculty of language: What it is, who has it, and how did it evolve? *Science, 298,* 1569-1579.

Holtgraves, T. M. (2002). *Language as social action: Social psychology and language use.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Miller, G. A. (1991). *The science of words*. New York: Scientific American Library.

Pinker, S. (1994). *The language instinct: How the mind creates language*. New York: Morrow.

Saffran, J. R. (2003). Statistical language learning: Mechanisms and constraints. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12*, 110-114.

Tserdanelis, G., & Wong, W. Y. P. (Eds.). (2004). *Language Files: Materials for an introduction to language and linguistics (9th ed.).* Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press.