Theory & Evidence in Cognitive and Neuroscience
Psychology 2265

Speakers/Syllabus

Professors: Alfonso Caramazza & Marc Hauser

Speakers:
Karen Wynn (karen.wynn@yale.edu)
Elissa Newport (newport@bcs.rochester.edu)
Dan Simons (dsimons@wjh.harvard.edu)
Antonio Damasio (antonio-damasio@uiowa.edu)
Mike Tarr (Michael_Tarr@Brown.EDU)
Jerry Kagan (jk@wjh.harvard.edu)

Date	***Topic***
September 19	Class mechanics, general discussion of issues
September 26	What is evidence? What is an assumption? What's a theory?
October 3	Discussion of Damasio on Emotion
October 10	Antonio Damasio on Emotion; colloquium at 5:00pm
October 17	Karen Wynn
October 24	Class discussion of arguments against Karen Wynn
October 31	Mike Tarr
November 7	Class discussion of arguments against Mike Tarr
November 14	Jerry Kagan
November 21	Class discussion of arguments against Speaker D
November 28	Dan Simons
December 5	Class discussion of arguments against Dan Simons
December 12	Elissa Newport
December 19	Class discussion of arguments against Elissa Newport
January 16	Final exam paper due

Course Blurb:
A challenge for all sciences is to determine what constitutes a reasonable argument based on the data at hand. In this seminar, we explore the kinds of assumptions and theoretical accounts offered by the practitioners of cognitive science and neuroscience. In particular, we attempt to lay bare through a case-study approach with prominent examples how the field of cognitive science/neuroscience is practiced and how arguments are developed from the existing findings. We examine such problems as: the mental imagery debate, how an infant's looks tell us about its thoughts, the extent to which evolutionary theories of human thought can be tested, how

neuroimaging data inform our understanding of mental representation, what inferences can be made from the study of the performance of damaged systems, the role of computational modeling in theory evaluation and development, and so on.

Readings:
Articles will be left for photocopying next to the mailboxes on the 9th floor of William James Hall. There will be three copies. Please make a copy and bring back immediately. In addition to the general readings distributed at the start of the seminar, each invited speaker will provide 1-2 articles based on their own work, together with 1-2 articles from researchers who disagree with their position.

Assignments:
Your grade will be determined on the basis of three components: 1) Class participation (25%); 2) Write-up of assigned presentation (25%) – specifically, the presenters will write up the discussion pre-, during, and post-speaker presentation. The essence of these write-ups is to provide a synopsis of the key arguments, ideas and discussion points that have been raised during the meeting. These will be due the week after your presentation; 3) A final exam essay (50%) due on the first day of exams (January 16) by 5:00pm; we will not accept late papers.

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