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**Psychology 440**  
**Language and reasoning, Winter 2021**  
**REMOTE ASYNCRONOUS VERSION**

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**Virtual office hours:** Tuesday, 3 pm – 5 pm

**Link info (be aware that clicking this will basically drop you straight into the meeting):**

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**Required Texts**

There is no textbook for this class. All readings for the course will consist of journal articles, review articles, or book chapters, available on eReserves (which is accessible via onQ). Please see the **Reading list** for a complete list of references for the readings, and please see the **Class Schedule** for the weeks corresponding to those readings.

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**Course Overview**

This course will explore the science behind how seemingly-innocuous changes in language can impact how people think about social concepts. For instance, do metaphorical frames impact how we think about diseases (such as cancer and COVID-19)? Do subtle variations in wording (such as talking about causing vs producing) influence how we view other people? This course sheds light on how language shapes the mental models that we use to understand and reason about complex social phenomena.

This course is structured as if it were a guided reading and research group. The priorities are to acclimate students to classic and modern research on the link between language and reasoning and to build students' abilities to develop their own empirical research skills related to this area. There are no tests, no lectures, and because of remote delivery, there are no in person discussions. Additionally, in an effort

majority of the coursework is comprised of weekly readings and weekly discussion with classmates about the readings via the onQ discussions forum. Toward the end of the term, each student will develop and present an original research idea related to language and reasoning, provide feedback upon one project of the course).

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**Intended Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, a successful student should be able to:

1. Understand, evaluate, and discuss with classmates major constructs in language and reasoning, such as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, conceptual metaphors, and distributed semantics
2. Develop and present an original research project proposal related to language and reasoning
3. Provide constructive feedback
4. Write an APA-style proposal of the original research project

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## Assessments and Grading Scheme

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Participation will be graded on the basis of effort to integrate course material (e.g., you make reference to course readings, outside readings, or readings from past or present Psychology or related disciplines), engagement (evidence that you are responding to other people), and critical thinking. Each post will be graded on a 5-point scale and added so that your total score per week will be  $X/10$ . For Content weeks (Weeks 1–10), I am only counting your highest 8 weeks' scores. Your lowest 2 week scores will be dropped (i.e., you can take two weeks off). These dropped week scores will not be reflected in your course grade.

**Presentation weeks (Weeks 11 – 12) –**

If you have any questions about your project topic and whether it fits, feel free to email me and ask. For tips on developing proposals for research projects (and writing about them), see <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and->

Note, videos submitted after the grace period will not be accepted. Presentation videos comprise the content for the last two weeks of the course, so videos that are submitted late cannot be used as content for that week and compromise the purpose of the assignment.

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**Assessment Details:****Final proposal – 40%**

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Finally, to cap off the course, students will submit a written APA style research proposal of their project (10 pages minimum, double-spaced, times new roman font, 1 inch margins). This paper should contain many of the same elements as the proposal outline and proposal video presentation but written in APA format (title page, abstract, introduction, method, expected results, discussion, and references). However, because those assessments are focused on the methods and results, the paper should include a more extensive literature review of past research relevant to your topic and theoretical rationale. More details on the paper and the rubric for grading it will be made available in advance in onQ.

This paper will be due during the final exam period (on the date set for the final exam for the course) and worth 40% of the final course grade. For more details on writing in APA style, see the follow link ([https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/apa\\_sample\\_paper.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_sample_paper.html))

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**Location and timing of final examination**

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The final exam will be the final research project proposal paper and will be due on the final exam date scheduled by the Faculty of Arts and Science. The exam dates for each Term are listed in the Faculty of posted via SOLUS. Students should delay finalizing any travel plans until AFTER the examination schedule has been posted. The final research project proposal paper due date will NOT be moved or deferred to accommodate employment, travel/holiday plans, or flight reservations.

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**Diversity and Inclusiveness**

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In an ideal world, science would be objective. However, much of science is subjective and is historically

I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it. (Again, anonymous feedback is always an option.)

As a participant in course discussions, you should also strive to honour the diversity of your classmates.

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### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

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Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Wellness Services (SWS) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the Student Wellness website at: <http://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services/>

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### **Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances**

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to students experiencing  
extenuating circumstances that are beyond their control and are interfering with their ability to complete academic requirements related to a course for a short period of time. The Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances is available at <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.uslclwww/files/files/policies/senateandtru>

include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Relevant to academic integrity is plagiarism, intended or not. Regardless of how and where you retrieve information, the principles of academic integrity apply with regard to plagiarism. Please visit these helpful websites to help you make sure that you are able to write things in your own words:



In extreme circumstances, the syllabus and/or course schedule may be modified at my discretion. I will announce all changes via onQ.

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### **Late policies**

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Because this is a discussion-based course, many assessments are designed to promote/facilitate discussion among the class (namely, the discussion posts and the proposal presentation). In these circumstances, late submissions deprive classmates of the opportunity to respond or are akin to making a contribution after everyone else has moved on to a new topic. This is the reasoning behind the following policies.

**Forum discussion.** Each week, forum posts will be due by Friday at 2 pm (EST). There is a 72 hour grace period for forum posts, such that late forum posts will be accepted up until Monday at 2 pm (EST) the following week, but let me know in advance if you are taking it. Additionally, in line with universal design learning principals, each student is permitted two penalty-free weeks off from forum discussions (excluding presentation weeks). So, two weeks (out of eight weeks) do not count toward your course grade, washing away those zeros.

**Proposal presentation outline.** The outline is due by March 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm. There is an allowable 72 hour grace period (which must be requested in advance of the due date). The purpose of the outline is primarily to nudge students into thinking about their presentations early, so the outline is graded purely pass/fail. If you submit it by the due date (or the grace period if it is requested), you get full points regardless of the quality of the outline. Outlines submitted outside of the due date (or grace period if it is requested) will not be accepted.

**Proposal presentation videos.** The presentation video is due by March 26<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm. There is an allowable 72 hour grace period (which must be

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## Class Schedule

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Week	Topic	Readings
<b>Week 1: Jan 11</b>	Welcome	Boroditsky (2011)
<b>Week 2: Jan 18</b>	Intro to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis	Whorf (1939) Levinson (1997)
<b>Week 3: Jan 25</b>	Sapir-Whorf and colors	Gilbert et al (2008) Regier & Kay (2009) Winawer et al (2007) Lupyan et al (2020)
<b>Week 4: Feb 1</b>	Sapir-Whorf and time	Boroditsky (2001) Casasanto (2008) Boroditsky et al (2011) Fuhrman & Boroditsky (2010)
<b>Week 5: Feb 8</b>	Intro to conceptual metaphors	Landau et al (2010) Boroditsky & Ramscar (2002) Thibodeau & Borditsky (2011) Landau (2018)
<b>READING WEEK: Feb 15</b>		
<b>Week 6: Feb 22</b>	Metaphors and sensory states	Meier et al (2007) Ackerman et al (2010) Williams & Bargh (2008) Hauser & Schwarz (2020)
<b>Week 7: March 1</b>	Metaphoric frames and health	Hauser & Schwarz (2015) Hauser & Schwarz (2020) Hauser et al (2017) Hendricks et al (2018)
<b>Week 8: March 8</b>	Distributional semantics and collocation	Hauser & Schwarz (2016) Hauser & Schwarz (2018) Stubbs (1995) Xiao & McEnery (2006)
<b>Week 9: March 15</b>	Distributional semantics and word embeddings	Alammar (2018) Landauer & Dumais (1997) Lupyan & Lewis (2017) Thompson et al (2020)
<b>Week 10: March 22</b>	Distributional semantics and bias	Lupyan & Lewis (2020) Caliskan et al (2017) Caliskan & Lewis (2020) Garg et al (2018)
<b>Week 11: March 29</b>	Presentation week 1	View other student presentations
<b>Week 12: April 5</b>	Presentation week 2	View other student presentations



- Williams, L. E., & Bargh, J. A. (2008). Experiencing physical warmth promotes interpersonal warmth. *Science*, 322(5901), 606-607.
- Hauser, D. J., & Schwarz, N. (2020). Situated embodiment: When physical weight does and does not inform judgments of importance. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 1948550620971968.

Week 7, March 1: Metaphoric frames and health

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