

**PSCH 350: Sensation and Perception**  
**University of Illinois at Chicago, Fall 2021**

**Lecture:** T/TR 11–12:15  
Synchronous Online

**Instructor:** Alexander P. Demos, PhD  
Email: [ademos@uic.edu](mailto:ademos@uic.edu)  
Virtual Office hours: *By appointment*  
Office: 1018A BSB

**Teaching Assistants:**  
Emma Ning, [yning7@uic.edu](mailto:yning7@uic.edu),  
Virtual Office hours: *TBD*  
Pauline Levy, [plevy2@uic.edu](mailto:plevy2@uic.edu)

**Course Description and Objectives:** This course will provide you with an overview of how people make sense of sensory input--in particular, light and sound (particularly music). We will compare sensation and perception across several domains, including vision, audition, touch, olfaction, and taste. Critical to the understanding of sensation and perception is having an understanding of the methodologies and experimental procedures used to examine the issues. This course will explore these methodologies, from traditional measures like psychophysics and signal-detection analysis to newer cognitive neuroscience approaches. We will also discuss the disorders and diseases of sensation and perception. Here we will examine peripheral problems from central problems and how these problems differ.

**Required Material:** Schwartz, B. L., & Krantz, J. H. (2017). *Sensation and perception* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. Student study site: <http://edge.sagepub.com/schwartz2e/>. Given you are at a “Research 1 University” and your instructor and TAs are researchers, we will also read a few scientific journal articles to talk about the cutting edge research in the domain the instructor studies (sensorimotor systems and music perception). Please give yourself enough time to read them before class as might seem short, but they can be challenging to read.

**Exams:** We will have 6 short exams (the lowest score is dropped). They require you to answer multiple-choice questions and maybe short answer. Exams will be short (think extended quizzes), and you will be given a 48 hour window to take them (due by midnight). We will review them in class. **Thus, there are no make-up exams for any reasons** (see *Excuses* section for the one exception and those rules). If you miss an exam, it will be your lowest exam score (0) and count as dropped. If you miss more than 1 exams, you will be required to write a 10-page APA style paper on an advanced topic of Dr. Demos’ choosing to replace that particular exam (for example, review the latest research on absolute pitch perception).

**Class Music Perception Project:** Project will require you to do a perceptual learning study (on music) and keep an online diary of your abilities and generate a report. We will be testing your perceptual abilities at various times in the semester (or you will be asked to it for homework). Details will be supplied during the semester as the scope of the project and grading. *Late projects will not be accepted.*

**Assignments & Experiments:** Specific short assignments or experiments will be assigned in class completion and for homework. Instructions and due dates will be given for each. These will not be accepted late, especially if we need the data for an in-class demonstration.

**If something is wrong on blackboard, you must let us know ASAP. If you wait until the end of the semester to argue we will ignore your requests, and the grade will stand.**

<b>Grading breakdown:</b>		<b>Letter grades:</b>	
6 exams (lowest dropped)	50%	A	90-100
Experiment participation (lowest 2 dropped)	20%	B	80-89
Class project	30%	C	70-79
		D	60-69
		F	0-59
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>		

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**Email:** When emailing Dr. Demos or Ms. Ning, please indicate the course number and a brief description of the issue in the subject line of all course-related emails. However, before emailing, please check this syllabus, the information on the Blackboard course site, and previous emails you have received to see if your question has already been answered. While we will respond to emails (within 48 hours), do not expect a reply to questions that have already been addressed.

Questions concerning learning the material (for example, “I don’t understand concept X”) should not be emailed. You should come to see Dr. Demos or the TAs during office hours. Office hours will be posted, and if you cannot make them, we can arrange another time. Questions concerning missing grade assignments, problems getting experiments to work, etc. can be directed towards the TAs.

**Attendance:** Attending lecture will make the readings clearer, and I will be giving examples, doing demonstrations, engaging you in group work, so attendance will ensure you do well in the class. **Not all topics we cover appear in the book.** Coming to class is a necessity, but I will not require it. We also reserve the right to give unannounced extra credit for in-class assignments or unannounced pop-quizzes. **There are no makeups for missing these any of these in-class opportunities or for missing class demonstrations, projects, etc. that occur during class.**

**Excuses:** Disasters happen, and normal life gets disrupted. It happens to all of us. This is why you can drop two assignments/homework and 1 exam. Every situation might be legitimate, but I am not going to play judge so no matter your reason do not ask for your excuse to override the established policy\*. \*The two exceptions are religious holidays or university-sponsored things (away games) on the days. See me one week BEFORE so we can work out an alternative. AFTER is too late cause you should have known it was coming.

**Blackboard:** I will post relevant information about the assignments and other course information on our website. It is your responsibly to check it before coming to class. Please be sure to update Blackboard with your UIC e-mail address. If you fail to check your e-mail, or if e-mail sent to you is returned as undeliverable, you are still responsible for the content of that e-mail. Note: This is not an online class, so announcements made in class are not always going to be duplicated on blackboard.

**Academic Integrity & Class Conduct:** Don’t be a twit and tweet during class. Distracting me or your fellow class members with your social media nonsense will result in public embarrassment (and maybe doing an in-class presentation on the miss-information effect). You have been warned. There will be no tolerance for plagiarism or cheating. In this course, plagiarism/cheating will result in loss of credit for the exam or assignment and/or suspension from the university (see *Student Disciplinary Policy* for what qualities are academic integrity: <http://dos.uic.edu/docs/Student%20Disciplinary%20Policy.pdf>).

**Academic Integrity & Class Conduct:** There will be no tolerance for plagiarism or cheating. In this course, plagiarism/cheating will result in loss of credit for the exam or assignment and further, more serious, consequences (see *Student Disciplinary Policy for what qualities are academic integrity:* <http://dos.uic.edu/docs/Student%20Disciplinary%20Policy.pdf>). ***The goal of the class (and graduate school in general) is to learn the material because you will need to it and cheating to get an A is counterproductive to your goals. Graduate students have many obligation, but do you best to be on time to class and ready to start (so be logged into zoom at least 5 mins before class officially starts).***

**Students with Disabilities:** UIC is committed to full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of university life. If you face or anticipate disability-related barriers while at UIC, please connect with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at [drc.uic.edu](http://drc.uic.edu), via email at [drc@uic.edu](mailto:drc@uic.edu), or call (312) 413-2183 to create a plan for reasonable accommodations. In order to receive accommodations, you will need to disclose the disability to the DRC, complete an interactive registration process with the DRC, and provide me with a Letter of Accommodation (LOA). Upon receipt of a LOA, I will gladly work with you and the DRC to implement approved accommodations.

**Religious Holidays:** Students who wish to observe their religious holidays shall notify the instructor by the tenth day of the semester of the date when they will be absent unless the religious holiday is observed on or before the tenth day of the

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semester and remind the instructor five days before the absence. We will discuss a reasonable accommodation for the missed class.

**Privacy Notification and Policy for Video Recording of Synchronous Class Sessions:**

We will be recording the class sessions, or portions of the class, for students who are unable to attend synchronously. The recording feature for others is disabled so that no one else will be able to record this session through Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate, Webex, or Echo360. Recording by other means is not permitted. The recorded class sessions will be posted on our Blackboard class website unless otherwise notified.

If you have privacy concerns and do not wish to appear in the recording, turn OFF your video and notify me in writing (via email) prior to the next class session. If you prefer to use a pseudonym instead of your name, please let me know what name you will be using, so that I can identify you during the class session. If you would like to ask a question, you may do so privately through the chat feature by addressing your question to me, or another private method, which we will agree upon in advance of class. If you have questions or concerns about this video recording policy, please contact me before the end of the first week of class.

**Getting Help:** As the semester progresses, I expect you will need help. *Do not delay in-class seeking help. The longer you stay confused the harder it will be to catch up.* The TAs and I are here to help you as much as we can, and if there is a problem, it is always easier to address it *before* the fact rather than after it.

**The Academic Center for Excellence** can help if you feel you need more individualized instruction in reading and/or writing; study skills, time management, etc. phone (312) 413-0031.

**Counseling Services** are available for all UIC students. You may seek free and confidential services from the Counseling Center <[www.counseling.uic.edu](http://www.counseling.uic.edu)>. The Counseling Center is located in the Student Services Building; you may contact them at (312) 996-3490. In addition to offering counseling services, the Counseling Center also operates the InTouch Crisis Hotline from 6:00 p.m.-10:30 p.m. They offer support and referrals to callers, as well as telephone crisis interventions; please call (312) 996-5535.

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**Tentative Weekly Schedule (This is subject to change and I will change it!)**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Exams</b>
1	8/24 8/26	Overview History + Psychophysics & Methods (I)	Ch 1 (1-13) Ch 1 (13-24) + Ch 2 (27 – 35)	
2	8/31 9/2	Psychophysics & Methods (II) Special Topic: <i>Attunement &amp; Affordance</i>	Ch 2 (36- 45) Greeno, 1994	
3	9/7 9/9	<b>Class Music Project Day</b> Vision (Eye) 1	<i>Papers to be assigned</i> Ch 3 (53-76)	E1 Due
4	9/14 9/16	Vision (Brain V1) Vision (Brain V2+)	Ch 4 (91-105) Ch 4 (106-115)	
5	9/21 9/23	<i>Catch-up or Experiment</i> Object Perception	Ch 5 (123-142)	E2 Due
6	9/28 9/30	Color Depth and Size	Ch 6 (151-178) Ch 7 (187-218)	
7	10/5 10/7	<i>Class Discussion Topic: Vision in the Virtual World</i> <b>Class Music Project Day</b>	<i>Reading to be assigned</i>	E3 Due
8	10/12 10/14	Action Visual Attention	Ch 8 (227-232; 242-251) Ch 9 (255-272; 282-284)	
9	10/19 10/21	<b>Mini-Project: Gorillas in our midst I</b> <b>Mini-Project: Gorillas in our midst II</b>		
10	10/26 10/28	Sound and its Percepts Ear, Acoustics Hearing Brain	Ch 10 (289-311) Ch 11 (317-335)	E4 Due
11	11/2 11/4	Ecological Approach to Sound Speech	<i>Papers to be assigned</i> Ch 12 (341-357)	
12	11/9 11/11	<i>Class Discussion Topic: Hearing in the Virtual World</i> Music Perception I	Ch 13 (whole chapter)	E5 Due
13	11/16 11/18	Music Perception II Music Perception III (Absolute Pitch)	<i>Papers to be assigned</i> <i>Papers to be assigned</i>	
14	11/23 11/25	<i>Special Topic: Social Perceptions</i> <i>Turkey Day</i>	<i>Papers to be assigned</i>	
15	11/30 12/2	Smell & Taste <b>Class Music Project Wrap up II</b>	Ch 15 (whole chapter)	E6 Given