Instructor: Lisa Scott, Ph.D.  
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Graduate TA: Jaxenne Daniels  
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Office Hours: 10-11 Mondays or by appointment  
e-mail: jaxdaniels@ufl.edu

Time: Thursdays Periods 5-7 (11:45-2:45 pm) end at 2:30, one 15 minute break. Days when student presentations are scheduled may go until 2:45.  
Place: Florida Gym 0260

Purpose and Goals  
Scientists often find that they need to discuss complicated scientific findings in a clear, concise manner with both the academic community and members of the public. This class is designed to hone scientific presentation and communication skills and will prepare students to better communicate scientific information to those inside and outside their immediate field. The ability to convey complex concepts effectively can help scientists successfully engage in a variety of public and professional interactions, including conducting media interviews, writing grant proposals, discussing ideas with students, testifying before Congress, or participating in a public forum.

TED is a nonprofit organization devoted to “Ideas Worth Spreading.” Prominent researchers conducting exciting research are invited to give these talks every year and they are posted on the web for the public to view and learn from. In this class we will watch 1-2 TED talks related to Psychology each week. We will read articles by the TED presenter(s) or other authors on related topics and will discuss the work. The specific topics/talks will cover topics in developmental psychology, neuroscience, social psychology, cognitive psychology, education, and clinical psychology. Our discussions will not only focus on the academic work and research findings of the presenter but we will also talk extensively how to give effective and engaging talks and presentations and how to communicate your specific research to a broader audience. Assignments will include short weekly reaction papers to the assigned reading, a press release on your own research finding/project you are involved in or research proposal, several short in-class presentations, an NIH style “specific aims” section for a grant proposal, and each student will give a presentation- similar to a TED talk in structure and format- at the end of the semester.

Course Readings:  
• Each week additional assigned readings for the class will be available on E-Learning-Canvas: http://elearning.ufl.edu/
• These readings are listed below by week. If a reading does not show up for some reason, all of them are available online and a search through UF’s library should get you to them.

Course Requirements:
• Extend breadth of knowledge of psychology, including theoretical perspectives, research findings, and applications [assessed through short reaction paper assignments and in-class discussions]
• Engender the ability to read and critique psychological articles and presentations by researchers in the field [assessed through writing assignments and in-class discussions].
• Improve skill in presenting data to a variety of audiences [assessed through in-class presentations]
• Improve skill in oral presentation in a variety of contexts [assessed through in-class presentations and critique of presentations].
• Improve skill in written expression [assessed through short writing assignments].
• Foster critical thinking and creativity [assessed through writing assignments, in-class discussions, and presentations].
• Foster and improve skills in providing others with feedback on their work [assessed through in class group work and peer evaluations].

All assignments need to be submitted in word or power point format and must be submitted online via CANVAS. For all assignments, please include your full name on the assignment at the top and include your last name in the saved file name. If I download the files this makes it easier for me to match files with people.

A major goal of this course is to sharpen your skills in preparing and giving presentations to a wide variety of audiences. I have tried to design a course that will enable you to continually hone your presentations skills. High value will be placed on students actively participating in discussion and critiques and completing short writing assignments and presentations. You can display your mastery of the material in multiple ways:

1. Participation and Class Reaction Papers (10%) Please print out and bring your reaction paper to class each week or bring them on your mobile device or laptop. The course will be taught in seminar-discussion format, therefore, it is expected that class members will have completed the assigned readings prior to class, attend each session, and actively participate in discussions during class. Seminar members will be asked to submit a short- approximately ½ page, single spaced-reaction paper with comments, questions and/or observations based on the assigned readings that could serve as points of discussion for the class. For empirical or review papers, you should go beyond summarizing the paper or the results and begin to ask probing questions, to propose what might come next, to compare or contrast it to another paper or research result, or to highlight important implications of the work. For weeks when we read articles about giving a good talk or preparing a presentation please focus your reaction papers on the major important points or take-home messages. What did you learn from the article that you might incorporate into your own presentations? Do you agree or disagree strongly with anything the author said? Can you give an example of a principle or topic that the author proposes? What points would you incorporate into your own talks or presentations?

These assignments are to be submitted once a week to the instructor via Canvas by 12:00 pm on Wednesdays before class. You will be expected to complete 4 of the 5 assigned reaction papers. You can miss 1 reaction paper without it affecting your grade. No reaction paper will be required
on weeks when you are assigned to present or another written assignment is due. However, you are still required to complete the reading and participate in discussions.

2. **Abstract Assignment ~ Due: September 13th (5%)** Please bring enough copies for everyone in your group and submit on Canvas by September 12th at 12 pm. Often academics need to write abstracts to summarize their presentation at a conference or for an invited talk or job talk. Please prepare a 250-word abstract for the purpose of presenting your work. See links below for guidance.

The abstract must be on a current or previous (unpublished) research project (or set of projects) you have been involved in OR a proposed research project that you would like to conduct. You MUST cite and describe previous work that led to the research you are working on or proposing (citations in APA format). You MUST include a sentence that suggests future work (the next assignment will be based on this). You will continue to write and present about this project throughout the semester so please choose wisely! Abstract examples will be posted on canvas.

APA format Cheat Sheet: http://www.library.kent.edu/files/APACheatSheet.pdf
APA Formatting Guide: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

3. **Press Release Assignment~ (Due: September 27th, 10%)** Please bring enough copies for your group and submit on Canvas by 12 pm on September 26th. Researchers often communicate their research findings through press releases or by talking with the media. Please write a 1-page press release about the project(s) you have chosen to work on for this class. Things to keep in mind:

1) Think about the public you are seeking to reach through the news story: what readership do you want to reach, and what would you like them to do as a consequence of receiving this information.
2) Think of 2 or 3 key messages that you want to convey (and you think the authors want to convey), write these down and practice how to communicate them in simple terms.
3) Be aware of the limitations of the data and overstepping what the data allow you say, but...It’s also okay to speculate: you can share a hunch, just be clear that it is a hunch or a hypothesis.
4) As one media specialist once said to me, to have a story, you need a fact, a quote, and a comparison (you should quote yourself or another senior person working on the project).

Grades will be based on the following: 1) Clearly stating your main question, 2) describing why it’s interesting, 3) describing previous research that led to this question, and 4) clearly describing your methods, and 5) stating your hypotheses (for ongoing work) or results (for completed work).

Here are two examples:


3. **NIH Research Proposal Specific Aims- 1 Page ~ (Due October 18th in class please submit on Canvas by 12 pm on the Wednesday before class, 15%)** Other members of the class will read and give you feedback on this assignment and you will have an opportunity to revise and resubmit by the following week. Please bring enough copies for your group. Please write a 1
page NIH style specific aims page of a proposed project that follows-up the project that you summarized in your abstract assignment (i.e., the next step for those presenting on current projects and the proposed work for those presenting proposals). Use the worksheet on Canvas to help put it together.

- Specific Aims (Should include 2-4 aims; length: 1 page, 1 inch margins and 11-12 point Times New Roman or Arial font) Your specific aims are the objectives of your research project, what you want to learn, and briefly how you will learn it. The project aims should be driven by the hypothesis you set out to test. Make sure they are highly focused. Begin this section by stating the general purpose or major objectives of your research in a brief introductory statement (with reference to previous research). You also want to catch reviewers’ attention, so make sure this is well written and compelling. Be sure all objectives relate directly to the hypothesis you are setting out to test. If you have more than one hypothesis, state specific aims for each one. Keep in mind your research methods will relate directly to the aims you have described.
  - Example 1: http://psych.colorado.edu/~willcutt/res_meth/CS_F31_aims.pdf
  - Plus one example from my own research will be on Canvas.

- Good link to learn more about funding research in psychology (good to know if you are graduate student or thinking about graduate school in psychology). Graduate students in this class MUST read (and print/save in case the link is removed at some point)! Page 35 starts tips on writing proposals.
  http://www.psych.ucr.edu/grad/GradStudentGuide2Funding.pdf

5. Data Blitz Presentation (Due: October 25th, 10%)
For this project you should prepare and present 4-5 slides that highlight your research project. These will be designed around suggestions in the reading: Speaking about Science. The presentation should include: “Attention Grabber Slide” “Main Question Slide” “Methods Slide” a “Money Slide” and a “Take-Home Message Slide.” These slides can be used to build your TED Talk. Please submit your slides on Canvas by 12 pm on Wednesday Oct 24th. I will put them all on my computer for the presentation. You will present these slides in class and have 4 minutes.

6. TED Talks (Nov 1st (graduate students), Nov 15th (undergraduates), Nov. 29th (undergraduates), 30%)
You will prepare a 8-10 minute (total amount of time determined by number of students in the class) TED talk on the research project(s) you have been using for this class. We will have an in class critique of each talk. Your talk should be rehearsed and should be no longer than the allotted time. There will be 1 minute for questions after each talk. Use the TED talks we watched this semester, along with the readings about giving effective presentations to guide your presentation. Please submit your slides in power point format online by 12 pm on the Wednesday before you present. I will put them on my computer for the presentation. If you have videos of graphics, please email them to me in addition to putting them in your presentation directly, that way if they don’t work we can open them outside of power point. I will video tape all of the talks and will provide you with a copy of the video, all videos will be deleted at the end of the class.

Expectations for Talks:
1) Introduce the topic with an interesting and engaging slide followed by an introduction of the topic that includes a summary of previous research that is directly linked to your research or proposal (2-3 slides)
2) A clear statement about what is missing from the research you reviewed, what don't we know that you are going to answer, i.e., what is your main question (1 slide)

3) How will (or how did) you answer this question? i.e., what are your methods and why are they appropriate for answering your question? (2-3 slides)

4) What are your findings or your expected findings? Graphs here are typically helpful. (1-2 slides)

5) What do these findings add (or will they add) to our knowledge of this topic and the previous literature you described at the beginning? (1 slide)

6) Conclude with an engaging slide that explains the importance of this research, the take home message, and what's next (future directions) (2-3 slides).

7) Use an exit line.

8) Reduce text on slides and instead use pictures and graphs and describe things. You can put notes in the notes sections of slides and read off of those if needed.

9) Make sure that you are telling story in your talk, that all slides and information is connected in some way shape or form. Everything that you say should be clear.

10) Practice your talk at least once ahead of time to make sure that you can describe everything in the allotted 10-11 minutes if you feel your talk is short you might want to include more background details or spend more time on predicted findings and what they mean.

7. Thoughtful and respectful critique of other presenters/writers (20%)

Throughout class we will be reviewing and critiquing the work of everyone in the class. Early in the semester we will form working groups based on research project topics and interests. We will spend part of class time reading and providing helpful feedback to others in your group. It is important to give each critique the time and effort that you would like someone else to give your work. You should give positive feedback in addition to any suggestions/corrections. Please carefully word what you are going to say and be respectful at all times. There is also often no one way to do things and no one is a perfect presenter or writer, we are all trying to improve, please keep that in mind. You will be graded based on the quality of your feedback.

- Critique of Abstract: 2 Points
- Critique of Press Release: 4 Points
- Critique of NSF Summary Page: 4 Points
- Critique of Data Blitz: 2 points
- Critique of TED Talks: 8 Points

TED Talk Review: Please write a 1-page single spaced review of your partner’s TED talk. You should write your review up in paragraph form and be sure to include both positive feedback and suggestions for future presentations or research projects. This review should address the below questions and be typed and submitted via Canvas. Your review will be graded and given to your partner. Questions to answer in your review: 1) Was the introduction clear and engaging? What was the best part? 2) Did the presenter clearly present previous research that led up to the current/proposed project? 3) What were the methods used or proposed? Was enough detail presented that you fully understand what the presenter did or was proposing to do? 4) If you had the money would you fund this project? Would there be anything that you would want to see added or changed in order to fund it? 5) How was the presenters presentation style, were the slides clear, and was the speaker understandable? Is there anything that you think the presenter could have improved in terms of presentation style? 6) End with a summary of the take home message and the best part of the whole talk.
Summary of Grading Schedule
1. Participation and Class Reaction Papers (10%)
2. Abstract Assignment ~ September 13th (5%)
3. Press Release Assignment ~ September 27th (10%)
4. NIH Specific Aims Proposal Assignment ~ October 18th (15%).
5. Data Blitz~ Oct. 25th (10%)
6. TED Talk~ Nov 1st (graduate students), Nov 15th (undergraduates), Nov. 29th (undergraduates) (30%)
7. Thoughtful and Respectful Critique of the Work of Classmates. (20%)

Abstract, Press Release, NIH Specific Aims, Presentations

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- A 15% per day reduction will be applied for all late assignments. This results in no late assignments accepted after 1 week. If you plan to miss class, please contact me in advance to let me know and I will work with you and provide a suitable make-up assignment. Please note, Reaction Papers cannot be made up, I will drop the lowest grade so you can miss one without penalty. If you turn in reaction papers or assignments after the 12 pm deadline but before the class period you will be marked off 1 point and on days when written feedback is provided you will not receive written feedback.

- Information of current UF grading policies for assigning grade points:
  https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Course Schedule

Week 1 (August 23rd): Introduction to Course
  - Introductions
  - What makes a good talk?
  - Syllabus
  - Discussion: Feedback, Presentations, and Discussing
  - Information about working groups

Week 2 (August 30th): Language Development, Reaction Paper Due

Patricia Kuhl: The linguistic genius of babies
(http://www.ted.com/talks/patricia_kuhl_the_linguistic_genius_of_babies.html)

Deb Roy: The birth of a word
https://www.ted.com/talks/deb_roy_the_birth_of_a_word

Readings:

Week 3 (September 6th): Learning and the importance of early experience in infancy, Reaction Paper Due

Pawan Sinha: On How Brains Learn To See
http://www.ted.com/talks/pawan_sinha_on_how_brains_learn_to_see?language=en

Readings:


Week 4 (September 13th): Adolescence, Abstract Due, In-class group review.

Sarah-Jayne Blakemore: The mysterious workings of the adolescent brain (http://www.ted.com/playlists/1/how_does_my_brain_work.html)

Daphne Bavelier, Your brain on video games
http://www.ted.com/talks/daphne_bavelier_your_brain_on_video_games.html

Readings:


Week 5 (September 20th): Science of Bias, Reaction Paper Due

Verna Myers, How to overcome our biases? Walk boldly toward them.
https://www.ted.com/talks/verna_myers_how_to_overcome_our_biases_walk_boldly_toward_them

Joy Buolamwini, How I am fighting bias in algorithms.
Readings:


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Week 6 (September 27th): Perception and Emotion in the Brain, Press Release Due, Critique of Press Release

Nancy Kanwisher: The Brain is a Swiss Army Knife
https://www.ted.com/talks/nancy_kanwisher_the_brain_is_a_swiss_army_knife

Lisa Feldman Barrett: You aren’t at the mercy of your emotions, your brain creates them.
https://www.ted.com/talks/lisa_feldman_barrett_you_aren_t_at_the_mercy_of_your_emotions_your_brainCreates_them

Readings:


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Week 7 (October 4th): Grit and Power Posing, Reaction Paper Due

Angela Lee Duckworth, The key to success: Grit
https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit

Amy Cuddy, Your body language shapes who are
http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are?language=en

Readings:

Power posing is back: Amy Cuddy successfully refutes criticism, Forbes Magazine.


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Week 8 (October 11th): Autism, Reaction Paper Due

Wendy Chung: Autism — what we know (and what we don't know yet)
https://www.ted.com/playlists/153/the_autism_spectrum

Ami Klin: A New Way to Diagnose Autism.
(http://www.ted.com/talks/ami_klin_a_new_way_to_diagnose_autism.html)

Suzy Scherf: Autism, Vaccines, and Adolescence.
http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/Autism-Vaccines-Brain-Science-a

Readings:


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Week 9 (October 18th): NIH Specific Aims Assignment DUE.

Guest Speaker Scott Blades (Assistant Director, UF Training and Organizational Development, Human Resources), Topic: Effectively Communicating with Visuals

Readings:
Speaking about Science Chapters 1-6 about Presenting and Presentations

Optional Readings to help with your presentations:
Power Up your Power Point: Seven research-backed tips for effective presentations

Effective Communication, Scitable


TEDx Speaker Guide
Week 10 (October 25th): Five Slide Data Blitz Presentations, Data Blitz Power Point Due, Revised NIH Specific Aims DUE

Week 11 (November 1st): Graduate TED Talks
Week 12 (November 8th): Undergraduate Prep work for TED Talks (Lisa out of town, Jaxenne will lead)
Week 13 (November 15th): Undergraduate TED Talks
Week 14 (November 22th): No Class Thanksgiving Break
Week 15 (November 29th): Undergraduate TED Talks

Dec. 5th Review/Critique of TED talks Due on CANVAS by 2:00 pm.

University Policies

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

Disabilities:
Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. All students needing accommodations should contact the instructor or have disability services contact instructor in order to make a plan soon after the beginning of the semester.

Course Evaluations:
Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. An email will be sent to you with this link so you can complete the evaluations. This evaluation is very important to me, please take the time to complete it.

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at: https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/

Policy Related to Academic Dishonesty:
Academic integrity and honesty is taken very seriously in this class. You must work independently on all assignments and anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F in the course. Any violations of the academic honesty policy will be vigorously pursued. All students are expected to adhere scrupulously to the University Honor Code.
All written assignments are automatically given a turn-it-in score and all text that is flagged for plagiarism is reviewed. If you use someone else’s ideas you need to cite them, if you are taking someone else’s words directly you need to quote them. Here is a good reference for understanding plagiarism: [https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html](https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html)

In this class, ignorance is not an excuse for plagiarism.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for this course by the following pledge is implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Honor Code ([https://www.dso.ufl.edu/secr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/secr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/)) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult the instructor.

****This syllabus is subject to change by the Instructor. Announcements of changes will be made in class and posted on Canvas.