



PSY 675: Advanced Topics: Eyewitness Identification
Winter Mini: 12/15/2014 – 1/8/2015
COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor: Curt A. Carlson, Ph.D., curt.carlson@tamuc.edu

Office Hours: Due to the online nature of this class, it is best to either post questions in the eCollege discussion boards or email me.

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

There is no textbook for this course, or any other readings you need to purchase. Rather, I will post several articles and chapters in eCollege Doc Sharing for you to download and read.

Course Description:

In this course you will learn about an important applied field of social and cognitive psychology. We will focus on the **cognitive elements** of eyewitness identification, which include **perceiving** the perpetrator during a crime, paying **attention** to the best details during the crime to enhance later eyewitness identification, how malleable and fallible eyewitness **memory** for the perpetrator is, and the **decisions** an eyewitness must make during a lineup. Based on my area of expertise, we will focus on eyewitness memory and decision-making. Topics to be covered will include some cognitive theory about these processes, and also procedures that psychological research has shown to be beneficial for eyewitness identification accuracy. As you'll see, a great deal of psychological research has been dedicated to the issue of eyewitness identification for a few decades, and some of this has led to policy changes in this country and elsewhere. Part of this course will focus on one recently popular policy change (involving how a lineup should be presented) that is not supported by recent data, and therefore should not be followed unlike other, more robust findings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your developing knowledge of the above topics will be assessed in two ways: 1) discussion posts during the entirety of the course, and 2) a brief literature review paper submitted on the last class day.

Readings and Discussion Posts

You will receive the readings for the class on or before the first class day. Each student will be responsible for posting in eCollege a summary of one or more readings. Not submitting a summary or missing the deadline for a summary will result in a loss of points toward your grade.

Everyone will be responsible for carefully reading each post and commenting on them. Not commenting or missing the deadline for a comment could result in the loss of points toward your grade. By the end of the second week, you will have your assigned topic for your literature review. As you conduct your review, you will need to summarize two of the empirical articles you find (about 3-4 paragraphs should suffice for each summary), and post the summary to the designated discussion board in eCollege. Not submitting a summary or missing the deadline for a summary will result in a loss of points toward your grade. These summaries will help you to deeply digest at least two articles of your review, which will lead to a better ultimate paper. You will also be required to read your classmates' summaries that week, and post a response to each summary. Failing to post a substantive response by each respective deadline could result in the loss of points toward your grade. By reading and commenting on others' summaries, everyone in the class will get some exposure to each topic area being covered in each literature review.

Literature Review

By the end of the second week, you will have your assigned topic for your literature review. Your literature review paper should reference approximately 5-7 articles, and be about 4-6 pages in length (not including title page or references; no abstract please).

Your paper must be formatted based on APA-style (6th edition). If you are unfamiliar with this style, check out the tutorial at <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx>. Not all of it will be relevant for this paper because it is a literature review rather than a full description of an empirical study, but it will still be helpful.

Your paper must be double-spaced, with 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman), with 1-inch margins. Submit as a .doc or .docx. Also, be very careful not to plagiarize any of the literature you summarize. You must summarize in your own words, but if you feel you must include direct quotes, please do so sparingly. Surround each quote in quotation marks and put the page number source in parentheses at the end. For example, "this is the quote" (p. 576). To avoid accidental plagiarism, I recommend writing your eCollege posts as well as your literature review paper without having the readings directly in front of you. Any plagiarism, intentional or otherwise, could lead to severe penalties, potentially affecting your grade in this course and/or your status as a graduate student in your program.

Grading

Your grade will be based on the following: 1) discussion posts (50%), and 2) the literature review paper (50%).

You need 90% or better for an 'A', 80% or better for a 'B', 70% or better for a 'C', and 60% or better for a 'D'. Below 60% results in an 'F'.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS

This course will be presented entirely in eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to:
<https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/>

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

1. Each topic will be accessible from the left column of the eCollege site for this course – within each you will see the topic to be covered, any discussion post that might be due.
2. You will download the readings from Doc Sharing. These are to be read carefully for discussion posts.
3. You will submit your literature review using the eCollege dropbox tool/tab – see ‘Dropbox’ in the top toolbar of eCollege for this course.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

You can communicate with me via email, but I will need 24 hours to respond. I might not be able to respond on Saturday-Sunday, but I will try.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty Policy: Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

Late Work: **Late work will not be accepted late unless I give you permission in advance.**

Dropping the Course: A student may drop this course by logging into their myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled 'Drop a class' from among the choices found under the myLEO section of the Web page.

Incompletes: The policy for this course is not to allow incompletes. If you cannot complete the course with a grade that you find satisfactory, it is your responsibility to drop it.

University Specific Procedures:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
 StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

This schedule is to be used as a guide. It is possible that it will change.

Week

Topic

12/15 – 12/16	Syllabus, introductions, Estimator variables
12/17 – 12/18	System Variables; read/respond to posts
12/19 – 12/23	Factors Influencing Memory for Perpetrator; read/respond to posts
12/24 – 12/28	Showups versus Lineups; Lineup Construction & Fairness; read/respond to posts; Article Summary 1 due Monday the 29th
12/29 – 12/31	Importance of ROC analysis; read/respond to posts; read/respond to posts
1/1 – 1/5	Simultaneous vs. Sequential Lineup; read/respond to posts; Article Summary 2 due Monday the 5th
1/6 – 1/8	Confidence-Accuracy Relationships; read/respond to posts
1/9	Literature Review Due by end of day Friday the 9th