

Introduction to Cognitive Science
Writing in the Majors
Spring 2023
Jing Gao
Fri 2:40-3:30p (tentative)
Location TBA

Course description

Cognitive science is an exciting coalition of academic fields united by a common interest in understanding the human mind. The *Writing in the Majors* (WIM) section accompanies the main *Introduction to Cognitive Science* course to provide additional opportunities to engage in discussion, critical thinking, and writing on select topics in this broad interdisciplinary field. In this WIM section we will learn about and discuss two areas of study that are brought into cognitive science from the field of linguistics: (i) language and thought; (ii) modeling human language. In-class discussion will focus on examining contrasting views and understanding argumentation. Writing instruction will focus on developing a clear thesis and presenting effective arguments.

Course content

The course is divided into three parts. The first two parts are discussion-oriented. During class we will be primarily engaged in discussion of the assigned readings (these are additional reading materials, not the readings assigned for the main course). A small writing assignment (~3 pages 1.5 spaced) based on the content of the reading/discussion will be assigned. In the third and final part of this course we will focus on developing a longer writing piece (~6 pages 1.5 spaced). Class time will be devoted to helping you formulate and articulate your ideas through peer editing and presentation. Throughout the course we will also be discussing material presented in the main course, though much less extensively than our WIM-designated topics. More details about the writing assignments will be available as they near.

Grading

Writing 1:	20%
Writing 2:	20%
Writing 3 first draft:	10%
Writing 3 final draft:	30%
Participation:	10%
Presentation:	10%

Assignment submissions

If an assignment is due at the beginning of a class, you should bring a hard copy with you to class; no electronic submission on Canvas is necessary. Otherwise an assignment needs only to be submitted electronically on Canvas and by 11:59pm on the due date.

Late & absence policies

Late work is accepted up to 5 days after the due date with a 10% deduction for each day the work is late for. If there is a truly exceptional circumstance that prevents you from submitting work on time, please get in touch as early as you can. Please try not to be late on assignments that are due at the beginning of a class, because that class will include a peer-editing session and you not having finished your assignment would mean that you wouldn't be able to participate in peer-editing.

You have one 'free' absence. Additional absences will affect your participation grade. Religious holidays and medical-based absences with doctor's note are excused.

Schedule

Week	Date	Class	Assignment
Week 2	Feb 3	Introductions; Language & thought: an orientation	Reading: Danesi, Wilton
Week 3	Feb 10	The linguistic relativity hypothesis	Reading: Danesi, Santorini & Kroch
Week 4	Feb 17	Arbitrariness, symbolism, iconicity	Writing 1
Week 5	Feb 24	Writing discussion (Writing 1 due before class)	
Week 6	Mar 3	February break - No meeting	
Week 7	Mar 10	Modeling language: an orientation	Reading: Santorini & Kroch, Wu
Week 8	Mar 17	Hierarchical structure in language	Reading: Sag & Wasow
Week 9	Mar 24	A constraint-based grammar	Writing 2
Week 10	Mar 31	Writing discussion (Writing 2 due before class)	Writing 3 proposal
Week 11	Apr 7	Spring break – No meeting	
Week 12	Apr 14	Select topics from main course (Writing 3 proposal due Apr 12)	Writing 3 first draft
Week 13	Apr 21	Writing discussion (Writing 3 first draft due before class)	Presentation
Week 14	Apr 28	Student presentations	Writing 3 final draft
Week 15	May 5	Student presentations (Writing 3 final draft due May 9)	Writing 3 final draft